

May 24, 2014

via FAX: 011 502 2411 8168/9210

**Lic. Thelma Esperanza Aldana Hernández**

Attorney General of Guatemala

Dear Attorney General Aldana Hernández:

We are deeply troubled about the armed attack on April 13 against environmental human rights defenders **Edwin Alexander Reynoso** and his 16-year-old daughter **Merilyn Topacio Reynoso Pacheco** in the municipality of Mataquescuintla in Jalapa Department. Merilyn Topacio was killed and Edwin Alexander Reynoso was hospitalized with four bullet wounds to the chest and stomach.

Both father and daughter are activists in the Peaceful Resistance in Defense of Natural Resources of Mataquescuintla, which was organized in resistance to Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine in neighboring San Rafael las Flores. Canada-based Goldcorp holds 40% of Tahoe Resources' shares; the Escobal project is operated locally by Minera San Rafael, a Tahoe subsidiary.

The Reynoso family has been at the forefront of the region-wide struggle in defense of the right to prior consultation, self-determination and human rights since the arrival of Tahoe Resources to the southeastern departments of Jalapa and Santa Rosa in 2010. Communities living in the area of the mine have been peacefully opposing the project through marches and community referenda. In the municipality of Mataquescuintla, more than half of the eligible voters participated in a vote in November 2012 in which 96% (some 10,000 people) voted against mining.

We are very concerned about the ongoing violence and persecution against human rights defenders and community leaders opposing Tahoe's mine project. It is vitally important that the attack against Edwin Alexander Reynoso and the assassination of Merilyn Topacio Reynoso not remain in impunity.

For these reasons, we **strongly urge that you:**

- conduct a full and impartial investigation into the attack described above, publish the results, and bring the responsible persons to justice;
- ensure the safety of Edwin Alexander Reynoso and his family, in accordance with his wishes;
- return police and armed forces presence to levels that existed prior to the "state of siege" declared by President Molina in May 2013;
- engage in good-faith dialogue with communities who are demanding respect for the results of their community consultations.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai  
Co-Coordinator

copies: Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908  
Bruce Williamson, Chargé d'Affaires, US Embassy in Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2331-2348  
James Cavallaro, Rapporteur for Guatemala, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights~ via fax: (202)458-3992  
Caitlin Kennel, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via email  
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email  
US Senators Brown & Portman ~ via email  
US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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