

<p>via email: aberger@mingob.gob.gt Sr. Enrique Antonio Degenhart Asturias Minister of the Interior of Guatemala</p>	<p>via email: fiscalgeneralmp@gmail.com carrecis@mp.gob.gt Lic. María Consuelo Porras Argueta Attorney General of Guatemala</p>
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February 25, 2020

Dear Minister of the Interior and Attorney General:

We are extremely concerned about the attempted break-in, by unidentified individuals on the morning of February 5, at the home of human rights lawyer, **Esteban Emanuel Celada Flores**. Prior to the incident, unknown persons asked his neighbors about his whereabouts.

Esteban Celada is a member of the Group of Litigators against Torture in Latin America (*Grupo de Litigantes contra la Tortura en América Latina*), an initiative led by lawyers from 10 Latin American countries, who work to combat the systematic use of torture in the region. He has collaborated with a number of human rights organizations in Guatemala, including *Mujeres Transformando el Mundo (MTM)*. He has also provided legal representation in many sensitive cases concerning crimes against humanity, organized crime, sexual violence and femicide.

On February 8, 2018, as Esteban's brother, David Raymundo Celada Flores, was leaving Esteban's house, unidentified persons shot David dead with a machine gun. Two witnesses were also killed during the incident.

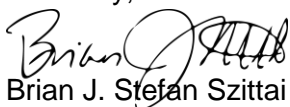
Between May 8, 2019 and February 5, 2020, Esteban Celada experienced at least 27 security incidents, including persistent surveillance. One of these incidents occurred on the night of December 21, 2019. Unknown individuals broke into his house while he was away and searched his belongings, especially documents related to his legal work.

On February 6, Esteban Celada filed a complaint at the office of the Prosecutor for Human Rights about the attempted break-in of February 5 as well as all the previous security incidents he has experienced. To date and to our knowledge, authorities have taken no action. Esteban Celada has a request for precautionary measures pending before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. According to information he received, the request has not been processed because the Ministry of the Interior has not submitted a risk analysis.

We believe that Esteban Celada is being targeted solely as a result of his peaceful activities in the defense of human rights. Therefore we **strongly urge** that you

- carry out immediate, thorough and impartial investigations into the attempted break-in at the house of Esteban Celada, the past security incidents against him, and the killing of his brother; publish the results and bring those responsible to justice
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical security and psychological integrity of Esteban Celada (including carrying out the risk analysis for providing protection measures), in strict accordance with his wishes

Sincerely,


Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-coordinators


Christine Stonebraker Martínez

copies: Manuel Alfredo Espina Pinto, Ambassador of Guatemala to the US ~ via email, US mail
Luis E. Arreaga Rodas, 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
Joel Hernández García, Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email
NISGUA ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

02/12/20_FrontlineDefenders_Guatemala

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