

via fax: 011 502 2411 9124/2411 9326
Lic. Juan Luis Florido
 Attorney General of Guatemala

via fax: 011 502 2413 8658
Adela Camacho de Torrebiarte
 Minister of Interior of Guatemala

June 16, 2007

Dear Sirs:

We are extremely concerned for the safety of **Edit Corado, Liliana Tzin, Olympia Chata** and other staff of **Ixqik Women's Association** following the murders of two family members of Edit Corado. The association has been promoting women's rights and the political participation of women in El Petén Department for the last nine years.

On June 3 at 5:30 pm, two men entered the home of Ixqik's outreach worker Edit Corado, where her family keeps a small shop in the town of El Chal. One man entered one of the family rooms where he fatally shot her mother **María Cristina Gómez** (also a human rights defender) and her brother **José Corado Gómez** in the back of the head. **Edit Corado** was wounded in her left shoulder, right hand and left leg.

These murders followed a series of incidents threatening Ixqik staff during the past month, which include:

- May 13-20: **Olga Urizar, Evely Valladarez** and other Ixqik workers were repeatedly followed and saw men watching their homes.
- May 18-31: Four Ixqik members received eight phone calls; some asked for the whereabouts of staff members, others were open threats.
- May 25: Ixqik member **Margarita Tux** received a text message: "Just you wait...I'm going to do it."
- June 1, 10:15pm: Two drunken men walked into the corridor leading to the apartment where Ixqik staff member **Olga Urizar** lives. They stood by her door for a few minutes loudly shouting threats for her to come out. At the same time, Ixqik Director **Iris Perez** received a phone call in which she only heard a man laughing loudly.
- June 2, 6:00am: Ixqik staff member **Martha Arauz** received a call from a woman asking for Ixqik colleague **Eulalia Herrera Garcia's** phone number. When Martha said that she did not have the phone number, the woman told her she was Clara, Eulalia Herrera's aunt. Eulalia Herrera has no aunt names Clara.

We again remind you that human rights defenders have the right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

In light of the preceding facts we **strongly urge** you to

- order a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the June 3 killing of María Cristina Gómez and José Corado Gómez, the wounding of Edit Corado and the intimidation of other Ixqik staff, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take immediate and effective measures to guarantee the safety of all the human rights defenders working for Ixqik, according to their own wishes.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
 Coordinator

Copies: Ixqik Women's Association ~ via fax: 011 502 2232 2651
 Ambassador Jose Guillermo Castillo, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
 Ambassador James Derham, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
 Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk, US State Department ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
 Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States ~ fax: 202-526-4611
 U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and U.S. Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Ryan, Sutton, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 136/07 Guatemala

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