

February 22, 2004

GUATEMALA – Chixoy Dam Reparations Campaign
Action & support needed

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list: info@rightsaction.org <<mailto:info@rightsaction.org>>

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GUATEMALA: A TINY AMOUNT OF JUSTICE?

Since the mid-1990s, Rights Action has worked on the Chixoy Dam
Reparations
Campaign, trying to get reparations and compensation from the World
Bank and
the Inter-American Development Bank, for the massacres of 444 Maya-
Achi
people and the complete destruction of the village of Rio Negro,
Guatemala,
so as to make way for the mega Chixoy Dam "development" project.

Since the late 1990s, many North Americans have had the chance to
listen to
Rio Negro survivors Carlos Chen Osorio and Jesus Tecu Osorio speak
publicly
about what happened to their home community. Over the past two years,
many
have heard Denese Becker (born Dominga Sic Ruiz) tell her story of
reconnecting with her massacred and once lovely Rio Negro.

To date, both Banks deny knowledge of and responsibility for the
death, loss
and suffering committed in the context of their project. This is
impunity
at the global level.

Related to this broader campaign, are efforts by ADIVIMA (a grassroots
human
rights organization founded by Rio Negro survivors, and supported by
Rights
Action) to have a measure of justice done for the March 13, 1982
massacre of
177 women and children (one of five massacres committed against the
villagers to make way for the flooding of the dam basin).

In September 1999, a Guatemalan court sentenced three ex-civil defence
patrollers for their participation in the March 13 massacre. The men
are
serving 50-year sentences. A bitter-sweet legal victory. Sweet, as

it provided a tiny measure of justice for so much barbarity. Bitter because the planners of the repression and genocide in Guatemala have mostly gotten off scot-free, and indeed benefited from the repression; bitter because it is the only trial (over 200,000 Guatemalans were slaughtered) that succeeded in jailing men, even if the poorest and lowest ranking ones, for participation in a massacre.

Despite all that, and the on-going poverty and death threats, ADIVIMA continues with the trial. On January 20, 2003, arrest warrants were issued against nine more ex-patrollers, for their participation in the March 13 massacre. On April 15, 2003, an arrest warrant was issued against José Antonio Solares González, who became a colonel after the Rio Negro massacres. Solares and three ex-patrollers (Miguel Sic Alvarado, Victor Gonzales Lopez, and Serapio Lajuj Cuxum) remain on the loose.

As of January 2004, there is a new government in Guatemala, ensuring that the rule of law and administration of justice will reign supreme. Quite a challenge in a country where the rich and powerful have acted with impunity and gotten away with their crimes and abuses since before the republic was formed. Yet, take a government at its word. Let them ensure that Colonel Solares is detained and put on trial. That would be a tiny step ... in the right direction.

ACTION NEEDED:

- * human rights accompaniers to attend the trial in March in Guatemala and work with ADIVIMA and other leading grassroots human rights groups
- * funds for the work of ADIVIMA, working for community development based on the rule of law and the proper administration of justice
- * letters to be sent to officials, pressuring them to ensure the detention and trial of Coronel Solares

LETTER

Please email or fax the same short letter, en espanol si pueden, to as many of the following officials, urging them to ensure the detention and trial of Coronel Solares:

US Embassy in Guatemala, Ambassador John Hamilton, Fax #s: 011-502-334-8474, 332-0065, 332-1549

Canadian Embassy in Guatemala, F: 011-502-365-1214, E: gtmla@dfait-maeci.gc.ca <mailto:gtmla@dfait-maeci.gc.ca>

Embassy of Guatemala in Canada, T: (613) 233-7188

Embassy of Guatemala in USA, Ambassador William STIXRUD, t: (202) 745-4952,

F: (202) 745-1908

Guatemalan Mission to the United Nations: T (212) 679-4760, F (212) 685-8741

WB - Donna Dowsett: ddowsettcoirolo@worldbank.org

WB - Franco Passacantando: fpassacantando@worldbank.org

WB - Gerald Carter: gcarter@worldbank.org

WB - Mario Marroquin: mmarroquin@worldbank.org

WB - Mark Cackler: mcackler@worldbank.org

WB - Minneh Kane: mkane@worldbank.org

WB - Shelton Davis: sdavis@worldbank.org

WB - Steve Maber: smaber@worldbank.org

WB - Annika Tornqvist: atornqvist@worldbank.org

IDB - Anne Deruyttere: anned@iadb.org

IDB - Carlos Sepulveda: carlosse@iadb.org

IDB - Carmen Albertos: carmenal@iadb.org

IDB - Jairo Sanchez: jairos@iadb.org

IDB - John Ferretter: johnf@iadb.org

IDB - Marcelo Antinori: marceloa@iadb.org

IDB - Peter Bate: peterb@iadb.org

PLEASE 'CC' YOUR MESSAGE TO:

Turismo-Inguat <<http://www.inguat.net/>> (Tourism Organization),

inguat@guate.net <mailto:inguat@guate.net>

Cámara de Comercio de Guatemala <mailto:Cámara de Comercio de Guatemala> (Chamber of Commerce of Guatemala), gremila@guate.net

<mailto:gremila@guate.net>

Asociación Gremial de Exportadores de Productos No tradicionales 'GEXPRONT'

' <<http://www.agexpront.com>> (Association of exporters of nontraditional

products), gremila@guate.net <mailto:gremila@guate.net>

Fundación para el Desarrollo <mailto:Fundación para el Desarrollo> (Foundation for Development), fundesa@guate.net

<mailto:fundesa@guate.net>

Asociación de Azucareros de Guatemala 'ASAZGUA' (Association of Sugar

Products of Guatemala 'ASAZGUA'), asazgua@gold.guate.net
<mailto:asazgua@gold.guate.net>
Ventanilla única para las inversiones (Investment Information),
vupi@ns.concyt.gob.gt <mailto:vupi@ns.concyt.gob.gt>, Information
<mailto:info@proguat.org>@proguat.org <mailto:info@proguat.org>
Comara de Industria de Guatemala <http://www.indistriagate.com>
(Chamber of
Industry of Guatemala), cig@concyt.gob.gt <mailto:cig@concyt.gob.gt>
Comité coordinador de Asociaciones agrícolas comerciales, industriales
y
financieras -CACIF-
(Coordinating Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial and
Financial Associations -CACIF-), cacif@infovia.com.gt
<mailto:cacif@infovia.com.gt>
Comisión Nacional de Medio Ambiente (National Committee for the
Environmental), conama@concyt.gob.gt <mailto:conama@concyt.gob.gt>

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TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK OF ADIVIMA, SEND TAX
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DONATION, MADE OUT TO "RIGHTS ACTION", TO:
USA: Rights Action, 1830 Connecticut Av, NW, Washington DC, 20009
CANADA: Rights Action, 509 St. Clair Av, W., box 73527, Toronto ON,
Canada,
M6C-1C0

Donate ON-LINE in the USA: www.rightsaction.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 416-654-2074 / info@rightsaction.org /
www.rightsaction.org

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EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL from RIGHTS ACTION

*** Book Release *** In English y En Espanol ***

"The Rio Negro Massacres", a testimonial by Jesus Tecu Osorio, a
Mayan-Achi
man who is a massacre survivor and eye-witness to the Rio Negro
massacres
and the genocide in Guatemala. The book includes reproductions of
original
drawings by the author depicting the tremendous repression of the
past.

It on sale, in Spanish or English, from our offices in Washington DC &
Toronto. Please re-distribute this information far and wide.

THE AUTHOR

Jesus Tecu Osorio is a Mayan-Achi man living with wife and children in Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala. He is a survivor of, and eye-witness to

the March 13, 1982, massacre of 177 women and children in the village of Rio

Negro. This and 4 other Rio Negro massacres were committed by the Guatemalan Army and paramilitaries, all backed by USA, in part because Rio

Negro villagers opposed forced resettlement to make way for Chixoy Dam Hydro-Electric Project, funded by World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

Jesus lost his parents and all but one sibling to the massacres.

Since

1993, Jesus has worked to seek justice for the crimes and genocide of the

past, and to heal and re-build his torn region of Guatemala. Jesus is:

-- Co-founder of ADIVIMA, a local human rights group at forefront of exhuming mass graves, building monuments to commemorate the lives of the

victims of the genocide.

-- Co-founder of Rabinal Legal Clinic, offering legal support to Achi population that has never received legal support.

-- Co-founder of Rabinal Community Museum, documenting the genocide in Rabinal and Achi history and culture.

-- Founder of the "New Hope Foundation/March 13" providing primary school

and scholarships for Achi and impoverished youth, and building a bi-lingual

and multi-cultural Middle School.

-- Participant in legal case of genocide, in Guatemalan courts, against

military generals of the early 1980s.

-- Leader in struggle for reparations from World Bank and Inter-American

Development Bank for damage and death due to Chixoy Dam Project.

- Author of auto-biographical testimony of years of repression, enslavement,

survival and protagonism to build a just and fair country.

TO ORDER:

In the UNITED STATES: US\$15 per copy [includes shipping in the US].

Make

check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to: Rights Action, 1830 Connecticut Av, NW, Washington DC, 20009.

In CANADA: Cdn\$25 per copy [includes shipping in Canada]. Make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to: Rights Action, 509 St. Clair Av, W. box73527, Toronto ON, M6C-1C0.

*** BULK RATES available

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Grahame Russell, 416-654-2074, info@rightsaction.org