

via fax 011 502 2411 9124

Lic. Jose Amilcar Velasquez Zarate

Attorney General and Head of Public Prosecutor's Office of Guatemala

via fax 011 502 2413 8658

Francisco Jose Jimenez Irungaray

Minister of the Interior of Guatemala

December 4, 2008

Dear Sirs:

We are gravely concerned for the safety of **Miguel Arturo Albizures Pedrosa**, Vice-President of COMUNICARTE, **his family and members of the student organization Comunidad Estudinatil No'j (No'j)**.

On October 20, Miguel Arturo Albizures filmed a demonstration against a government rally by relatives of persons disappeared during Guatemala's internal armed conflict and other activists, including members of No'j. Following the demonstration, two members of No'j were followed by a purple pickup truck. On the morning of October 25 another No'j member was abducted near her home by men in an identical truck. Its license plates showed it to be a government vehicle. She was pulled into the back seat by three men in balaclavas holding knives, who asked her repeatedly, "What are you up to?" They kept her face pressed against the window, then pushed her out without stopping.

On October 30 at 8 pm, gunmen in a Honda Civic pulled up outside the house of Miguel Arturo Albizures, walked into the courtyard and opened fire on the house. Over 50 bullets of various calibers were later recovered at the scene. Fortunately, no one was injured. It is evident that this incident is a direct result of Miguel Arturo Albizures' position with COMUNICARTE, which has made a number of recordings of exhumations of mass graves from the internal armed conflict. These recordings have been presented as evidence in court and shown on television. On February 13, 2007 we wrote to you about the burglary of the COMUNICARTE offices. No progress has been made into the investigation of this incident nor has anyone been brought to justice.

We therefore urge that you

- order an immediate and thorough investigation into the October 25 abduction of the No'j member and the October 30 shooting at Miguel Arturo Albizures' house, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- ensure that immediate, effective and appropriate measures are taken to guarantee the safety of members of No'j and of Miguel Arturo Albizures and his family in strict accordance with their wishes.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

CC: COMUNICARTE ~ US mail
Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
Stephen McFarland, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2334-8477
Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
Paolo Carozza, US member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
US Senators Brown & Voinovich ~ via email
US Representatives Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Regula, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 309/08 Guatemala

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