

NO MORE POLITICS & BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH WAR CRIMINALS IN GUATEMALA (OR ANYWHERE)

Rights Action - August 24, 2011
GUATEMALA – Genocide Impunity Watch

BELOW:

A letter sent to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture calling for an investigation into the role that Guatemalan presidential candidate ex-General Otto Perez Molina played in the commission of genocide, torture and disappearances in Guatemala during the worst years of State repression and terrorism in the 1980s.

WATCH - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdV1WJJEFHE&feature=email> - a Democracy Now interview – english and spanish – with Francisco Goldman about how Otto Perez Molina is also accused of being one of the intellectual authors of the 1998 assassination of Bishop Juan Gerardi.

BELOW:

also, the list of individuals and organizations that are supporting this investigation.

Please re-send this letter to your own organizations, listservs, social networks, etc. Please send copies to your own politicians and media, to keep critical attention on the forthcoming (undemocratic) “elections” in Guatemala.

The underlying point to all of this, we believe, is that of no business and politics as usual with war criminals in Guatemala (or anywhere). This goes for governments, companies, investors, the World Bank, the United Nations, etc.

If you or your organization can fund the amazing people and organizations in Guatemala that continue to demand and fight for truth, memory and justice, despite the on-going repression and impunity, please contact us (info@rightsaction.org).

If you want more information about the on-going work and struggles for truth, memory and justice in Guatemala, contact us.

Thank-you.

Grahame Russell, co-director
info@rightsaction.org

NO MORE POLITICS & BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH WAR CRIMINALS IN GUATEMALA (OR ANYWHERE)

August 22, 2011

Sr. Juan Méndez, U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture
OHCHR, United Nations
CH-1211 Ginebra 10, Suiza
sr-torture@ohchr.org
tdawson@ohchr.org

scronin@ohchr.org

Dear Sr. Juan Mendez,

Below, you will find a list of organizations and individuals, as follow-up to the Allegation Letter that was submitted to you on July 6, 2011, concerning allegations against ex-General Otto Perez Molina (now presidential candidate in Guatemala) of being an intellectual and material author of torture, disappearances and genocide in Guatemala.

The people and organizations listed below support the Allegation Letter, and will follow this investigation closely, given the universal importance of seeing justice done for war crimes and other crimes against humanity, given the global demand for 'No more politics & business as usual with war criminals in Guatemala (or anywhere)'.

We look forward to hearing from you about your investigation.

Thank-you,

Grahame Russell, co-director, Rights Action
info@rightsaction.org / 1-860-352-2448

Cc:

Annie Bird, co-director, Rights Action, annie@rightsaction.org

Jennifer K. Harbury, Human Rights Attorney, jharbury@gmail.com

Kelsey Alford-Jones, Director, Guatemala Human Rights Commission-USA, kajones@ghrc-usa.org

ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTING THIS INVESTIGATION

GENOCIDE-DISAPPEARANCES-TORTURE ALLEGATION LETTER – SIGN-ONS

Grahame Russell, Annie Bird, Karen Spring of Rights Action [Canada & USA]

Guatemala Human Rights Commission [USA]

Jennifer Harbury [USA]

Varias companeras y companeros de Guatemala quienes – por razones de seguridad – no pueden usar sus nombres

Joe Emersberger, Canadian Auto Workers Union [Canada]

Katherine Maich, UC-Berkeley, Member, UAW 2322 [USA]

Phyllis Ponvert [USA]

Bill Howson, Amicus Foundation [Canada]

Blase Bonpane, Office of the Americas [USA]

Kathleen Ruff, RightOnCanada.ca [Canada]

Julie Webb-Pullman, Wellington Zapatista Support Group [New Zealand]

Oberlin, in Solidarity with El Salvador (OSES) [USA]

Greg Norman, Guatemala Solidarity Project [England]

Will Lotter, DRCS, Davis, CA [USA]

Francisco Ramirez Cuellar, SINTRAMINERCOL y FUNTRAENERGETICA [Colombia]

Organización Comité Hondureño Acción por la Paz (COHAPAZ) [Honduras]

Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras, COPINH [Honduras]

Aaron Pollack [Mexico]
Pável Uranga, Comunicador popular [Ecuador]
Organización Fraternal Negra Hondureña, OFRANEH [Honduras]
Otros Mundos, AC/Amigos de la Tierra [México]
Convergencia de Movimientos de los Pueblos de las Américas (COMPA) [Mexico]
Movimiento Mexicano de Afectados por las Represas (MAPDER) [Mexico]
Red Mexicana de Afectados por la Minería (REMA) [Mexico]
Esteban (Stephen) Bartlett, Misiones Agrícolas [USA]
Consejos Indígenas Nahuatl y Chorotegas [Nicaragua]
Associação de Favelas de São Jose dos Campos, Angela Aparecida da Silva [Brasil]
Dra. Gabriela Sánchez Gutiérrez, Instituto Mora, Cooperación Internacional y Desarrollo [México]
Centro Memorial Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. [Cuba]
Ruben Solis, Southwest Workers Union [USA]
Greg Grandin, New York [USA]
Maribel Rivas Vasconcelos [Mexico]
Environmental Network for Central America [England]
PAPDA [Haiti]
CNA Colombia (Coordinadora Nacional Agraria/Vía Campesina) [Colombia]
Rosalba Piazza [Italy]
GALFISA. Grupo América Latina, Filosofía Social y Axiología [Cuba]
ZigZag Young Women's Resource Centre [Australia]
Comite de los Pueblos Qeqqhis, El Estor [Guatemala]
Dra. Coralía Gutiérrez Álvarez, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla [México]
Asociación Bufete Jurídico Popular de Rabinal [Guatemala]
Center for Alternative Mining Development Policy, La Crosse, Wisconsin [USA]
Kirstin Büttner [Germany]
Kathrin Zeiske [Germany]
Hondureños por la Democracia (Hondurans for Democracy), Washington DC [USA]
Clara Ferri [Mexico]
Guillermo Almeyra, CLACSO, profesor universitario y periodista [Argentina]
René Reeves, Professor of History, Fitchburg State University, MA [USA]
Renate Rueb, Berlin [Germany]
Consejo de Mujeres Nahuatl [Nicaragua]
Bret Thiele, Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [USA]
SOA Watch [USA]
Susan Campbell, Retired professor of Caribbean history [Canada]
Kathleen O'Hara [Canada]
John Conrad Jones [Canada]
Kathleen Dill [USA]
Barbara Robertson [USA]
Sasha Wood, Social Worker [Canada]
Latin American-Canadian Solidarity Association of London [Canada]
Colombia Action / CT [USA]
Frente de Defensa Miguelense, FREDEMI [Guatemala]
Latin American Solidarity Committee, Buffalo [USA]
Judith Deutsch, Science for Peace, Toronto [Canada]
MMM Americas [Varios países de las Americas]
Sharon Hallas [Mexico]
Roxana Hart [USA]
Peter Murphy, SEARCH Foundation [Australia]
Walter Sherwood [USA]

CODECA [Guatemala]
Lynda Sullivan [Ireland]
COECOCEIBA-Amigos de la Tierra [Costa Rica]
Harry Smaller, Toronto [Canada]
Dieter Misgeld, Professor, University of Toronto [Canada]
John Sniegocki, Professor, Xavier University, Cincinnati [USA]
Margarita María Muñoz Conde [México]
Phyllis Creighton, Toronto [Canada]
Fondazione Guido Piccini per i Diritti Dell'uomo – Onlus [Italia]
Laura Westra, Professor, University of Windsor [Canada]
Ottmar Zimmer, Guatemalagruppe Nürnberg / Nuremberg [Germany]
Jennifer N. Costanza, Brown University, Providence [USA]
Entrepueblos [Guatemala]
Asociación para el Desarrollo Integral de las Víctimas de la Violencia, en las Verapaces, Maya Achí, ADIVIMA [Guatemala]
Companero, Consultor, Desarrollo Humano y Rural [Guatemala]
Salvadorian Canadian Association of Ottawa and National Capital Region – ASCORCAN [Canada]
Guatemala Working Group, Ontario Public Interest Research Group, McMaster [Canada]
Dr. Edwin E. Daniel, FRSC, Victoria [Canada]
Laura Barker [Canada]
Centro de Reflexiones Nim Poqom, Cobán [Guatemala]
People for Peace, London [Canada]
International Human Rights Clinic, Western New England University School of Law [USA]
Janis Alton [Canada]
Debra Stoleroff, Plainfield, VT [USA]
Lenca Federation and Maya Lenca House [Australia & New Zealand]
Grupos de mujeres, Totonicapán [Guatemala]
Pam Kryskow, BC [Canada]
Nadine HAAS, GIGA Institute of Latin American Studies, Hamburg [Germany]
Denis Doherty, Communist Party of Australia [Australia]
Red de solidaridad con el Pueblo de Guatemala en Zurich [Suiza]
Larry Wartel [Canada]
Eline Ghysels, Broederlijk Delen [Bélgica]
Educators for Peace and Justice, Toronto [Canada]
Jewish Voices Opposing Zionism, Toronto [Canada]
Jennifer Cornally [Ireland / Guatemala]
Lidia Climent [España]
Marta Hernandez [Canada]
Erin Beck, Brown University, Providence [USA]
Harold Garrett-Goodyear, Professor, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley [USA]
Christiane Treeck y Grupo Esperanza e.V. [Alemania]
Margaret A Greene, Nova Scotia [Canada]
Steve Porter, UNBC [Canada]
Blanca Blanco Abellan [España, Mexico]
Bruce Miller, Professor, Western New England University School of Law [USA]
Educators for Justice, Kitchener, ON [Canada]
Camp Micah: Leadership for Peace and Justice, Bancroft, ON [Canada]
Collettivo Italia Centro America – CICA [Italia]
Therese Gerstenlauer [Alemania]
MISEREOR [Alemania]

Kerstin Thies [Germany]
Zeljko Crncic [Alemania]
Franziska Scheidemantel [???)
Verena Rassmann [Austria]
Nicole Cruz de Echeverría Loebell [Alemania]
Steffen Lehnert, periodista [Alemania]
Tony Weis, Professor, University of Western Ontario, London, ON [Canada]
Hanna Reich [Alemania]
Anka Mason, Northampton, MA [USA]
James Goldie, Vancouver, BC [Canada]
Elena Doreen Eifel [Alemania]
Renate Gerstenlauer [Alemania]
Mildred Menchu-Johnson, Louisville, KY [USA]
James Flynn [USA]
Matthias Fichtenbauer, Viena [Austria]
Wolfgang Fischer, Vendersheim [Alemania]
Ruth Beckers, Brussels [Belgium]
Arne Devriendt, Meise [Belgium]
Michel Kluyskens, Brussels [Belgium]
Valentin Franck [Alemania]
Fabian Flues [Alemania]
Harald Ihmig [Alemania]
Plataforma de Solidaridad con Chiapas y Guatemala, Madrid [España]
Agnes Efficand [Alemania]
Leticia Hillenbrand [Alemania]
Uli Stelzner [Germany/Alemania]
Diana Kordon, Equipo Argentino de Trabajo e Investigación Psicosocial -EATIP-, Argentina
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Argentina
Hermann y Brigitte Schmidt, Munich [Alemania]
Susan Hermenau, Berlin [Alemania]
Dr. Andrea Althoff [Alemania]
Katharina Otto [Alemania]
Liv Patte [Alemania]
Bianca Oebel [Alemania]
Stephan Beuting [Alemania]
Stella Thuns, Berlin [Alemania]
Andrea Berger [Alemania]
Jasmine Bischke [Alemania]
Dr. Anja Lieb [Alemania]
Ute Simmerling, Oficina de la Paz Goettingen [Alemania]
José Mejía-Urzuá [Canada]
Andreas Henrichs [Alemania]
Stefanie Kern [Alemania]
Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee of the Sisters of Providence of St.
Vincent de Paul, Kingston, Ontario [Canada]
Verna C. Sanchez, Northampton, MA [USA]
Adrian Busuttil (Canada)
Laura Mallinson (Canada)

Stephenie Chambers [Canada]
Chelsea Leigh-Ann Rose, Delhi, Ontario [Canada]
Andrea Lammer, Leipzig [Alemania]
Kelly Williamson, Fanshawe College in London, ON [Canada]
Steven Lopez, Fanshawe College in London, ON [Canada]
Claudette Bois, University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) [Canada]
Sofie Steinberger [Alemania]
Eve Routhier [Canada]
Malte Neuser [Alemania]
Yhanic Mauricette (Saint Lucia)
Suad Fadous [Canada]
Lorraine and Charles McNeil [Canada]
Andrea Bertele, Munich [Alemania]
Ella von der Haide, Pullach [Alemania]
Undine Schmidt [Germany]
Maria Pauthner [Alemania]
INKOTA-red ecuménica, Berlin [Alemania]
La Asociación Elote de Alemania [Alemania]
Alexander Fischer [Alemania]
R. Swoboda [Alemania]
Magdalena Blazek [Alemania]
Lydia Koblofsky [Alemania]
Astrid Camille Winchester, Fanshawe College, London, ON [Canada]
Oliver Rentmeister [Germany]
Carolina Hernández Casasfranco, London, ON [Canada]
Katharina Gallo Ramírez, Leipzig [Alemania/Germany]
Candy Castellon [Canada]
Susanna Sutter [Suiza]
Celia Peral Espina [España]
Dr Jochen Scheidemantel, Wurzburg [Alemania]
Guatemala Partnership Committee of the Congregational Church of Needham, MA
[USA]
Alessandro Chiodaroli, Piacenza [Italia]
Hans Leipold [Alemania]
Atlantic Regional Solidarity Network [Canada]
Movimiento De Trabajadores/as Compesinos/as (MTC), San Marcos [Guatemala]
Mildred Menchu-Johnson [???)
Ursula Storcks [Germany]
Vilma Caceres [Canada]
Yvonne Massoth [Germany]
Selvas.org [Italia]
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De Comunidad a Comunidad, Bellingham, WA [USA]
Gabriela Dieguez, Milwaukee WI [USA]
Lionor Hurtado [USA]
Guatemala Solidarity Committee Boston [USA]
Peter H.A.M. Otten, Maastricht
Maya Alvarado
H.I.J.O.S. [México]
Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala



(Photo by Grahame Russell: July 2011, Guatemala City)

PRESS RELEASE

NO MORE 'POLITICS & BUSINESS AS USUAL' WITH WAR CRIMINALS IN GUATEMALA (or anywhere)

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FILE GENOCIDE & TORTURE COMPLAINT WITH U.N. SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR AGAINST GUATEMALAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE GENERAL OTTO PEREZ MOLINA

On July 6, 2011, three human rights defenders presented a formal report of torture, or "Allegation Letter", to Professor Juan Mendez, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture.

The letter alleges that General Otto Pérez Molina, now a leading presidential candidate in Guatemala, was directly involved in the systematic use of torture and acts of genocide during the long civil war in Guatemala – as an "intellectual author" and as a "material author". Specifically, he was on the ground and in command in the Ixil triangle in 1982 during the village-by-village massacre campaign, and he was directly responsible for the long term torture and disappearance of prisoner of war Efraín Bámaca Velásquez. Protesters in Washington D.C. recently demanded the cancellation of his visa to the United States.

The report is accompanied by 1982 film footage

(http://www.youtube.com/verify_age?next_url=http%3A//www.youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3DIE9OBmLdce) showing the then-Major Pérez Molina being interviewed by journalist

Allan Nairn in the Ixil triangle. The battered bodies of several prisoners lie nearby on the ground. Although Pérez Molina was using a different name, he is identifiable by his voice and features. He is also well remembered in the Ixil.

According to the 1999 UN Truth Commission report, "Memoria de Silencio", the army carried out daily acts of torture, genocide and terror in the Ixil region, and razed between 70 and 90% of the villages there. Pérez Molina currently presents himself as a reformist and "peace candidate".

Otto Perez Molina was also the National Director of military intelligence (D-2) on March 12, 1992, when Efraim Bámaca, a Mayan resistance leader, was captured alive and taken to the Santa Ana Berlin military base. According to evidence cited in the Allegation Letter, a high level intelligence meeting was held at the same base that day, and the officers decided to subject Bámaca to a secret 'intelligence program' for valuable prisoners of war. This consisted of long term torture in order to break the prisoner psychologically and force him or her to collaborate with the D-2 forces.

Bámaca was severely tortured for more than 2 years: always in D-2 compounds, under orders of the D-2, and by D-2 specialists. He was also transported throughout the country by the D-2, and twice detained by a secret D-2 death squad based in the Capital at the notorious "La Isla".

The Allegation Letter alleges that Pérez Molina was the key intellectual author of these and similar war crimes. U.S. declassified documents confirm that the D-2 systematically tortured all prisoners of war, then either executed them or forced them to collaborate. In 1993 the CIA reported 300 such prisoners. See attached memorandum regarding the Bámaca case.

The Allegation Letter requests an investigation into General Pérez Molina's responsibility for such war crimes, and was presented by the following human rights defenders:

Annie Bird, Co-Director, Rights Action, annie@rightsaction.org
Jennifer K. Harbury, Human Rights Attorney, jharbury@gmail.com
Kelsey Alford-Jones, Director, Guatemala Human Rights Commission-USA, kajones@ghrc-usa.org

July 6, 2011

ALLEGATION LETTER

Mr. Juan Mendez
Special Rapporteur on Torture
c/o Office of the High Commission of Human Rights
United Nations office at Geneva
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Re: Guatemala and General Otto Perez Molina

Dear Mr. Mendez,

We would like to begin this letter by thanking you for your many decades of crucial human rights work. We are writing today to express our growing concern about the torture record of General Otto Perez Molina of Guatemala. As you know, he is currently a Presidential candidate for the September 2011 elections.

However, there is very strong evidence that he was in a command position in the Ixil triangle in 1982, when acts of torture, terror and genocide were daily events in that region. Moreover, the evidence shows that he was the key intellectual author of the forced disappearance and long term torture of Efraim Bamaca Velasquez in the 1990s. He is implicated in a number of other serious war crimes as well.

For many years he was able to conceal his past through the use of false names, the destruction of records, and of course, intimidation. However, the evidence has slowly but surely come to light.

At this time, General Perez Molina claims to be a reformist and a leader for peace. He has completely silenced the press as well as his opponents in Guatemala. The Mayan survivors in the Ixil area remember Perez Molina only too well, but cannot speak without placing their families in jeopardy. Moreover, a large percentage of the Mayan survivors cannot vote. Worse yet, as discussed below, his military allies have heavily obstructed the prosecutions of the emblematic war crimes cases, a special program which began in late 2009.

Each of us has long been involved in human rights work in Guatemala, and we have observed the accelerating chaos and violence during the last year with growing alarm. We believe that the lack of official recognition of Perez Molina's and other military leaders' serious involvement in crimes against humanity is contributing heavily to the current crisis. The unlawful impunity which has so long shielded the military is now threatening the civilian institutions, the rule of law and the fragile transition to democracy.

We of course do not ask you to become involved in the electoral process in any way. We do however, ask that quite apart from the elections, and whatever their results, your offices investigate and help to break the long standing silence regarding Perez Molina's substantial involvement in torture and genocide in Guatemala.

BACKGROUND:

As you know, the United Nations sponsored Truth Commission issued a very thorough report on the war crimes which had occurred in Guatemala during the more than 35 years of internal conflict. (Comisión de Esclarecimiento Historico de Guatemala, or CEHG, "Memoria de Silencio")

Specifically, the Commission found that the government security forces were responsible for a campaign of genocide against Guatemala's Mayan citizens, and had routinely engaged in acts of torture and terror. Some 660 massacres had been carried out, and 200,000 persons had been extra-judicially executed or forcibly "disappeared". The military was found responsible for 93% of those human rights violations, with 4% undetermined and 3% the responsibility of the URNG forces. The army intelligence division received special criticism for its role in the devastation.

Most high level military leaders have managed to retain their impunity for the war crimes, as a result of their continuing use of violence and terror against all lawyers, witnesses, judges and prosecutors who attempt to bring them to justice.

EVIDENCE AGAINST GENERAL OTTO PEREZ MOLINA:

1. In 1982, Perez Molina held the rank of Major, and was in a command position in the Ixil triangle. As the Truth Commission documents, half of all the massacres occurred during this period and in this region.

Between 70 and 90% of the villages were razed. Acts of torture, murder and mutilation were daily events. The survivors in the region recognize and remember him only too well. Moreover, a documentary film from the year 1982 shows Allan Nairn interviewing him in that region in 1982. Nearby lay the terribly battered corpses of four prisoners. Although Perez Molina uses the false name of Tito Arias, he can be easily recognized both by his voice as well as his facial features.

Annie Bird, of Rights Action, sends you the attached video (http://www.youtube.com/verify_age?next_url=http%3A//www.youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3DIEN9OBmLdcE) for your review. Ms. Bird is also very familiar with the survivor community in the Ixil area, as well the proceedings in the genocide case in Spain. Although the survivors cannot speak publicly without endangering their children, Ms. Bird can certainly help you access any needed information and witnesses.

We note moreover that a recently disclosed U.S. embassy cable also confirms that Perez Molina was in a position of command in the Quiche department during this time period.

2. In 1992 Otto Perez Molina was the national director of the military intelligence division (known as G-2 locally and D-2 nationally), and was the intellectual author of the long term torture and eventual forced disappearance of prisoner of war Efrain Bamaca Velasquez, a Mayan URNG commander, also known as Comandante Everardo. His wife, Jennifer Harbury, is including an annotated explanation of the case, together with a memo specifying the evidence of his involvement.

Suffice it to repeat here that Mr. Bamaca was captured alive on March 12, 1992 and secretly submitted to a special intelligence program for the long term torture of high value prisoners. He survived for more than two years, was moved from base to base around the country, always in the hands of intelligence officers, was transported in intelligence helicopters, and was concealed in intelligence compounds. Intelligence "especialistas" carried out his torture. He was twice held in the capitol by the official intelligence death squad called the Comando, located in the notorious "La Isla". All of the involved intelligence officials would have been acting under the supervision and orders of Otto Perez Molina. Moreover, General Perez Molina participated in the March 12, 1992 intelligence meeting at the Santa Ana Berlin base during which it was decided to conceal Mr. Bamaca's capture by falsely announcing that he died in combat.

These facts had long been confirmed not only by eye witness accounts, military documents, and forensic reports, but also by declassified U.S. documents, which confirm his capture and the D-2's systematic policy, pattern and practice of torturing prisoners of war, then either executing them or forcing them to work as intelligence collaborators.

(One CIA document reports a 1993 conversation with high level military officers, who confirmed that there were more than 300 such secret prisoners in custody, for example. Other U.S. documents report them being held in water pits, thrown from helicopters, summarily executed and thrown into unmarked graves, or in some cases retained as special long term prisoners of the intelligence division.)

In 1994, moreover, the U.S. issued a formal demarche to the Guatemalan government, confirming that Bamaca had been captured alive in March 1992, and was lightly but not seriously wounded. In 2000, the Inter-American Court issued a lengthy ruling in the case, finding the government of Guatemala responsible for Bamaca's torture and forced disappearance. Ms. Harbury will be happy to supply you with copies of any of these documents.

3. As we also indicated, General Perez Molina is implicated in a number of other very serious human rights violations. Most of these we are not yet authorized to discuss, but we can connect you with appropriate intermediaries. We also direct your attention to the disturbing information presented by Francisco Goldman in his book "The Art of Political Murder", chronicling the investigation of the assassination of Bishop Gerardi.

As you know, the Peace Accords ended the armed conflict but did not bring peace to Guatemala. We are especially concerned with the ongoing crisis in the judicial system. When the government first moved to advance the prosecutions of a number of key emblematic cases, organized crime networks strongly tied to influential military figures responded by trying to position one of their allies into the position of Attorney General.

This resulted in the resignation of Carlos Castresana, Director of the CICIG, in the spring of 2010. After he disclosed the candidate's close ties to networks of corruption and abuse, the recently appointed Attorney General was forced to resign.

Apparently in response, human heads appeared in strategic locations in the capitol, one on the doorstep of the Congress. Thanks to the sacrifices of Lic. Castresana, at the end of 2010, after almost six months of intense work by human rights organizations, Claudia Paz, a jurist recognized for her long struggle to reform the justice system in Guatemala, was named as Attorney General.

The military then focused its attention on the courts and judges. In the beginning of 2010, the Constitutional Court, apparently bowing to heavy pressure, began to issue remarkable rulings, defying international law and direct orders from the Inter American Court.

In the Bamaca case two amparos were granted which directly contradicted the Corte IDH resolutions.

In the case of the Rio Negro massacre, the same court asked for reconsideration of the obediencia debida defense, despite the clear holdings of Nuremberg.

Meanwhile, the magistrates of the Supreme Court are intent on complying with international norms, but fear for their lives. In a historical advance, on June 20 a General was formally accused of participation in acts of genocide.

However, all advances will be lost under a military administration which will doubtless move to swiftly change the Fiscal General. In short, the entire transition to the rule of law is in jeopardy.

Accordingly, we are asking your offices to carry out an investigation of the long term involvement of General Otto Perez Molina in torture throughout the war, including but not limited to the systematic use of torture in the Ixil triangle and other areas in the 1980s, as well as the systematic torture of all prisoners of war, especially as National Director of the intelligence division in 1992.

Once again, we will be happy to connect you to key witnesses, but have omitted their names here in order to protect them and their families.

Please let us know if we can offer your further information or documentation. We await your response, and thank you once again for your lifelong commitment to the defense of human rights.

Sincerely,

Annie Bird, Co- Director, Rights Action, annie@rightsaction.org
Jennifer K. Harbury, Human Rights Attorney, jharbury@gmail.com
Kelsey A. Jones, Director, Guatemala Human Rights Commission-USA, kajones@ghrc-usa.org

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

for Guatemalan organizations working for truth and memory, and for justice for war crimes and human rights violations, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

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