

via fax 011 502 2413 8658 Sr. Salvador Gandara Minister of the Interior of Guatemala	via fax 011 502 2334 0119 Sra. Ruth del Valle President of the Presidential Commission of Human Rights, Guatemala
via fax: 011 502 2411 9124/9326 Liv. José Amilcar Velasquez Zarate Attorney General and Head of Public Prosecutor's Office, Guatemala	

January 26, 2009

Dear Sirs and Madam:

Once again we, members of the InterReligious Task Force, are compelled to write regarding our grave concern for the safety of **Fredy Peccerelli**, Executive Director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG), his brother **Gianni Peccerelli**, their other relatives and colleagues. On January 8 at 1:13 pm, Fredy Peccerelli received an email death threat: "your families will pay ...we are watching you...first we will kill yani (Gianni)." Attached was a photograph of Gianni Peccerelli's car parked at a gasoline station near where he and Fredy live. The email was copied to **Omar Bertoni Giron**, head of the FAFG Forensic Anthropology Department.

On numerous occasions since 2002, these members of the FAFG and their families have been threatened with torture and death; the women have been threatened with rape. These threats are undoubtedly a result of their work to exhume mass graves of those killed by the Guatemalan military and their civilian adjuncts in the early 1980s. Moreover, attention to the work of the FAFG has been renewed by the prominence of the court proceedings in Guatemala City on behalf of the Spanish courts hearing a genocide case against high-ranking members of the military junta of the early 1980s. The state has granted them some police protection following requests from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, but this protection has been insufficient and inadequate. No one has been brought to justice for any of the threats made against them.

We remind you again of the right of human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

We therefore urge that you

- take immediate steps to provide effective protection to FAFG members in full compliance with the orders of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights;
- order an immediate, full and impartial investigation into these and previous threats and bring those responsible to justice.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

cc: Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation ~ via US mail
 Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
 Stephen McFarland, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3992/6215
 Skye Justice, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-3518/4292
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and
 US Representatives Boccieri, Fudge, Kaptur, Kucinich, Latta, LaTourette, Ryan, Sutton, Wilson ~ via email

UA 07/09Guatemala

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