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## **Guatemala urged to investigated trade unionist's killing**

Guatemalan authorities must immediately carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of a trade unionist in the north-eastern province of Izabal, Amnesty International said today.

Idar Joel Hernandez Godoy, a finance secretary in the Izabal banana workers' union SITRABI (Sindicato de Trabajadores de las Bananeras de Izabal ), was shot several times by unknown assailants on a motorcycle on Thursday. He was reportedly on his way to the headquarters of SITRABI in the town of Morales.

“The brutal killing of Idar Joel Hernandez Godoy is yet another example of the dangerous conditions Guatemalan workers rights activists are facing. His death raises fears for the safety of other trade unionists in the country”, said Guadalupe Marengo, Amnesty International’s Deputy Director for Americas.

“The Guatemalan authorities must carry out a thorough and impartial investigation into his murder, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice”, she added.

“Trade unionists must be provided with appropriate protection in order to carry out their work in an environment free from reprisals, threats and intimidation,” she added.

Guatemalan trade unionists have faced a spate of threats, attacks and killings in recent years.

In March 2008, Miguel Ángel Ramirez Enríquez, one of the founders of southern Guatemala’s banana workers’ union, SITRABANSUR (Sindicato de Trabajadores Bananeros del Sur), was killed in the village of El Semillero in the southern province of Escuintla.

Other members of SITRABANSUR’s executive committee were intimidated.

In October 2010, Mateo Lopez, Secretary General of a local branch of the Health Trade Union in Catarina, San Marcos, was shot five times.