

For Immediate Release:
March 13th, 2001

World Bank and IDB Call-In Day

to Demand Reparations and Compensation
for the Surviving Victims of the Chixoy Dam Project

Contact:

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On March 13th, 2001 NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala) activists, working with the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission, Rights Action [formerly Guatemala Partners], and Witness for Peace will conduct a call-in to the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB").

This call-in event will be held on the 19th anniversary of the March 13, 1982 massacre [the 2nd of four "Rio Negro massacres"], in which Guatemalan soldiers and civil defense patrols brutally killed 177 women and children.

By conducting a call-in, concerned citizens and activists will be pressuring the World Bank and the IDB to acknowledge their contribution to these crimes, and to make proper, and long overdue, compensation and reparations to the surviving family members of the Rio Negro community.

Between 1975 and 1985, the World Bank and the IDB made loans to the US-backed military government of Guatemala in support of the Chixoy Dam Project. By channeling \$350,000,000 to such a military regime, and by continuing with the project during the worst years of genocide, the World Bank and the IDB legitimized the repression.

Between February and September 1982, 440 villagers from Rio Negro were killed in a series of massacres, due to their resistance to being forcibly displaced to make way for the dam. Shortly after the fourth and final massacre, the land of the Maya-Achi community of Rio Negro was flooded.

The survivors received little of the largely empty promises the government offered for resettlement. Most survivors live today in conditions of endemic poverty; most suffer on-going trauma related to the massacres and forced displacement.

Both the World Bank and the IDB have refused to acknowledge their contributory role in these crimes, initially claiming that the massacres were a result of guerilla activities in Rio Negro! The UN sponsored Guatemalan Truth Commission (CEH) has directly implicated the Chixoy Dam Project as a cause of the Rio Negro massacres.

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO PHONE, FAX OR EMAIL

Demands:

- 1) compensation for land, personal and community property lost to the dam;
- 2) reparations for land and personal and community property stolen or

destroyed;

- 3) reparations for loss of life and suffering related to the repression;
- 4) reparations for 17 years of lost income due to lack of access to land and personal and communal property;
- 5) reparations for lost family support due to murdered heads of household;
- 6) reparations for psychological damages.

WHO TO CONTACT:

-- WORLD BANK

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INTERVIEWS

For interviews concerning the Chixoy Dam/ Rio Negro massacres
Reparations Campaign, contact Rights Action:
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- Grahame Russell. Tel: (416) 654-2074, info@rightsaction.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Chixoy Dam Project and the Rio Negro massacres,

1- Go to the Rights Action website www.rightsaction.org

2- Obtain a copy of the Witness for Peace report "A People Dammed".

Contact: witness@w4peace.org

3- Go to the Advocacy Project website www.advocacynet.org

For more information on this or other campaigns, please contact Carrie Ferrence from NISGUA at 202-518-7638 or nisgua@igc.org