

New York Times article

“Corruption long endemic in Guatemala” ~ Guatemala President Softens Stand on Expelling Graft [Endemic Corruption and Impunity] Prober

(Share: <http://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/corruption-long-endemic-in-guatemala-nyt-articleunity-prober>)

... and business-as-usual from the governments of the US and Canada, from Tahoe Resources, Goldcorp and a host of mining and hydro-electric dam companies, from the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, ... as yet another corruption “crisis” rises up in Guatemala, linked to the exploitation, violence and repression; All this, next door to the on-going corruption in Honduras, linked to the exploitation, violence and repression.

Guatemala President Softens Stand on Expelling Graft [Endemic Corruption and Impunity] Prober

By the AP, Aug.28, 2017

https://mobile.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/08/28/world/americas/ap-lt-guatemala-un-president.html?_r=0&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F

GUATEMALA CITY — President Jimmy Morales appeared to soften his stand Monday in his effort to oust the U.N. anti-corruption commissioner in Guatemala, a move that left him battered him with criticism at home and abroad.

Hours after he got support from his own Cabinet on the expulsion order, Morales indicated a willingness to abide by court decisions on his action, which had touched off anger and raised threats to the future of his administration.

"People of Guatemala, as president of the republic I have and will respect the decisions of the other branches of government. The rule of law should always prevail," he wrote in his Facebook account.

One day earlier Morales announced he was expelling Ivan Velasquez, but his order was quickly blocked by Guatemala's highest court and international disapproval poured in. One Cabinet minister quit in protest and the president fired the foreign minister for refusing to expel Velasquez.

On Monday, Guatemala's chief prosecutor, Thelma Aldana, who with Velasquez had announced Friday they would seek the removal of Morales' immunity from prosecution to make way for a campaign finance investigation, expressed her unconditional support for Velasquez in radio interviews and at a news conference.

Morales had issued a statement after the court ruling standing by his order to kick Velasquez out of the country, but many said the legal standoff could undermine the president whichever way it went — either overturning the expulsion order or bringing a wave of international pressure on his government.

While ruffling the feathers of politicians and officials, the U.N. panel and local prosecutors have built popularity among many Guatemalans over the last decade by attacking the corruption long endemic in Guatemala, including helping force the previous president from office two years ago.

Indigenous groups blocked a major interchange on the Inter-American Highway on Monday to show support for Velazquez and small street protests by students grew as the day wore on.

"I protest because I reject the corruption in the country," said Andrea Rodriguez, a public policy student at San Carlos de Guatemala University. "This is a moment that calls for all of us to participate and mobilize in a way to participate."

A short time later, Aldana said at a news conference that she was willing to meet with Morales, but said the president must obey the Constitutional Court's suspension of his order while it considers its final ruling in the case.

And while Morales had said he stood by his expulsion order, there was no sign the government was trying to make good on removing Velasquez, who had not commented publicly.

"Velasquez is the symbolic factor in the fight against impunity," said analyst Renzo Rosal. "To remove him would be an even bigger fire because it is going to give space for organized crime."

One of the few voices outside Morales' own party to support his move was his predecessor, Otto Perez Molina, who was forced from the presidency in 2015 by a corruption investigation led by Aldana and Velasquez. In jail awaiting trial, Perez Molina said Monday that Velasquez must go.

Why Hondurans and Guatemalans Flee North

The exploitation, poverty and repression, the corruption and impunity of Honduras and Guatemala are "American" and "Canadian" issues. The U.S. and Canadian governments, the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, and North American companies and investors (including pension funds), maintain profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan and Honduran regimes, turning a blind eye and/or directly contributing to environmental harms, exploitation, repression, corruption and impunity that force so many to flee their homes and country, decade after decade.

Get Informed / Get Involved

- Speakers: Invite us to give presentations about these issues and struggles
- Delegations: Join educational, human rights delegations to Guatemala and Honduras to learn firsthand about these issues and struggles

Recommended Daily News

www.democracynow.org; www.upsidedownworld.org; www.theintercept.com;
www.telesurtv.net/english; www.rabble.ca;

Recommended books

Open Veins of Latin America, by Eduardo Galeano; A People's History of the United States, by Howard Zinn; Lies My Teacher Told Me, by James Loewen; Capitalism versus The Climate (This Changes Everything), by Naomi Klein; Drug War Capitalism by Dawn Paley; Stolen Continents, by Ronald Wright;

Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & U.S.)

To support the community, human rights and environmental defense work of community organizations in Honduras and Guatemala, struggling for justice and fundamental political and economic transformation from the local to national to global levels, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- U.S.: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

Credit-Card Donations: <http://rightsaction.org/donate/>

Donations of stock? Write to: info@rightsaction.org

Please re-post and publish this information
