



GUATEMALA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/USA

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The Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA (GHRC) is a nonprofit, grassroots, solidarity organization dedicated to promoting human rights in Guatemala and supporting communities and activists who face threats and violence. GHRC was founded in 1982 amid the turmoil of Guatemala's internal armed conflict. GHRC documents and denounces abuses, educates the international community, and advocates for policies that foster peace and justice.

CONTEXT

In 2022 and 2023, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights expressed serious concern about the independence of the judiciary in Guatemala and the weakening of human rights institutions. Democracy itself hung in the balance until January 14, 2024, when Guatemala's new president, Bernardo Arévalo, was inaugurated. The Arévalo administration is making efforts to address corruption, strengthen institutions, and protect the long-ignored rights of the country's near-majority Indigenous population. Sectors of Guatemalan society opposed to change are resisting advances. The full support of the international community is essential.

OUR GOALS

- GHRC supports the empowerment and full participation of marginalized communities. These include Indigenous communities seeking to reclaim illegally expropriated ancestral lands and working to protect their environmental and cultural, social, and economic rights. We support the rights of women and girls to live a life free of violence, and we support the Guatemalan government's efforts to protect and improve conditions for all marginalized groups and ensure respect for their rights, including the right to a clean and healthy environment and to sustainable and inclusive development.

In particular—

- *GHRC supports the demand for the recognition of plural and diverse realities; promotes the empowerment, inclusion, and autonomy of Indigenous communities; and supports the strengthening of protection for Indigenous sovereignty and territorial integrity.*
- *Calls for the prompt implementation of a public protection policy for human rights defenders so that Indigenous rights defenders will safely be able to advocate for and protect their land and territory rights, as well as their social, cultural, and economic rights.*
- *Insists on respect for the right to free, prior, and informed community consultation, as stipulated in Convention 169 of the International Labor.*
- *Supports Indigenous-led initiatives for sustainable resource management and conservation, as well as bilingual education in Indigenous languages, a commitment specified in the 1996 Peace Accords.*
- *Supports increased investment in health and efforts to address child malnutrition.*
- *Advocates for the recognition of internal forced displacement as a serious problem affecting Indigenous communities and calls for a solution to land conflicts that does not involve forced eviction, which is prevalent and violates international norms.*
- *Supports the rights of migrants to protection and freedom from violence.*

Through these integrated advocacy efforts, GHRC aims to contribute significantly to the realization of human rights and sustainable development goals in Guatemala, creating a more inclusive, equitable, and just society for all its inhabitants.

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