

via email: aberger@mingob.gob.gt Sr. Enrique Antonio Degenhart Asturias Minister of the Interior of Guatemala	via email: fiscalgeneralmp@gmail.com carrecis@mp.gob.gt Lic. María Consuelo Porras Argueta Attorney General of Guatemala
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May 24, 2020

Dear Minister of the Interior and Attorney General:

We are very disturbed at the continuing attacks on the home of human rights lawyer **Esteban Emanuel Celada Flores**. On the morning of April 22, unknown individuals raided and vandalized his house while he was at work. This is the third raid on his home in less than five months (cf our letter our Feb 25, 2020).

Esteban Emanuel Celada Flores 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 ten Latin American countries working 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) and has also provided legal representation in many sensitive cases across the country concerning crimes against humanity, organized crime, sexual violence and femicide.

When Esteban Celada filed a complaint with the Crime Unit against Human Rights Activists of the Public Ministry about the April 22 incident, he was told that due to COVID-19 the Unit was lacking the resources to immediately assess the crime scene. He was advised to provide his own videos and photographs to ensure there was a record of the incident in his file.

Esteban Celada has filed at least six complaints before the Public Ministry for multiple attacks against him since 2016, including raids on his home on December 21, 2019 and on February 5, 2020. While filing complaints he has experienced intimidating attitudes from members of the Public Ministry. The intimidating content as well as the continuous and systemic nature of the attacks have left a harmful psychological impact on Esteban Celada. No advances have been made on the investigations, nor have protection measures been implemented to safeguard his life and integrity.

We believe that Esteban Celada is being targeted solely because of his peaceful human rights work. We **strongly urge** that you

- carry out thorough and impartial investigations into the break-ins at the home of Esteban Celada, the intimidating searches and vandalization of his properties, and the multiple aggressions and threats that he has faced since 2016; publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice
- stop using COVID-19 as an excuse for not investigating the continuance of human rights violations

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
Guatemala Human Rights Commission USA ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email
US Representatives Beatty, Fudge, Gibbs, Gonzalez, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Ryan ~ via email

27 April 2020 _FrontlineDefenders_Guatemala

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