

via FAX: 011 502 239 0090
Exmo. Sr. Otto Perez Molina
 President of Guatemala

via FAX: 011 502 2413 8658/2413 8888 ext 2290
Sr. Mauricio López Bonilla
 Minister of Interior of Guatemala

October 21, 2013

Dear Sirs:

We are horrified at the **massacre in the Maya Kaqchikel community of San José Nacahuil** in the municipality of San Pedro Ayampuc in Guatemala Department that killed ten people and injured at least a dozen others. The victims were part of a peaceful protest against construction of El Tambor gold mine in San José de Golfo. Killed were: **Aurelio Surte Pixtún, Carlos Xocoxit Salala, Pixtún Santos Garcia, Rolando Pixtún Monroy, Leonardo Agustín González Hernández, Vicente Tepen Xuya Santos, Javier Tepen Soyoz, Surte Pixtún Santos, Ines Ortiz and Rigoberto Noj Hairstyle Tepen.**

On September 7 at 11pm, unidentified men stalked through the town of 7,500, gunned people down and then fled in their stolen vehicle. Witnesses state that police arrived 20-30 minutes before the shooting and passed through the part of town where most of the victims were killed. A relative of a local bar owner who was killed reported that the police demanded a bribe from the owner, which he refused to pay.

We understand that Interior Minister López blamed the attack on gangs—without first undertaking an investigation—and placed the community under a special contingent of police and soldiers. The town has had their own community police force since they expelled the national police six years ago; they have successfully maintained peace and security without outside support. They demanded that the police and military be removed from the community. Instead, the Interior Minister López has asked President Pérez to install a military detachment in the community. Anti-mining residents fear that the government will use the September 7 massacre in Nacahuil as an excuse to militarize the region or crack down on protesters.

The people of Nacahuil—like many other indigenous people in Guatemala—have participated in nonviolent resistance movements against “development” projects that have been approved without their consent. For more than a year, families have maintained a peaceful road block at “La Puya” in San José de Golfo to stop the El Tambor gold mine (cf our letter of Nov 23, 2012). El Tambor mine is a local wholly-owned subsidiary of Kappes, Cassidy and Associates (based in Reno, NV), which bought it from Radius Gold of Canada in 2012.

We **strongly urge** that you

- investigate the massacre of September 7 in Nacahuil;
- respect the rights of the residents of Nacahuil to life, security, and freedom of expression; and
- withdraw members of the police and military from their community.

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

GHRC 9/30_Guatemala

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