

via fax: 1-202-522-1677 Mr. James D. Wolfensohn The World Bank, President	via fax: 1-202-623-3096 Mr. Enrique Iglesias The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), President
via fax: 011-502-251-2218 Juan Luis Florido Attorney General of Guatemala	via fax: 011-502-362-0237 Carlos Vielman Minister of the Interior, Guatemala

September 26, 2004

We are extremely concerned that the government of Guatemala is bringing charges against the leaders of the Organization of Communities Affected by the Chixoy Dam (*Coordinadora de Comunidades Afectadas por la Represa Chixoy*). This occurs just days after the government signed an agreement with the organization to establish a working group to negotiate compensation and reparations owed to the communities affected by the Chixoy hydroelectric dam construction (1975-1985).

In 1982, almost 400 Maya Achí men, women, and children from the village of Rio Negro were tortured, raped, and massacred by the Guatemalan Army, to enable the building of the Chixoy hydroelectric dam. Since the construction and flooding of the dam basin, the surviving people from the 17 villages have lived in conditions of poverty and trauma. Inadequate replacement land has produced widespread hunger; villages downstream are flooded without warning; and the lack of a bridge and safe boats has cut off access to communal lands. Meanwhile, the Guatemalan National Electrification Company (INDE) has benefited from profits generated off the flooded land, which is still the property of the Mayan communities.

The survivors have been demanding reparations for the past 20 years. Now that INDE has been privatized by the World Bank, the new private electric companies are not recognizing priority agreements to provide free electricity to the villagers. No electricity means no water pumps, which means many people are going without safe drinking water.

On September 7, 2,000 Mayan-Achí displaced villagers occupied the Chixoy hydroelectric facility. After 29 hours, their peaceful action succeeded in getting a joint agreement signed by the Guatemalan government, INDE, MINUGA (the UN team in Guatemala), and the government's Human Rights Ombudsman's office. Now the government is pressing charges against the leaders who organized the peaceful occupation of the hydroelectric power plant.

Therefore, we demand that the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank

- strongly urge the Guatemalan government to drop all charges against the leaders of the Organization of Communities Affected by the Chixoy Dam;
- designate senior officials to participate in the reparations working group established September 8, 2004
- negotiate, in good faith, for full compensation and reparations owed by the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Government of Guatemala to the communities and survivors of the Chixoy dam construction .

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai, Coordinator

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The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: