



GUATEMALA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/USA

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Dear Friend,

On September 15, Guatemalan Independence Day, the US State Department [congratulated](#) Guatemala on its independence while praising it for its ever closer cooperation with the Trump administration. For the first time in more than four decades, Guatemala has purchased weapons from the United States and, in the words of the State Department, is “building one of our hemisphere’s most extensive migration partnerships.” The Guatemalan government has yet to address conflicts around land that have led so many to migrate. Violent evictions that violate international norms continue, in spite of the United Nations rapporteur’s urgent call last year for a moratorium on evictions. Progress has been made in the last two months in at least one area, though. In a key transitional justice case involving the forced disappearance of Luz Leticia Hernández, a former police commander was sentenced to decades in prison.

Please find this story and more below.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

- **Guatemala Receives First US Weapons Shipment in Decades**

On September 21, Guatemala [received](#) the first [shipment of weaponry](#) from the United States government in decades, following the lifting of restrictions that had limited US military sales to the Guatemalan Army. The \$5.03 million [acquisition](#), made through the US Foreign Military Sales program, included 2,699 M4A1 rifles, 59 M240 machine guns, 57 grenade launchers, and 11,220 30-round magazines. A [prior delivery](#) of grenade launchers was made in June. The equipment, according to the Guatemalan government, will be used to bolster the fight against drug trafficking, organized crime, and arms and human smuggling networks, as well as to strengthen border surveillance. The machine guns, valued at \$3.61 million and referred to as the “first lot,” are destined for the newly created Jungle Operations Brigade (Brigada de Operaciones de Selva), which will operate in the Petén. Guatemala purchased the items entirely through its own budget, which for defense spending has [increased steadily](#) since 2024.

The purchases form part of a broader program of cooperation between the US and Guatemalan militaries, including [joint training exercises](#) between US Army Green Berets and Guatemalan Kaibiles. Guatemala’s Defense Minister, Henry Saenz, [announced](#) the lifting of the US embargo on military sales to Guatemala last March.

Foreign Military Sales to Guatemala were [restricted](#) in 1977 because of the egregious human rights violations committed by the Guatemalan Army during the internal armed conflict, and the restriction was maintained for decades because of [ongoing concerns](#) about human rights violations and about the misuse by the Army of US-provided equipment. President Bernardo Arévalo, who [attended the ceremony marking the delivery of the weapons](#) and, in fact, posed with a rifle, said Guatemala has been rebuilding its democracy and that the military has changed significantly since 1978. In 2018, however, the Guatemalan government [used](#) jeeps provided by the United States to intimidate human rights defenders and diplomats, including US embassy officials, as the [US Government](#)

[Accountability Office](#) has documented, and in 2021, the jeeps were reportedly used to [repress a protest](#) of the Fenix mine. As a Department of Defense report [quoted](#) in *The Hill* states, “After the initial allegations of misuse, DOD conducted a policy review and found that the Guatemalan government had engaged in repeated misuse of DOD-provided Jeeps. In response, on February 12, 2019, DOD decided to stop providing any additional security cooperation equipment and training to the IATFs [Inter-Agency Task Forces].”

- **US Attorneys & Prosecutors from Nine Districts Visit Guatemala**

A delegation of senior officials from the US Department of Justice visited Guatemala on September 22, marking the first visit of its kind. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Jorgan Andrews welcomed to Guatemala five United States Attorneys, appointed by President Trump, and lead prosecutors from nine federal districts. According to a [statement](#) published by the US embassy, their presence in the country “reflects the seriousness with which the U.S. government addresses transnational crime and our commitment to confronting it together with Guatemala, by pursuing drug traffickers and human smugglers, their enablers, and those who provide them protection, including narco-linked politicians.”

The delegation met with President Bernardo Arévalo, Attorney General Gabriel García Luna, and Minister of the Interior Marco Antonio Villeda to strengthen coordination and reaffirm the US commitment to supporting Guatemala’s investigative capacity and judicial processes to build criminal cases for prosecution in US courts. According to acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brian Skaret, of the US Department of Justice’s Criminal Division, the DOJ is “working with our Guatemalan law enforcement partners to strengthen cooperation against terrorist organizations and in alien-smuggling cases, secure more extraditions of US fugitives and bring criminals to justice, no matter where they operate.” The delegation included federal prosecutors from the Southern District of California, District of Arizona, District of New Mexico, Western District of Texas, Northern District of Texas, Southern District of Texas, Eastern District of Texas, Southern District of Florida, and Northern District of New York, along with senior leaders of the US Department of Justice’s Criminal Division, represented by Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brian Skaret, Joint Task Force Alpha (JTFA) and Vulcan (JTFV), and officials from the DEA, FBI, and HSI. The Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT), represented by Director Erik Peterson, coordinated the visit. Their visit follows a [visit](#) in July by Co-Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Andrew Bailey, aimed at “deepening bilateral cooperation against narco-trafficking networks, disrupting transnational criminal organizations, and countering terrorist threats, including Barrio 18 and Mara Salvatrucha 13, that threaten both the American and Guatemalan people.”

GOVERNANCE

- **Nominees for Comptroller General Selected**

After four rounds of voting, the Nominating Committee for Comptroller General has [chosen](#) six nominees for Comptroller General of Accounts, to serve from 2026–2030. The list of nominees will be sent to Congress for an early October vote. Congressional President Luis Contreras said the vote could be held on October 6 or 8. The new Comptroller will take office on October 13. The Comptroller General oversees and ensures the proper use of public funds, playing an essential role in democratic oversight, the protection of public resources, and the prevention of corruption. The special mission of the Organization of American States for the Strengthening of Democratic Institutions in

Guatemala, which had issued a [statement](#) in August urging the 27-member [Nominating Committee](#) to increase transparency, [reiterated](#) its call to preserve the transparency of the process and to base the decision on the competence, recognized integrity, and independence of the person who will assume this responsibility.

Three of the six candidates on the shortlist currently work at the Comptroller General's Office; two others have experience in tax auditing, and one serves on the Board of Directors of the Superintendency of Tax Administration. The shortlist includes Luis Antonio Marroquín Pimentel, Elfego Odair Castañón González, Marco Antonio Vélez González, Óscar Alberto Hernández Romero, Jorge Giovanni Castellanos Gudiel, and Julio Otoniel Roca Morales. Three of the finalists faced formal objections during the selection. Castellanos Gudiel was questioned over inconsistencies in his academic record and his wife's job at the Comptroller's Office; Castañón González was questioned about hiring his brother and his wife; and Marroquín Pimentel was questioned about irregular notarial records in his sworn statements.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Violations of Land Rights

- **PNC Attempts Second Eviction of Indigenous Community**

Guatemala's National Civil Police (PNC) on August 26 attempted for the second time in a year to evict the Indigenous community in [Macho Creek](#), Livingston, Izabal. According to [Prensa Comunitaria](#), police attempted to evict over 100 Q'eqchi' and mestizo families from the Macho Creek community from land they claim historic rights to. The Criminal Court of First Instance in Puerto Barrios issued the eviction order, and police who arrived in dozens of patrol cars, accompanied by representatives of the Human Rights Procurator's Office and the Public Ministry, attempted to persuade the community members to leave the land. The community defended their right to the land and refused to leave. A [police officer](#) was killed, and other officers were wounded when, according to Macho Creek residents, armed people from neighboring communities arrived as residents were dialoguing with police and [opened fire](#) on the residents. The eviction operation was then suspended. Following the attempted eviction, the community called on the Arévalo government to take action on their behalf and asked that evictions be halted and that no community member be prosecuted for the events of August 26. "They know we weren't the ones who fired shots. We were peaceful," residents told *Prensa Comunitaria*. Since its first registered census appearance in 1913, Macho Creek has faced numerous threats from cattle ranchers, forestry services, and large landholders.

- **Pachoj Community Faces Eviction & Death Threats**

Kiche' families in the community of Pachoj, in Santa Cruz del Quiché, denounced an eviction scheduled for September 17, which they said would be the eighth attempt to force them from their ancestral lands. Indigenous leader and environmental activist Lolita Chávez spoke out in a [video](#) against the scheduled eviction, which she said was driven by interests in forest exploitation. She said a man named Evaristo Reyes had forged documents, carried out shootings, and issued serious threats against the Indigenous community and the Council of Kiche' Peoples (CPK). According to Chávez, Reyes operates a powerful local illicit network that exploits systemic weaknesses in Guatemala's regional government, the judiciary, and the property registries to seize these communal lands. He reportedly deploys armed groups to escalate the conflicts between police and Indigenous community

members. Lolita Chávez in the video emphasized that the land is sacred to the Pachoj community. A [previous](#) eviction attempt was scheduled for July.

- **CCDA Calls for Moratorium on Evictions**

Guatemala is facing one of the most acute agricultural crises in decades, [according to](#) the Campesino Committee of the Highlands (CCDA) and the Campesino Unity Committee (CUC). Given the gravity of the situation, on September 2, the organizations [called for](#) an end to evictions; the implementation of concrete and urgent measures to immediately mitigate the impacts of drought; and the prioritization and reinvigoration of the Agrarian Agreement President Arévalo signed with Indigenous and campesino leaders at the beginning of his term. As the organizations pointed out, this year there have been 69 days without rain and a 33 percent reduction in rainfall during the first rainy season. As a consequence, 138 municipalities have suffered crop losses, affecting 236,447 families, and more than 13,900 cases of acute malnutrition have been reported.

The Agrarian Agreement, signed by President Arévalo in February 2024, was [designed](#) to address agrarian conflicts, facilitate access to land, support family-based peasant economies and non-agricultural production, and implement the Comprehensive Rural Development Policy. The Executive Branch committed to fulfilling it within a specific timeframe, the first 100 days of its term, and yet has failed. The organizations have recorded at least 14 violent evictions in different communities undertaken in favor of extractivism and monocultures since President Arévalo took office, affecting approximately 1,500 families, who now live without food, housing, health care, security, or education. The evictions are “backed by a co-opted justice system that systematically criminalizes Indigenous and peasant communities in favor of extractive companies and the expansion of monoculture plantations—all without complying with United Nations guidelines that establish “the obligation of States to refrain from forced evictions and to protect against evictions from homes and land.”

“The judiciary orders evictions,” their [statement](#) goes on, “without guaranteeing due process, without the possibility of defense, without verifying the legality of eviction requests, and without complying with commitments enshrined in the Constitution. Furthermore, the Executive Branch fails to guarantee the human rights of evicted families and compliance with United Nations guidelines on evictions. Land concentration and the expansion of monoculture farms are stripping farmers of their best farmland; evictions are even depriving them of marginal plots. And the Agrarian Agreement, which was meant to break this cycle, remains unfulfilled. These are not three parallel crises: they are a single structural problem—the lack of genuine agrarian reform—manifesting on three fronts: climate, institutional violence, and state inefficiency.”

During his official visit in 2025, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing Balakrishnan Rajagopal called for Guatemala to impose an [urgent moratorium on evictions](#) until effective safeguards are in place.

- **Global Witness Reports Eight Land Defenders Murdered in 2025**

According to Global Witness, eight environmental and land defenders [were murdered](#) last year in Guatemala. Although this number represents a significant drop from the number in 2024, when Global Witness recorded twenty murdered, on a per capita basis, Guatemala remains one of the four most dangerous countries for environmental defenders in the world. In that respect, Guatemala is tied with Nicaragua. Only Honduras and Colombia have higher rates of land and environmental defender murders per capita.

The Guatemalan defenders murdered in 2025 include, among others, Abel Hernández Ramírez, who was [killed](#) together with his son, Hanswer Adolfo Gómez Marroquín, while defending their land rights during an eviction; [Marco Antonio Zuleta Quevedo](#), a forest ranger in the Sierra de las Minas biosphere, and [Misael Mata Asencio](#) and [Víctor Manuel Colindres](#), who were assassinated after investigating and protesting a nickel mine in Livingston, Izabal.

Violations of the Right to Justice

- **USAC-Ramón Cadena Case Repeatedly Delayed**

In August, the Tenth Criminal Court [suspended](#) the intermediate-stage hearing for the third time in the case against human rights lawyer Ramón Cadena and University of San Carlos students Christopher Morales Estrada and Pedro Ros. Judge Victor Cruz, who has been [sanctioned for corruption](#), had an alleged scheduling conflict. The court previously suspended the hearing because the prosecutors missed the May 11 date. The trial date is now set for March 8, 2027. At this stage of the proceedings, the judge will decide whether the prosecution has presented sufficient evidence for the defendants to stand trial. The repeated suspensions have prolonged the restrictions imposed on the defendants, without allowing them to challenge the prosecution's case or obtain a definitive resolution.

Cadena, Morales, and Ros are among the students, professors, workers, and lawyers prosecuted in the “USAC Takeover: Political Spoils” case after participating in or supporting protests against the disputed 2022 election of Walter Mazariegos as university rector, the highest-ranking academic administrator. In 2022, Walter Mazariegos was accused of a fraudulent election in which “accredited members of electoral bodies were prevented from entering” by police and hooded individuals wielding bats, allegedly affiliated with Mazariegos. “Only voters affiliated with the INNOVA group were considered, which does not even reach two-thirds of the 135 accredited voters, making the election fraudulent,” said [Camilo García](#), the student representative to the CSU for Chemistry and Pharmacy. Cadena was detained for 11 days in 2025 and remains subject to house arrest and other restrictions. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has [described](#) the prosecution of members of the university community as part of a pattern of criminalization against those who participated in peaceful protests and defended university autonomy. The Public Ministry maintains that the occupation of university facilities pursued political objectives and involved [criminal conduct](#). The continuing delays undermine the defendants’ right to be tried within a reasonable time and prolong the punitive effects of the proceedings before any determination of guilt.

- **Stuardo Campo’s Hearing Delayed for Fifteenth Time**

The preliminary hearing in the Zolic case against former anti-corruption prosecutor Stuardo Campo was [suspended](#) in late September for the [fifteenth time](#). The Public Prosecutor’s Office has requested that he be sent to trial for an alleged breach of duty in the investigation he carried out centered on the Santo Tomas de Castilla trade zone (known as ZOLIC). Only nine of the scheduled hearings in the case against him have taken place. Reportedly, the only arguments that remain to be presented are the arguments by his defense team that could lead to the dismissal of the case. With that presentation completed, Judge Victor Cruz—who is broadly considered [corrupt](#)—would have to rule on the merits of sending Campo and two other former prosecutors to trial or closing the case. The [repeated delays](#) in the case have forced him to remain in detention.

Campo has been in pretrial detention since December 1, 2023, facing charges in three separate cases. The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has found his deprivation of liberty to be

arbitrary and has [called for his immediate release](#). In early July, the first case against him, known as Alfa Siete case, ended with an acquittal, but on July 13 the Fourth Appeals Chamber overturned the ruling and ordered that the proceedings be repeated, a decision that Campo's legal team is challenging.

- **Hearing for 1982 Disappearance of Jesús Saloj Panjoj Delayed**

On August 19, after two delays, the [initial hearing](#) that was to take place in the case concerning the 1982 detention and [disappearance](#) of teacher Jesús Saloj Panjoj was immediately adjourned because the defendants, Clodoveo Domínguez de León and Edwin Rolando González Ochoa, both former Mobile Military Police officers, failed to appear. The previous hearing, held in October 2025, had also been adjourned after Judge Mynor Moto ordered a suspension of the criminal prosecution against Edilberto Letona Linares, Clodoveo Domínguez de León, and Edwin Rolando González Ochoa, pending a ruling by a panel of judges on whether the National Reconciliation Law should apply.

- **UN Includes Guatemala in Report on Reprisals**

On August 20, the United Nations Secretary-General released his [yearly report](#) on reprisals against people who cooperate with the United Nations on human rights. The report, which covers 2025, includes Guatemala as a country that has carried out such reprisals, largely against judges, prosecutors, and officials linked to the work of the UN-backed International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). The report details 14 Guatemalan cases. Describing a "disturbing pattern of criminalization," the UN report notes that national and international arrest warrants were issued in May 2025 for former Attorney General Thelma Aldana; the former head of the Special Prosecutor's Office against Impunity (FECI), Juan Francisco Sandoval; and former FECI prosecutors Eva Siomara Sosa Pérez and Amy Mayra Lissette Girón Rodas, as well as others who had played a key role in the investigation of the Odebrecht case. As the report makes clear, INTERPOL rejected the international arrest request for Sandoval on March 27, 2026, leading the Supreme Court of Guatemala to nullify previous arrest warrants. Girón's family was allegedly intimidated and under surveillance for the latter half of 2025, and she continues to receive threats.

The UN report found that reprisals continue against former prosecutor Stuardo Campo and against judges Carlos Ruano Pineda, Erika Aifán Dávila, Yassmín Barrios Aguilar, and Pablo Xitumul Paz. Barrios remains in Guatemala but is barred from participating in judicial events. Xitumul remains suspended from judicial functions. While his case remains at a preliminary stage, his security detail has reportedly been reduced. Aifán and Ruano remain in exile due to the risk of arrest. Claudia González Orellana, a lawyer who formerly worked with the CICIG, has been prosecuted for an alleged abuse of power related to a high-profile investigation. The UN is currently concerned with unjustified delays, repeated hearing suspensions, and an alleged bias by the judge related to her case. In January 2026, her defense sought permission for her to travel abroad for work, which was not met with opposition. Later that month, the court revoked her non-custodial measures, requiring her to attend hearings. Her hearing has also been postponed; the original hearing, scheduled for May 5, 2026, has been postponed until May 12, 2027.

Virginia Laparra, former FECI chief in Quetzaltenango, served prison sentences in Guatemala, leading the UN to classify her detention as arbitrary. Laparra was released in January 2024 but received a second conviction in July of the same year. She left Guatemala due to the risk of detention, and during

the period of 2025-2026, her convictions remain in place. Prosecutors have sought financial reparations against her, and on July 5, 2025, the appeals chamber declared her in contempt, leading the court to rule in favor of the request by the Public Prosecutor's Office to seek an international arrest warrant through INTERPOL. At the time of the report, her first conviction remains under appeal. Former FECI prosecutor Samari Gómez Díaz faces allegations against her that she leaked confidential information to a former FECI chief. She was acquitted on June 14, 2023, but in October of that year, an appeals court ordered a retrial. Her case currently remains in the appeals stage, and she faces the possibility of returning to prison. The UN says that the prolonged case has caused significant damage to her professional and family life.

The report draws on the work of Margaret Satterthwaite, the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, who [visited Guatemala](#) in May 2025. She concluded that the way these cases are pursued "converts prosecution into persecution." According to [Human Rights Watch](#), more than 50 justice officials remain in exile.

PROGRESS TOWARD JUSTICE

- **Cifuentes Cano Sentenced for Forced Disappearance**

Juan Francisco Cifuentes Cano, the former commander of the Special Reaction and Operations Brigade of the now-defunct National Police, has been sentenced to decades in prison for the forced disappearance of Luz Leticia Hernández Agustín and Ana María López Rodríguez. The Eighth Criminal Sentencing Court's September 17th [ruling](#) was unanimous: 50 years in prison, with credit given for time already served. Although the court established criminal liability, it did not find sufficient evidence to convict on charges of crimes against humanity. Previously, the Human Rights Prosecutor's Office and private prosecutors had asked the court to impose a 170-year prison sentence. The Court ordered the Public Prosecutor's Office to continue the investigation and criminal prosecution regarding other individuals who may have participated in the events. The trial began in May and included more than 30 hearings.

Luz Leticia Hernández Agustín and Ana María López Rodríguez, along with Leandro Gabriel Calate Temú, were detained during a police operation in the Monterreal neighborhood of Mixco on November 22, 1982. Hernández, an economics student, and the two other women were targeted because of their involvement with the urban insurgency against the violent dictatorial regime under General Efraín Ríos Montt (as described by Peace Brigades Guatemala [here](#)). Hernández disappeared on the day she turned 25. Hernández's and López's whereabouts remain unknown. Calate, on the other hand, was presented before a special military tribunal and died at the Military Hospital in January 1983.

The prosecution also [requested](#) dignified reparations for their families, and on September 22, the court [granted](#) many of the requested reparations. Cifuentes Cano, as part of these reparations, has to issue a public apology in a widely circulated newspaper; install a commemorative plaque on the wall of the Polytechnic School (Escuela Politécnica); the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior must include the case in their curriculum for training new male and female officers in the army and the PNC; Cifuentes Cano must pay Q500,000 (about \$65,500) to each of the plaintiffs for non-pecuniary damages; and the court's ruling must be published in a widely circulated newspaper. The court did not grant the prosecution's request that Cifuentes Cano clarify the whereabouts of the two young women who were his victims.

- **Former Military Commissioner Sentenced in Rancho Bejuco Case**

On September 21, former military commissioner Nicolás Orrego Orrego was found guilty of participation in the [Rancho Bejuco massacre](#). He was not sentenced to prison, however; after reviewing reports from the National Institute of Forensic Sciences that pointed to irreversible cognitive decline, the High-Risk Court “D” ruled that Orrego be interned in the Carlos Federico Mora Mental Health Hospital. Orrego, who served as mayor of El Chol, Baja Verapaz, the year after the massacre, was charged with murder and crimes against humanity for participating in the killing of 25 Maya Achi people, many of whom were children, on July 29, 1982. Prosecutors allege that he provided information, logistical support, and his home for the military operation. The court found that he sought to remove the bodies from the scene in order to conceal the killings, which he allegedly helped former members of the Civil Self-Defense Patrol carry out. Orrego was indicted in November of last year, after turning himself in, but was released from pretrial detention in January because of his cognitive decline.

On August 17, the High-Risk Court “D” began a special [proceeding](#) to establish the facts of the case, assess Orrego’s level of participation, and determine whether to impose security measures rather than a conventional criminal sentence. The court kept the proceedings [confidential](#) while considering security measures for Orrego. The decision to close the trial prevented survivors, observers, and the press from following the case. Survivors’ organizations expressed concern that holding the proceedings behind closed doors restricted their rights to information and public participation after more than four decades of seeking justice for the massacre, in which the army and military commissioners tortured and burned alive 25 people, including 17 children, because the men from the community refused to join the Civil Self-Defense Patrols. After locking women, men, and children into a house, military forces threw explosives into the house. Those who survived that attack were thrown into a pit that had been dug by members of the Civil Self-Defense Patrol, where they were shot. In 2023, former military commander Juan Ovalle Salazar was [sentenced](#) to 20 years for crimes against humanity. Eight other defendants were acquitted.

- **Trial Advances Against Police Charged with Murdering Gay Couple**

The High-Risk Court “B” in the past two months has continued the [trial](#) of seven former National Civil Police officers accused of participating in the alleged extrajudicial execution of Guatemalan citizen Eldin Leonel Choc Xi and Canadian citizen Milton Nelson Santamaría. The two men had been detained by police officers in San Andrés Itzapa, Chimaltenango, on April 18, 2024. Santamaría died from an abdominal aorta rupture caused by severe trauma, while Choc’s body was found several days later in a ravine. The official cause of Choc’s death was strangulation. The trial began on July 7 and has continued with testimony from police officers and other witnesses concerning the men’s detention, physical abuse, and deaths, and the alleged attempts by the officers to conceal the crimes. According to prosecutors, both men were tortured before being killed.

Evidence presented during the investigation included recordings in which Choc can reportedly be heard calling for [help](#) while being beaten. One police officer allegedly refused to participate and preserved recordings that were later provided to police internal affairs. LGBTIQ+ rights [advocates](#) have described the case as an example of state violence against a particularly vulnerable population. The investigation has also raised suspicions about potential accomplices from the local Municipal Department of Firefighters, who may have assisted in transferring Santamaría from the site of his death at the substation. Many of the defendants have attempted to shift [blame](#) to the chief of police and the chain of command rather than the subordinate officers. Others, charged with failure to act (crimes of omission), claim not to have known about the violent acts, despite having driven one of

the victims to the substation where they were subsequently murdered. On September 22, two human rights workers and a former district police commissioner, Julio Fuentes, testified in the case. Saul Orellana, of the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office, spoke as well. Closing arguments are expected by October 5, and a [verdict](#) by mid-October.

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 documents and denounces abuses, educates the international community, and advocates for policies that foster peace and justice.