

via email: aberger@mingob.gob.gt Sr. Enrique Antonio Degenhart Asturias Minister of the Interior of Guatemala	via email: fiscalgeneralmp@gmail.com Lic. María Consuelo Porras Argueta Attorney General of Guatemala
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May 23, 2019

Dear Minister Degenhart and Attorney General Porras:

We are very concerned and alarmed about death threats toward, nonconsensual surveillance of, and attempted attack on **Quelvin Jimenez**, lawyer of the indigenous **Xinca** People in San Rafael las Flores in Santa Rosa Department.

In late April he was alerted to an assassination plot against him as well as to the fact that his house was under surveillance. On May 6 an armed man, who had been seen near Quelvin's house during instances prior, pursued Quelvin's vehicle on a motorcycle in an attempt to slow the vehicle. This followed recurring death threats Quelvin has received over the phone.

In San Rafael las Flores a mining project has caused great controversy, resulting in protest and rejection of the project and the site by community members, which has manifested in both violent and nonviolent ways. In January 2013 unidentified armed men attacked the mine site, resulting in the deaths of two security guards and another person who is presumed to be a member of the group which orchestrated the attack. On May 2, 2013, the government of Guatemala declared a state of emergency in and around San Rafael las Flores.


The mining project is a subsidiary of the Canada and US-based Tahoe Resources Inc. We have written several letters to officials in Guatemala to protest the human rights abuses committed by employees and contractors of Tahoe, as well as Guatemalan security forces, against residents opposing the mine. Those nonviolent protestors who are acting on behalf of the people of the community, especially those defending indigenous land rights, have felt this corporate and security presence.

Members of the Centre for Environmental, Social and Legal Action (CALAS), who have previously defended the rights of communities affected by the San Rafael mining company, have also reported repeated acts of intimidation and harassment against them. The investigations on previous attacks remain pending and the police have yet to enforce security measures ordered by the public prosecutor's office to protect Quelvin Jimenez.

We **strongly urge** that you

- conduct a prompt, independent, effective and impartial investigation into all the threats, surveillance, and attacks on Quelvin Jimenez, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- guarantee the protection of Quelvin Jimenez by the police, according to his wishes and needs.

Sincerely,


 Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Co-coordinators


 Christine Stonebraker Martínez

copies: Manuel Espina, Ambassador of Guatemala to the US ~ via website and email
 Rain Bian, human rights officer, US Embassy to Guatemala ~via email
 Luis E. Arreaga, US Ambassador to Guatemala, in care of human rights officer Rain Bian ~ via email
 Steven Kenoyer, Guatemala Desk, US State Department ~ via email
 Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño, Rapporteur for Guatemala, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
 Antonia Urrejola, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
 US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

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