



## GUATEMALA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/USA

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### ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS IN GUATEMALA

#### 1. Be a visible advocate for human rights.

If you are in the Washington, DC area, please be ready to visibly support human rights in Guatemala in front of the Guatemalan embassy.

Be on lookout for urgent actions from GHRC and other groups and take action.

#### 2. Help spread the message.

Consider what resources you have to help either Guatemalans fleeing repression or Guatemalans still in the country. Do you have a place of worship or a classroom that would like to hear from Guatemalan defenders risking their lives for their rights? Is there a way you can amplify the voices of Guatemalans and counteract the narrative spun by the Guatemalan government and its lobbying firms that all is well in Guatemala? Sharing our posts and other human rights organizations' and journalists' posts on social media, if you use social media, is helpful. A small step anyone can take is writing a letter to the editor of a news source that covers Guatemala well and commending their coverage. Can you make a donation, small or large, to GHRC to help us accompany and protect defenders in Guatemala and raise awareness about the human rights situation in Guatemala?

#### 3. Encourage our government to take action.

The US government could send a strong message of support for human rights by 1) **voting against loans to Guatemala in multilateral lending institutions**; 2) **canceling the proposed [investment initiative](#) announced by US government officials** in recent months; 3) **suspending Development Finance Corporation support for projects in Guatemala**; and 4) **withholding aid of any sort to a military and police force** increasingly used to silence dissent.

#### What you can do to push for these steps:

1. Make your congressional representative aware of the importance of [HR 9620, the Chixoy International Financial Institution Reparations Act of 2022](#). It is in the House Financial Services Committee, after being introduced last December by Rep. Chuy Garcia and co-sponsored by Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Rep. Ilhan Omar, Rep. Mark Pocan, and Rep. Raul Grijalva. Is your member of Congress a member of the [Financial Services Committee](#)? The importance of the bill is that it **requires development banks to issue reparations to victims of human rights violations associated with projects they have financed and also requires them to provide human rights and corruption risk assessments of any proposed project**. With the courts co-opted by corrupt networks, Guatemala's Indigenous peoples, the ones who suffer most from large-scale

development projects, are more unprotected than ever. Raising awareness about this bill and requesting support for it **reinforces the danger Indigenous people in Guatemala face** in today's climate.

2. Express concern to your members of Congress and [directly to the White House](#) about the idea that [increasing investment](#) will somehow right the issue of corruption in Guatemala. The investment initiative could be viewed instead as rewarding the current Guatemalan administration and the business elite who are complicit in corruption and in the persecution of human rights defenders, judges, attorneys, journalists, etc. The US government has placed its hopes in "a Business-Enabling Environment Action Plan, which will leverage new private sector investments to promote anti-corruption, good governance, and labor compliance while fostering a healthy investment climate." Multiple NGOs, including GHRC, wrote a [letter](#) to the Biden administration with questions and concerns about this plan. **By echoing these concerns, you will help hold US businesses and their Guatemalan partners, as well as US government agencies, to account. The Guatemalan president has been accused of corruption in two separate cases. The closing of civic space has set off international alarms. Guatemala's defenders are less protected than ever. Pushing large-scale infrastructure projects in Guatemala when the conflicts over land are intensifying could have disastrous results.**
3. **Make your congressional representatives and/or members of the [House Foreign Affairs Committee](#) and [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#) aware of the dangers of Development Financing Corporation funding for projects in Guatemala, especially extractive and so-called clean energy infrastructure projects. Led by GHRC, 18 NGOs last year [expressed concern](#) to the DFC and met with a group of DFC representatives, but the Biden Administration has [recently announced increased DFC funding](#) for clean energy infrastructure and other infrastructure projects in Guatemala. These types of projects typically displace Indigenous communities, create social conflict, lead to attacks on leaders and others opposing the project, and drive, rather than decrease, migration.**
4. **Contact your congressional representatives, especially in the Senate, and push for an end to all aid to the Guatemalan military and police, including aid for military education and training (IMET).**