

via fax 011 502 2413 8658
Carlos Vinicio Gomez Ruiz
Minister of the Interior of Guatemala

via fax 011 502 2230 6033
Rosa Maria Salazar Marroquin
Head of Special Prosecutor's Office on Human Rights

February 21, 2008

Dear Sir and Madam:

Once again we, members of the InterReligious Task Force, feel compelled to write regarding our grave concern for the safety of **Fredy Peccerelli**, head of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG), his brother **Gianni Peccerelli**, his sister **Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso**, his brother-in-law **Omar Giron de León**, the laboratory coordinator for the FAFG, and other members of the FAFG.

On February 2, Omar Bertoni Giron received a text message that stated that security would be taken away and that "Omar, Ginni, Bianca and Fredy will die." This threat was received the same day that the newspaper Siglio XXI published an article reporting a statement by the Deputy Minister of the Interior announcing a general review of police personnel assigned to personal protection duties.

The numerous death threats to Fredy Peccerelli and other members of the FAFG are a result of their work to exhume mass graves of those killed by the Guatemalan military and their civilian adjuncts in the early 1980s. Not coincidentally, another article in Siglio XXI on February 2 stated that testimony was due to be given in before a Spanish court this month by witnesses to the Guatemalan genocide during the 1980s.

These are not new threats. We have previously written to Guatemalan officials about threats to Fredy Peccerelli, his family members and others working with FAFG (May 26, 2003, Sep 21, 2005, Jan 23, 2006, Apr 11, 2006). We must remind you again of the right of human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

We therefore urge that you

- take immediate measures to offer all the protection needed to the individuals named above and to the offices of FAFG, in accordance with the requests made by the IACHR in 2002 and the IA Court HR in 2006;
- conduct an immediate and thorough investigation into the threats described above, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- account for the failure to conduct adequate investigations into previous threats against members of FAFG.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

CC via fax: FAFG: Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation ~ via fax: 011 502 2254 0882
Ambassador Jose Guillermo Castillo, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
Ambassador James Durham, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
Paolo Carozza US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ fax: (202)458-3992
Courtney Turner, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich and U.S. Representatives Latta, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Regula, Ryan, Tubbs Jones ~ via email

UA 238/05 update Guatemala

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