



# On the front line

Bulletin on human rights defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean

## SPECIAL EDITION: GUATEMALA

### Threatened human rights campaigners appeal to the international community to help stop attacks against them

**G**uatemalan human rights campaigners are no strangers to persecution. Hundreds of trade unionists, indigenous leaders, church activists academics and student leaders were killed or "disappeared" by members of the military, their cohorts or so-called death squads during Guatemala's internal armed conflict which was officially ended in 1996. During the war a whole generation of social and

strengthened, and that every effort was made to ensure past policies and practices of repression were completely dismantled and prevented from recurring in the future.

More than five years later, those trying to uphold the promises contained in the Peace Accords are being labeled, sometimes by high-ranking officials, as subversives and agitators. Hundreds have been threatened and harassed. Some have been abducted and tortured. Some have been killed.

The recent upsurge in attacks against human rights activists is closely linked to efforts to ensure that those members of the armed forces and others suspected of involvement in gross and systematic human rights violations during the early 1980s are exposed and brought to justice. During the early

community leaders from civil society was virtually wiped out. Following the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, the human rights movement re-galvanized to ensure that the many pledges made in the accords were upheld, that Guatemala's legal and democratic institutions were

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*Guillermo Ovalle de León, of the Fundación Rigoberta Menchú Tum (FRMT), Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation was shot dead, on 29 April 2002. ©FRMT*

1980s tens of thousands of Guatemalans were massacred or "disappeared" by members of the Guatemalan army or their auxiliary forces during a wave of counterinsurgency operations ostensibly aimed at eliminating members of the armed opposition. However, the overwhelming majority of the victims were members of the civilian population, many of them Mayan indigenous people.

The UN Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) and Guatemalan human rights groups have reported some 125 cases of violations against human rights activists during the first half of 2002. Amnesty International's report '*Guatemala's lethal legacy: Past impunity and renewed human rights violations*' [AI Index: AMR 34/001/2002] published earlier this year shows how the wave of abuses has been so severe that the human rights community in Guatemala is now living under siege. Guatemalan human rights defenders have denounced the violations to the UN and to the inter-American system and have repeatedly called on the international community to put pressure on the Guatemalan government to put an end to the attacks.

**Human rights groups attacked and intimidated**  
Attacks and intimidation have taken many forms: the offices of human rights organizations have been raided and sensitive information has been stolen; electronic

communications and data have been interfered with; death threats have been made by telephone and in writing; human rights defenders have been seized and tortured; and in some cases activists have been killed.

**Guatemalan NGOs reported 125 cases of human rights violations against human rights defenders in the first six months of 2002 alone.**

One of the first incidents that indicated an upsurge in this pattern of intimidation was that of Celso Balán, a representative of the *Centro de Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos* (CALDH), Centre for Legal Action in Human Rights, in San Martín Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango. On 1 August 2000, he was seized by two men in plain clothes posing as journalists, but believed to be members of a paramilitary organization. He was interrogated, beaten, robbed, drugged and left unconscious.

Celso Balán was working with CALDH, assisting relatives to exhume mass graves of villagers massacred by the Guatemalan army and the civil patrols (PAC) during General Ríos Montt's administration (1982-1983). CALDH had already alarmed military circles when it filed its first suit for genocide in May 2000, accusing a number of officials of General Romeo Lucas García's administration

(1978-1982) of responsibility for 10 massacres carried out in nine villages. It is believed that Celso Balán's assailants may be linked to those responsible for the 1982 massacre at Chipastor, Chimaltenango, and that their orders may have come from army personnel at the Chimaltenango military base.

Intimidation has not been restricted to those working on legal suits against human rights violators. Many activists working for the implementation of Guatemala's peace accords, signed in 1996 formally ending Guatemala's long-term civil conflict, have also been targeted. In July 2000, two indigenous rights activists were killed apparently as a result of their work to defend and promote the rights of their communities. José Alfredo Quino and María Elena Mejía were director and secretary of CORCI, an organisation that deals with land disputes within indigenous communities in the Sololá region. They also worked for the *Comité Campesino del Altiplano* (CCDA), Altiplano Farmers' Committee, which campaigns for the rights of farming communities, mediating in land disputes and campaigning for better pay for small-hold farmers and land labourers. According to the UN Development Program's 2001 human poverty index, Guatemala is the second poorest country in the Americas region. Only Haiti is ranked lower than Guatemala.

The *Centro de Estudios, Información y Bases para la*

*Acción Social* (CEIBAS), Centre for Studies, Information and Basis for Social Action, an NGO that campaigns for the implementation of social, economic and cultural rights agreed under the Peace Accords, has been so consistently targeted that it has been forced to close its offices in Guatemala. Staff of CEIBAS were first targeted on 7 September 2000, when unidentified individuals driving a pick-up truck attacked Ricardo Lobo, a CEIBAS staff member, and his travelling companion, as they drove by in the opposite direction. The attackers yelled insults and fired at Ricardo Lobo. The car was hit, but Ricardo Lobo threw himself on the floor of the car and was not injured. Then, in February 2001, CEIBAS' offices were raided. Similar raids on the office followed in March and April and on 1 May. On each occasion, computers and other office equipment were stolen. In another incident, on 15 May 2001, when finding that the computer equipment previously stolen had this time not yet been replaced, the raiders destroyed whatever was left in the office.

Guillermo Ovalle de León, an administrative worker for the *Fundación Rigoberta Menchú*

*Tum* (FRMT), Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation was shot dead, on 29 April 2002, as he ate lunch at a local restaurant close to the FRMT offices. Prior to the shooting, two suspicious looking individuals and a car with darkened windows, were allegedly seen outside the FRMT offices. At about the same time as Guillermo Ovalle

***Activist Domingo Yaxón Guarcax was abducted, interrogated, beaten unconscious and left near a funeral parlour in Guatemala City on 3 May 2002. ©Prensa Libre***

de León was killed, several anonymous telephone calls were made to the FRMT offices, in which the funeral march was played.

One day before the shooting occurred, hearings had just begun into the alleged killing by army soldiers of 11 peasants in the village of Xamán by Guatemalan soldiers in 1995. The FRMT is providing legal support for massacre survivors involved in the hearings. The FRMT also filed a suit in Spain, in 1999,

against a number of former Guatemalan officials for genocide and other crimes against humanity. Three days before Guillermo Ovalle de León's killing, the Spanish Supreme Court announced that an appeal hearing on this case would take place on 30 May 2002.

Domingo Yaxón Guarcax, a member of the *Movimiento de Jóvenes Mayas* (MOJOMAYAS), Young Mayan Movement, was abducted, interrogated and beaten unconscious in the centre of Guatemala City on 3 May 2002. Four men forced him into a black car and apparently stripped him naked, blindfolded him, questioned him about his work, beat him and cut him with a pocket knife. The men threatened to kill him if he continued with his human rights work. They beat him unconscious and left him near a funeral parlour.

Domingo Yaxón Guarcax had seen the black car following him for several weeks before the attack. He had been on his way to a bank to deposit cheques when he was abducted and although he was carrying cash, his attackers stole nothing.

The abduction of Domingo Yaxón is believed to be linked to efforts by Mayan communities to uncover the remains of relatives massacred and buried in clandestine cemeteries.

### **Forensic scientists targeted**

For some months, forensic scientists who are working to exhume many secret mass graves containing the remains of thousands of people killed during the military counter-insurgency campaign in the early 1980s have been receiving death threats. Some of those targeted include members of the *Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala* (FAFG), the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation and the *Centro de Antropología Forense y Ciencias Aplicada*, (CAFCA), the Centre of Forensic Anthropology and Applied Sciences.

On 21 February 2002, 10 copies of a typed letter arrived at the home of one forensic scientist. The letter explicitly threatened with death 11 people involved in exhumations. At the same time as the letter was issued, a

fire was started at a church in Nebaj, El Quiché Department, which stored equipment used for exhumations. Part of the church was destroyed. A few days later several of these scientists received anonymous telephone death threats against themselves and their families.

### **Death threats after UN Special Representative's visit**

On 7 June 2002, a notification threatening 11 leading human rights campaigners was sent to the offices of several organizations. The notification, signed by a group calling themselves "real Guatemalans", "*Guatemaltecos de verdad*", proclaimed, "these damned people are a stain on society, they are human rights parasites that must be exterminated in the same way that one eradicates cancer". This latest threat also made clear reference to the recent visit of Hina Jilani, the UN Representative to Kofi Annan on Human Rights Defenders, to Guatemala, and accused the human rights groups of telling lies and damaging the country's reputation. In the light of these threats, the leader of the Guatemalan

Catholic Church, Archbishop Rodolfo Quezada, stated "It is very regrettable that this is still happening in our country".

Since the attack against Celso Balán two years ago, Guatemalan human rights activists have been lobbying their government to provide them with effective protection. Measures so far offered by the government have been seriously flawed. This was demonstrated in May 2001, when two staff members of the *Familiares de los "Desaparecidos" de Guatemala*, (FAMDEGUA), Relatives of the "Disappeared" People of Guatemala, who had been provided with constant police protection to ensure their safety, were abducted in front of their offices in broad daylight after police failed to arrive to provide them with protection. It was only when put under great pressure and with the impending visit of the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders in May 2002 that the Guatemalan government began to respond to the NGOs demands. (see below).

## United Nations Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders confirms widespread attacks on activists

**H**ina Jilani, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders, issued the following press release on 12 June 2002:

“The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders, Hina Jilani, concluded on 1 June 2002 a six-day official visit to Guatemala at the invitation of the Government. The purpose of the visit was to assess the situation of human rights defenders, and specifically to examine the legal framework as well as alleged incidents relating to the defence of human rights in the country.

The Special Representative visited Guatemala city and San Marcos and met, among other Guatemalan officials, with the President of the Republic of Guatemala, the Vice-President, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Interior as well as the Minister of Labour, the Minister for Culture and Sport, the President of COPREDEH (Presidential Commission for the Coordination of Human Rights Policy), the President

of Congress, the President of the Supreme Court, the General Prosecutor and the Ombudsman. Ms. Jilani also met with high officials of the army and the police.

During her visit, Ms. Jilani met with a wide-range of human rights NGOs and a great variety of sectors representing human rights defenders, in particular peasants, indigenous people, journalists, trade-unionists,

social workers and church leaders.

Ms. Jilani ended her mission with a press conference held in Guatemala city on 31 May 2002, in which she gave her first impressions based on the facts and information gathered during the visit. Her final conclusions and recommendations will be

contained in a report on the visit to Guatemala, which will be submitted to the next session of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva (April 2003).

The Special Representative expressed concern, on the basis of information she has received, regarding the following issues:

- The existence of a climate of fear in which human rights defenders are working, which is due to the violations they are subjected to, such as threats, intimidations, disappearance and even killings. Some sectors of the society are particularly targeted: those who are seeking truth on past violations (human rights NGOs, forensic experts, judges, lawyers, witnesses); those who are fighting for economic and social rights – particularly land rights; those who are denouncing corruption; and indigenous people. The perpetrators of these attacks are reportedly illegal clandestine groups.

*Hina Jilani is accompanied by Guatemalan human rights activists during her visit to the country in May 2002.*

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Allegedly, some of them have links with State institutions, in particular the police and the army;

- The lack of respect of human rights defenders which are subject to public attacks by public officials;
- The lack of proper implementation of the peace accords, in particular the Global Accord on Human Rights. This goes together with the persistence of impunity and an increased militarization;
- The erosion of the institutions and deterioration of the global human rights situation;
- The lack of commitment of the Congress in offering guarantees for protection of human rights defenders.

The Special Representative recognized that concrete measures have been taken by the Guatemalan authorities by establishing committees and institutions dealing with human rights issues. Ms. Jilani referred in particular to the newly established special prosecutor on attacks against human rights defenders. She also recognized the important role of the ombudsman's office. However, the Special Representative considered these measures to be insufficient mainly because they suffer from lack of coordination and of political and financial support.

The Special Representative urged the Government to implement the peace accords and particularly its human rights component. Furthermore, Ms. Jilani urged

the Government to put an end to impunity for past and current violations and to conduct a thorough and independent investigation into the allegations of violations against human rights defenders and on the alleged existence of clandestine groups.

The Special Representative is deeply concerned about information received according to which death threats were sent by fax on 7 June 2001 to representatives of human rights organizations, who met with her during the visit. The fax, which was signed by ""Guatemaltecos de Verdad" (True Guatemalans), was sent to the following 11 human rights defenders: Clara Arenas, Miguel Angel Albizurez, Miguel Angel Sandoval, Nery Rodenas, Frank LaRue, Mario Polanco, Abner Guoz, Marielos Monzón, Ronaldo Robles, Rosa María Bolaños and Helen Mack. The text reportedly accused them of being "enemigos de la patria" (enemies of the State), threatened them with death and insulted them violently. The defenders were told they were only the first of a longer list. In an urgent appeal sent on 11 June 2002 to the Government of Guatemala, the Special Representative together with the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions of the UN's Commission on Human Rights expressed deep concern for the security and the physical and moral

integrity of the human rights defenders mentioned above. They referred to resolution 1994/70 of the Commission on Human Rights, which inter alia, urges governments to refrain from all acts of intimidation or reprisal against private individuals or groups who seek to cooperate, or have cooperated, with the United Nations or representatives of its human rights bodies. Finally, both experts urged the Government to take appropriate measures to investigate thoroughly these death threats and to guarantee the right to life and physical integrity of the abovementioned persons.

In view of the evidence brought to her during the visit, the Special Representative considers these further threats as very serious and requests therefore the urgent attention of the Government."

*Hina Jilani, attends mass during her visit to Guatemala in May 2002. ©Prensa Libre*

## **“It’s not a matter of meeting for the sake of holding a meeting; we want results”**

### **Dialogue between human rights groups and the Guatemalan government**

**T**he Guatemalan government has taken some positive steps to address human rights. These include an open invitation to all the UN Special Mechanisms and the recent appointment of a Special Prosecutor to investigate threats and attacks against human rights defenders.

However, many experts claim that the lack of decisive and comprehensive measures by the government to protect human rights defenders is actually contributing to the worsening of their security situation, and could even suggest that those carrying out these attacks are linked to the state.

#### **Unsubstantiated public accusations**

For example, defamatory public statements by people in positions of authority help to create a climate of hostility towards the human rights community, in which attacks against human rights defenders are seen as justified and sanctioned by the government. In September 2001, the then Minister of the Interior of the Guatemalan government, Byron Barrientos, stated to the press “we have information that there are groups that are interested in destabilizing and provoking chaos and anarchy.” He claimed that they were going to “burn down offices, principally those belonging to

non-governmental organizations”.

Two days later, the vice president of Congress stated that “The Minister of the Interior and the Director of the National Civil Police have informed us that the people who are intending to destabilize the country through confrontation belong to groups which claim to defend human rights”.

During her visit to Guatemala in May 2002, Hina Jilani, UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders repeatedly expressed her concern at such attempts to delegitimize human rights work: “I am very concerned at the attempts to discredit human

### **Legal Framework of the Action and Defence of Human Rights Defenders in Guatemala**

- 1. The Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala guarantees the exercise of all human rights including the right to organize, the freedom of expression, movement and petition.**
- 2. Article 46 of the Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala makes part of the Constitution all International Conventions on human rights that have been ratified by Guatemala.**
- 3. In the 1994 Global Human Rights Accord, the State pledged to protect human rights defenders and their organizations.**
- 4. Recommendation 41 in the Historical Clarification Commission’s report ‘Memory of Silence’ (analysing Guatemala’s 36-year internal armed conflict) calls for the promotion of legislative measures for the protection of human rights defenders.**
- 5. In Guatemala, human rights organizations can legally act as representatives or plaintiffs of the victims of human rights violations during judicial investigations and procedures.**
- 6. In Guatemala, the Human Rights Ombudsman is mandated by Congress to receive and investigate reports of human rights violations. This institution still has no department mandated to work on violations against human rights defenders.**

rights defenders and to underestimate the dangers that they are exposed to.” Immediately following the Special Representative’s visit President Alfonso Portillo discredited her findings stating that her vision was “very subjective” and that “Here in Guatemala no-one knows the absolute truth. Whoever says that they do is a liar”.

Guatemalan human rights activist, Frank La Rue, expressed his concern at such statements; “It seems to me that it is irresponsible of the President to speak like that of an international expert when democratic countries should welcome these sorts of suggestions”.

During her visit to Guatemala the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders criticised the lack of decisive action by Guatemalan Congress to protect human rights activists. Shortly after her visit a resolution tabled by one deputy seeking an announcement by Congress regarding the need to protect human rights defenders was rejected.

### **Lack of Investigation**

There has been a worrying lack of investigation of threats and attacks against human rights defenders. Investigations that

have been carried out have been seriously flawed. In a report submitted to the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, Guatemalan human rights groups stated:

“(…) We must highlight that investigations carried out both by the police and the Public Prosecutor’s office have in most cases been deficient, and in

*Human rights activists Frank La Rue and Helen Mack leave a meeting between the government and representatives of human rights organizations on 28 May 2002. ©Prensa Libre*

many cases have not even been initiated, in spite of the existence of much evidence, witnesses or details offered by the human rights defender. In the case of threats, the burden of proof is placed on the victim, who, in most cases, was not in a position to note down the registration number of the vehicle that was following him, or identify the person who was threatening him. The police and the Public Prosecutor’s office then accuse the victim of lack of cooperation and close the files.

“To date, not one case of a threat or attack against a human rights defender has been legally resolved. In a very small number of cases of killings people have been accused, but the cases have not gone to trial (...)”

### **Government response to human rights defenders demands**

On 22 March 2002, a coordinating body established by Guatemalan human rights groups presented to the government a document entitled ‘Security is not negotiable’. The document raised a number of human rights concerns regarding the current series of attacks and threats against human rights defenders and the climate of insecurity in which they are carrying out their legitimate work.

The human rights groups demanded an end to the threats, intimidation, attacks and killings of human rights defenders. They outlined concrete initiatives that the government should take as first steps towards addressing the situation:

“(…)1. Present a report on the results of the investigation carried out to identify illegal security groups, clandestine organizations and elements of



state security agencies acting outside the law.

2. Present a report on the results of the investigations into the various threats, attacks and murders, with special emphasis on threats against farmers, raids on human rights groups and academic institutions, and threats against members of religious orders and forensic anthropologists. This investigation will expose those who are materially and intellectually responsible for the threats.

3. Present a report on the security mechanisms and investigations that have been implemented for the security of human rights defenders and organizations, both in the countryside and the city. (...)"

On 16 April, representatives of the human rights movement attended a meeting with the Security Cabinet of the government, but reported that they had not received a satisfactory response to their concerns. The human rights groups agreed to postpone their next meeting until 28 May when the Security Cabinet would present a report on the results of the investigations into 'clandestine groups' and their involvement in attacks and intimidation against human rights defenders. However, the report finally presented on 28 May, that was supposed to be the first step to addressing the protection of human rights defenders, in fact contained no indications of effective investigations having been

conducted into clandestine groups. As Frank La Rue, Director of the Centro de Acción Legal de Derechos Humanos (CALDH), Human Rights Legal Action Centre stated to the press, "it's not a matter of meeting for the sake of holding a meeting; we want results".

**In protest at the lack of response by the government to their concerns some 24 human rights activists started a hunger strike on 17 May that they continued until after meeting with Hina Jilani at the end of May.**

Just three days before the arrival of UN Special

### **THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON GUATEMALA**

The Consultative Group is made up of 18 member countries, 2 observer countries and 12 international finance and governmental organizations that have all financed the peace process in Guatemala.

At the February 2002 meeting of the Consultative Group, the UN Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) presented a report which detailed the fundamental lack of commitment on the part of the Guatemalan government to address some of the most basic aspects of the Peace Agreements, such as the protection of human rights and human rights defenders, justice reform, demilitarisation and ending impunity.

According to press reports several of the donor countries present at the meeting have now tied their financial support to the implementation of the Peace Accords. The US representative, for example, stated that "the extent of our support is dependant on the willingness of Guatemalans to work together to implement the Peace Accords and to undertake the necessary reforms for improved socio-economic progress and to bring about fuller participation of all Guatemalans".

Such indications have yet to be formalized and clear benchmarks have not yet been set against which progress in the implementation of the Peace Accords can be measured.

At the conclusion of its February 2002 meeting, the Consultative Group said it would review its findings in one year's time. Country members of the Consultative Group are: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and US.

Representative on Human Rights Defenders, Hina Jilani, in Guatemala, the government announced the creation of a high level commission of public enquiry to investigate threats and intimidation against human rights defenders. This commission is made up of the Vice-president, the Minister of the Interior, the General Attorney, the Strategic Analysis Secretary of the President's office and threatened human rights activists. The establishment of this commission has since been criticised by human rights defenders who are concerned that it may have been a mere public relations exercise designed to coincide with the Special Representative's visit. In the past many such commissions have failed to

help resolve human rights cases.

**“To date, not one case of a threat or attack against a human rights defender has been legally resolved.”**

On 29 May, the Guatemalan government announced the appointment of a Special Prosecutor, Tatiana Morales, to investigate attacks, threats and intimidation against human rights activists. Human rights groups had been lobbying for some months for the creation of this post within the Office of the General Prosecutor. The move has been welcomed by members of the human rights movement who will be calling on the Special Prosecutor to ensure that investigations are

thorough and effective. It is important that the Special Prosecutor is provided with sufficient funding and administrative support to effectively carry out her role.

Guatemalan NGOs have appealed to the international community, and particularly those countries who are members of the Consultative Group on Guatemala, to play a more decisive role in the protection of human rights and human rights defenders in Guatemala: “In the light of the serious human rights crisis, in particular as regards human rights defenders, the member countries of the Consultative Group should take clearer and more decisive action to address this situation, in the framework of the Consultative Group's commitments.”

## WHAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN DO

### **Support Guatemalan human rights defenders in their recommendations:**

The following recommendations were made by Guatemalan human rights groups in their report submitted to Hina Jilani during her recent visit to Guatemala.

#### **To the Government of Guatemala:**

- ❑ The investigation, trial and punishment of those responsible for the threats and attacks against human rights defenders and reparation for the victims;
- ❑ Strengthen and ensure full independence of the investigative institutions so that those responsible for the attacks against defenders are brought to justice;
- ❑ Organize a national campaign for the legitimisation of the work of human rights defenders in the context of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders;
- ❑ Administrative sanctions should be taken against those state officials that participate in the defamation campaign against human rights defenders;
- ❑ The approval of a law for the protection of human rights defenders according to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and in the spirit of the Global Human Rights Accord of the Peace Accords;
- ❑ The creation of a national commission to remove from popularly elected bodies those responsible for human rights violations during the armed conflict, and the setting up of this commission within the government and the Guatemalan armed forces, in line with the Recommendations of the Historical Clarification Commission.
- ❑ Dismantle the Presidential High Command in accordance with the commitments of the Peace Accords;
- ❑ Reduce the military budget to the level stipulated in the Peace Accords;
- ❑ The creation of a Commission for the legislative control of the intelligence institutions in line with the agreement established in the Peace Accords Agreement on the Strengthening of Civil Authority and the Role of the Army in a Democratic Society;
- ❑ The creation of a Civil Intelligence Office in the Ministry of the Interior in line with the agreement established in the Peace Accords Agreement on the Strengthening of Civil Authority and the Role of the Army in a Democratic Society;
- ❑ The approval of a Habeas Data law in line with the agreement established in the Peace Accords Agreement on the Strengthening of Civil Authority and the Role of the Army in a Democratic Society.

#### **To the United Nations (UN):**

- ❑ Given the serious failure to fulfil the Peace Accords and, in particular, as regards human rights defenders, the General Assembly of the UN should extend the mandate of MINUGUA and once this mandate has ended, an office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights should be established to observe the human rights situation in Guatemala;
- ❑ Present to the Secretary General of the UN the request from the human rights organizations that steps are taken to create within the peace process an Ad Hoc Committee for the identification of clandestine groups and their networks.

#### **To the inter-American system:**

- ❑ To recommend a visit by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission to Guatemala to observe the situation of human rights defenders in Guatemala.

#### **To the international community:**

- ❑ In the light of the serious human rights crisis, with particular regard to human rights defenders, the member countries of the Consultative Group should take clearer and more decisive action in the framework of the Consultative Group's commitments as regards this situation.