

via fax: 011 502 2411 9124 Lic. Juan Luis Florido Attorney General of Guatemala	via fax: 011 502 2413 8658 Adela Camacho de Torrebiarte Minister of Interior of Guatemala
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June 12, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of a **male member of the staff of the international donor agency Consejeria en Proyectos (PCS)**, an international consortium of European and Canadian agencies which funds work in Latin America, mainly with refugees and internally displaced people. At 1:30 p.m. on May 7 the staff person was abducted, beaten, robbed and sexually assaulted. Nearly all his money, his mobile phone and his vehicle were taken. The attack was reported to the national police and the Human Rights Ombudsman. On the morning of May 17 he received a call threatening him and other PCS staff members with death.

At the time of the assault, the PCS staff member had been collecting materials for an international NGO conference on the consequences for female victims of sexual violence the internal armed conflict in Guatemala (1960-1996). PCS has been actively involved with local agencies in supporting women who were raped during the internal armed conflict and, since the conflict ended, in police stations.

This attack is only one of many that have befallen human rights workers in this field in Guatemala. Other Guatemalan organizations funded by PCS have experienced break-ins at their offices. In addition, there has been an 18% rise in the number of attacks against human rights defenders in Guatemala in the first four months of this year, compared to the same period last year.

In light of these facts, we strongly urge you to

- order a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats, sexual assault and robbery of the PCS staff member on May 7 and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate and effective measures to guarantee the safety of all the human rights defenders working for PCS;
- develop a national plan of action to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. This Declaration recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

Be assured that we will see to it that our elected officials here in the United States are made aware of human rights violations in Guatemala.

For Peace With Justice,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

Copies: Minister of Foreign Affairs Gert Rosenthal Koenigsberger ~ via fax: 011 502 2410 0071
 Project Counselling Service ~ via fax: 011 502 2332 7368
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 Ambassador James Derham, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich ~ via email
 U.S. Representatives Gillmor, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 105/07 Guatemala

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: