

via fax: 011 502 2239 0090

Sr. Otto Perez Molina

President of the Republic of Guatemala

via fax: 011 502 2413 8888 ext. 2290

Sr. Mauricio López Bonilla

Minister of the Interior of Guatemala

July 13, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the murder of mining resistance activist and human rights defender **Santos Fidel Ajau Suret**, and the continued harassment of **Telma Yolanda Oquelí Veliz del Cid**, leader of the Northern Front of the Metropolitan Area (FRENAM), in San José del Golfo in Guatemala Department. FRENAM is a movement of community residents who are defending their land against the expansion of large-scale mining activities in the area.

On July 7 Santos Fidel Ajau Suret, age 54, received threats from unknown individuals who had been linked to incidents of harassment and violence against local communities who have been nonviolently protesting at the entrance to the "Progreso VII Derivada" mining project in the area of La Puya, located between the towns of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc near Guatemala City. The project is owned by Kappes, Cassidy & Associates, a U.S. company in Reno, Nevada.

On July 9 at approximately 5:15pm, after he participated in a peaceful sit-in protest against the mining project, Santos Fidel Ajau Suret was assassinated. Two unknown men on a motorcycle shot and killed him with three bullets in the back as he was returning home on the road connecting San José del Golfo and San Antonio del Ángel.

On July 10 at approximately 2:00am, shots were fired outside Yolanda Oquelí's home in San José del Golfo while she and her children were inside. Her security personnel witnessed two unknown men fleeing on a motorcycle. Yolanda Oquelí was the target of an attempted killing on June 13, 2012 following her prominent role in the peaceful opposition movement to another local mining project at El Tambor village (cf our letter of June 26, 2012). The method of the killing of Santos Fidel Ajau Suret was similar to the failed attempt on Yolanda Oquelí's life in 2012.

Because of these latest actions against those opposed to local mining activities and because security measures assigned to Yolanda Oquelí and her family have been inadequate to prevent the latest act of intimidation against her, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out a thorough, impartial and immediate investigation into the killing of Santos Fidel Ajau Suret and the acts of intimidation against Telma Yolanda Oquelí Veliz del Cid, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the safety of Telma Yolanda Oquelí Veliz del Cid and her family, including a critical assessment of the effectiveness of the existing protection measures and the enhancement of such measures where appropriate;
- guarantee that all human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of restrictions or reprisals .

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Co-coordinator

copies: Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
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 Siobhan Sheils, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
 Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Frontline Defenders 7/12/13_Guatemala

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