

PUBLIC

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14 September 2005

UA 238/05 Fear for safety/Death threats

GUATEMALA **Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso (f)**
Omar Girón de León (m), forensic anthropologist and member of the *Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala* (FAFG), Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation
Fredy Peccerelli (m), head of the FAFG, brother of Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso
Jeannette Peccerelli (m), aged 34, former wife of Fredy Peccerelli
Other members of the Peccerelli family
Members of the FAFG

Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso, sister of human rights defender Fredy Peccerelli, has received a written death threat. Amnesty International fears that Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso and members of the *Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala* (FAFG), the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, which is headed by Fredy Peccerelli, may be in grave danger, along with other members of the Peccerelli family.

On 8 September Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso found a written death threat which had been slipped under the garage door of her home in Guatemala City. The note was addressed to Omar Girón de León, her husband, who is a forensic anthropologist at the FAFG. It read: *No entendieron la primera vez, ya dijimos que no los queríamos trabajando, si no entendieron por el lado facil ahora si las van a pagar, Sr. Pecherely [sic] tu hermana pagara [...] la tenemos al ojo en la Universidad, atentete hijo de puta, tu suerte a sido tener fuera de vista a tu familia pero alguien lo tiene que pagar [...] todavia salen al campo, Omar Giron saliendo al campo y ate dijimos mano te vamos a quebrar el culo Sr. Pecherely escoje tu tacuche porque te ha llegado la hora* (You didn't understand the first time, we already said that we didn't want you working, if you don't understand the easy way, now you are going to pay for it. Sr. Pecherely your sister will pay... we have an eye on her in the university [where she works], watch out son of a bitch, your luck has been to have your family out of sight but someone has got to pay... you still go out to the countryside [referring to the site of clandestine graves], Omar Girón going to the countryside we've already told you we are going to kill you. Sr. Pecherely choose your death robe because the time has come).

On 26 August, Fredy Peccerelli's former wife, Jeannette Peccerelli, was stopped by an unidentified man as she drove home from her work in Guatemala City. The man, who had been following her for some distance in a vehicle, put a pistol to her head and told her "*estamos controlando al licenciado Fredy Peccerelli*" (we are keeping an eye on Fredy Peccerelli). Both this threat and the death threat received by Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso have been reported to the Public Prosecutor's Office and Human Rights Ombudsman.

Fredy Peccerelli and other members of the FAFG have been subjected to numerous death threats as a result of their work to exhume mass graves of those killed by the Guatemalan military and their civilian adjuncts in the early 1980s (see for example UA 68/02, AMR 34/014/2002, 5 March 2002 and follow-up; and UA 127/03, AMR 34/028/2003, 8 May 2003). On 13 June 2003, Omar Girón de León received a written death threat at his home telling him that he was going to be killed. Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso has reportedly been harassed and intimidated on several occasions. The authorities have failed to conduct adequate investigations into the threats.

In 2002 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ordered that Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso, Omar Girón de León, Fredy Peccerelli and other members of the FAFG receive precautionary protection measures. However, Amnesty International is concerned that the level of protection is insufficient, particularly in light of the recent threats. While Fredy Peccerelli receives 24-hour police protection as a result

of the precautionary measures, Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso, Omar Girón de León and Jeannette Peccerelli receive protection only at their homes. When they leave their homes they have no protection. The Interior Ministry has failed to respond to repeated requests by the FAFG for increased police presence at their office in Guatemala City. Following the recent threats, the FAFG has again requested increased protection at their office and for those who have been threatened. To date, they have not received increased protection. It is of particular importance that FAFG not only receive increased police presence at their office but that they also are accompanied when carrying out exhumations in the countryside since those situations present special risks.

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

- expressing grave concern for the safety of Bianka Peccerelli, Jeannette Peccerelli, Fredy Peccerelli and Omar Bertoni Girón de León;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into the threats, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to take immediate measures to offer all the protection needed to the individuals named above and the offices of FAFG, in accordance with the 2002 order of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- calling for the authorities to account for their failure to conduct adequate investigations into previous threats against members of the FAFG;
- reminding the authorities of the right of human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General

Fiscal General de la República y jefe del Ministerio Público

Juan Luis Florido

8a. Avenida 10-67, Zona 1, Antiguo Edificio del Banco de los Trabajadores,
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 2251 2218

Salutation: Estimado Fiscal General/Dear Sir

Minister of the Interior

Ministro de Gobernación

Carlos Vielman

6a. Avenida 4-64, zona 4, nivel 3. Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 2362 0237

Email: ministro@mingob.gob.gt

Salutation: Señor Ministro/ Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Human rights organization

Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG)

Avenida Simón Cañas 10-64, Zona 2, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: + 502 2254 0882/2288 7297/ 2288 7302 (if a voice responds, say “por favor, tono de fax”)

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 26 October 2005.