

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
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December 24, 2013

Dear Sirs,

We are saddened and outraged at the **attack on four leaders of the Q'eqchi community Monte Olivo** in the Department of Alta Verapaz by employees of the Santa Rita hydroelectric company. The workers, carrying firearms, attacked with machetes and severely injured the four indigenous leaders. Police were called but they refused to arrest the attackers.

This attack occurred just prior to the start of construction on December 11 of a hydroelectric dam that would flood communities and destroy the local ecosystem. The dam is being constructed in violation of national and international law, which require consultation of the communities who strongly oppose the project. The dam project will destroy the Dolores River and the basin of the Chixoy River, threatening 23 Mayan communities, which are nearly 10,000 families, nearly 200,000 people in total,

In August two children of the community were killed in retaliation for human rights complaints filed by the community. David Eduardo Pacay Maas and Hageo Isaac Guitz, two Maya Q'eqchi children of Monte Olivo, ages 9 and 13, died by bullet injuries caused by a hitman hired by Hidroeléctrico Santa Rita, when he was attempting to kill David Chen, a leader of the resistance movement opposing the dam. The shooting took place on the day that Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, was conducting an on-site visit in Cobán, just 50 kilometers south of Monte Olivo. The purpose of her visit was to gather information about the human rights situation of indigenous peoples, with special focus on their lands, territories, and natural resources, and the right to prior, free and informed consultation.

Because we are extremely concerned that further violence will occur in support of the illegal dam, we **strongly urge** that you

- condemn the attack described above and call for the immediate arrest of those responsible, including the intellectual authors of the attack;
- call for suspension of construction of the dam and immediate cancellation of the shipment of machinery to the region.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
Arnold A Chacon, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2331-2348
Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur for Guatemala and Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3992
Caitlyn Kennel, 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 ~ via email
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

GuatemalaSolidarity 12/9/13

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