

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 34/038/2001

UA 265/01 Possible extra-judicial execution/Impunity/

19 October 2001
Fear of Safety

GUATEMALAEugenio García (m), farmer (killed)
Members of the Cerritto Small Farmers Development Association (*la Asociación Campesina de Desarrollo de los Cerritos*)

Eugenio García, an indigenous farmer from the Cerritos community in Izabal department, was shot dead on 27 September while on his way to cultivate his plot of land. He was a member of the Cerritto Small Farmers Development Association (*la Asociación Campesina de Desarrollo de los Cerritos*) which has been the subject of a series of threats and attacks in recent months, as it put pressure on the government to grant its members the right to occupy and use state land.

At 9.30am on 27 September, Eugenio García was confronted on his way to work by four people, one of whom shot and killed him. The men are said to be employed as security personnel by the landlord of a neighbouring plantation. They reportedly left the scene in a grey Mitsubishi pick-up, escorted by a police patrol car, registration number 61-024 from Morales Izabal, which was being driven by a named policeman. Eugenio García leaves a widow and 10 orphaned children.

This killing is the latest of a series of attacks and intimidation committed by security personnel from the neighbouring Las Quebrada plantation. On 5 September, 100 heavily armed security men, reportedly circled a group of farmers from the Cerritos community, as they demonstrated for the right to occupy and use land from the Las Quebradas plantation. The security personnel reportedly fired warning shots at the protestors.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Spanish or your own language:

- urging the authorities to investigate the killing of Eugenio García and bring the perpetrators to justice;
- calling for the authorities to investigate claims that the local police were complicit in the murder by standing by as it happened and providing police escort to the killers;
- expressing concern for the safety of the Cerritos community and urging the authorities to take action to protect them immediately;
- urging the authorities to investigate the allegations of a pattern of abuse and intimidation against members of the Cerritos community by Las Quebrada plantation security personnel;
- urging the government to investigate allegations of illegal paramilitary groups linked to the Las Quebradas plantation operating in the area.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of the Interior
Sr. Byron Barrientos
Ministro de Gobernación
Ministerio de Gobernación
6^a Avenida 4-64, Zona 4
Ciudad de Guatemala
GUATEMALA

Telegrams: Ministro de Gobernación, Guatemala, Guatemala
Fax: + 502 362 0239 / 362 0237

Salutation: Dear Minister / Señor Ministro

Attorney General

Lic. Adolfo González Rodas
Fiscal General de la República
Ministerio Público
8a. Avenida 10-67, Zona 1
Tercer nivel
Ciudad de Guatemala
GUATEMALA

Telegram: Fiscal General, Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 221 2718

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Señor Fiscal General

Director General of the National Civil Police

Sr. Rudio Lección Mérida
Director General de la Policía Nacional Civil
6ª Avenida 13-71, Zona 1
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Telegram: Director General de la Policía Nacional Civil, Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 251 9382

Salutation: Señor Director / Dear Director

Presidente de COPREDEH

Comisión Presidencial Coordinadora
de la Política del Ejecutivo en materia
de Derechos Humanos
Sr. Alfonso Fuentes Soria
13 Calle 15-33, Zona 13
Ciudad de Guatemala, C.A.

Telegram: Presidente de COPREDEH, Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 334 1407, + 334 1615

E-mail: Coprekeh@Guate.net

COPIES TO:

Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC)

31 Avenida A 14-46 Zona 7
Ciudad de Plata II
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Telefax: + 502 594 9754

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and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 November 2001.