

I R T F

InterReligious Task Force on Central America

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via fax: 011 502.238.17.34
Estimado Sr. Procurador
Don Jorge Eduardo De León Duque
Prosecutor for Human Rights of Guatemala

via fax: 011 502 2411 8168/9210
Estimada Sra. Fiscal
Lic. Thelma Esperanza Aldana Hernández
Attorney General of Guatemala

November 22, 2015

Dear Sir and Madam:

We are outraged at the recent shooting of **Alex Reynoso**, an environmental defender who is part of the peaceful resistance to the open-pit Escobal silver mine in Mataquescuintla, Jalapa Department. On October 17, he and two others, **Marlon Loy Dominguez** and **Estuardo Bran Clavel**, were shot and injured by unknown assailants.

The Escobal mine, a project of U.S.-Canadian company Tahoe Resources, has been opposed by the local community since its inception. In 2012 Alex Reynoso played a key role in organizing a plebiscite in which 98.3% of the people voted against mining. Local mayors and councilors who won elections in September 2015 campaigned on anti-mining platforms.

Speaking from the hospital, Alex Reynoso said, "The attack wasn't only against me but also the local community development councils. We were at a meeting with the mayor to hear about the latest steps in the consultation process over mining and to thank the community for their work during the elections. On our way back home, the gunmen opened fire."

Alex Reynoso was also shot and injured in April 2014, in an assault that killed his 16-year-old daughter, Topacio, a well-known youth activist. At that time both Alex and Topacio were active in peaceful resistance against Tahoe Resources (cf our letter of May 24 2014). In 2013, private security guards shot seven men who were part of a peaceful protest outside the Escobal mine site. The former head of security for the company was charged in connection with the shooting after wire-tap evidence indicated that he targeted peaceful protesters, then tried to cover up the crime and flee the country.

Because of our continued concern about the safety and human rights of environmental defenders who are organizing resistance to large-scale industrial mining throughout the region, we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate and thorough investigation into the attack on Alex Reynoso, Marlon Loy Dominguez and Estuardo Bran Clavel;
- provide protection for Reynoso and others whose lives are at risk for defending land, water and peace in their communities.

Sincerely,

Brian Stefan Szittai and Christine Stonebraker-Martínez
Co-Coordinator

copies: José Julio Alejandro Ligorria Carballido, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
Todd Robinson, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011 502 2331 2348
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James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Guatemala, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

Center for International Environmental Law 10/22/15

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

