

52nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 2
General Debate on the report of the High Commissioner
Joint Statement
7 March 2023

Check against delivery

We welcome the report on the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) in Guatemala, especially in a context of human rights and the rule of law crisis, aggravated by the weakening and co-optation of public institutions.

In Guatemala, there is a widespread practice of criminalization and harassment of human rights defenders and independent justice operators, many of whom are currently in exile or in prison. According to UDEFEGUA, the number of attacks in 2022 rose to more than two thousand cases, which represents double compared to 2020 and 2021; and four times higher than in 2019.³ The lack of public policies to protect defenders and the issuance of restrictive laws such as Decree 4-2020, which regulates NGOs, have fostered a hostile environment for the defense of human rights.

In addition, there has been an excessive and disproportionate use of force in contexts of peaceful protests and forced evictions, sometimes under the use of states of emergency, without observing international standards.

The Council must act collectively and act now to urge Guatemala to guarantee judicial independence, to prevent and investigate attacks against human rights defenders and justice operators, and to guarantee a transparent electoral process. Today more than ever, this Council must use its preventive role⁴ before the human rights situation in Guatemala reaches a point of no return.

Thank you.

³ *Cfr.* Situación de personas, comunidades y organizaciones defensoras de derechos humanos, enero-septiembre, 2020, <https://udefegua.org.gt/infografias/situacion-de-personas-comunidades-y-organizaciones-defensoras-de-ddhh-guatemala-enero-a-septiembre-de-2020/>

⁴ “The contribution of the Human Rights Council to the prevention of human rights violations”, Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 7 October 2020, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/RES/45/31>; “The contribution of the Human Rights Council to the prevention of human rights violations”, Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 6 July 2018, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/RES/38/18>; See also Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, “Human Rights Council” 60/251, para. 5 (f), https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/a.res.60.251_en.pdf; “Overview of consultations on the contribution of the Human Rights Council to the prevention of human rights violations”, Human Rights Council, Report of the rapporteurs, A/HRC/43/37, 14 January 2020, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/43/37>

Adhesiones

1. Alianza Américas
2. Asociación Civil Colectivo Madreselva
3. Asociación comunitaria para el desarrollo SERJUS
4. Asociación de Agricultores Las Ilusiones El Divisadero. AGRIDIVI-ONG
5. Asociación de Desarrollo Aj Awineleb' re Tzuul Taq'á
6. Asociación Guatemalteca de Personas con discapacidad, AGPD, Manuel Tot, ONG.
7. Asociación Las Crisálidas
8. Asociación Maya para el Buen Vivir.
9. Asociación Pop No'j
10. Bischöfliches Hilfswerk Misereor e.V.
11. Broederlijk Delen
12. Campaña Guatemala Sin Hambre
13. Cáritas Diocesana Verapaz
14. CCPR Centre
15. Centro de Estudios para la Equidad y Gobernanza de los Sistemas de Salud
16. Centro de Investigación, Estudios y Promoción de Derechos Humanos en Guatemala
CIEPRODH CIEORODH
17. CIDSE– International family of Catholic social justice organisations
18. CIVICUS World Alliance
19. Comisión de Justicia Paz e Integridad de la Creación OFM - Guatemala
20. Comisión de Justicia, paz e Integridad de la Creación OFM – México
21. Convergencia Nacional de Resistencia
22. Coordinadora Institucional de Promoción por los Derechos de la Niñez CIPRODENI
23. Dominicans for Justice and Peace
24. Dreikönigsaktion Hilfswerk der Katholischen Jungschar
25. Entraide et Fraternité
26. Fastenaktion - Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund
27. Festivales Solidarios
28. FIAN International
29. FONGU
30. FOSS
31. Franciscans International
32. Fundación Tierra Nuestra
33. Grupo Multidisciplinario por la defensa de los derechos sexuales y reproductivos en
Guatemala
34. Guatemalanetz Bern
35. Guatemala-Netz Zürich (Red de Solidaridad con Guatemala, Zurich)
36. Impunity Watch
37. Instituto Demos
38. International Service for Human Rights
39. JPIC Familia Franciscana Guatemala
40. Km207 Guatemala-Suisse
41. La Cuerda
42. Misioneros Claretianos
43. Organización Mundial Contra la Tortura
44. Otra Guatemala Ya
45. Paece Brigades International
46. Parroquia santa Catarina Mita, Jutiapa

47. Peace Watch Switzerland
48. Plataforma Internacional Contra la Impunidad
49. Plataforma Tejedoras de Güipil
50. Protection International Mesoamérica
51. Red Europea de Apoyo Caso Diario Militar
52. Red Europea de Comités Oscar Romero
53. Red Internacional de Solidaridad con Guatemala – RISG
54. Red Nacional por la Defensa de la Soberanía Alimentaria en Guatemala, REDSAG