

CIDSE calls on the EU and its Member States as well as Switzerland to maintain vigilance on Guatemala's socio-political situation until 14 January and beyond

Brussels, 20 December 2023

Following our network's call dated 15 November 2023, '[The struggle for democracy and the rule of law in Guatemala](#)', the CIDSE¹ member organisations would like to applaud the European Parliament's resolution (2023/3031(RSP))². At the same time, CIDSE calls to keep monitoring the social and political developments in Guatemala.

Given that historically in Latin America, the holiday season has repeatedly been used to push controversial political and economic decisions, to increase measures of social repression as well as to prepare for coups d'état; we ask the European Parliament to closely monitor the situation, especially during the holiday period, which should be a time of peace for all humankind around the globe;

Given that four Magistrates of the Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) left the country after Congress voted to strip them of their immunity, in a clear attempt by the majority of Congress members to further interfere in the results of the elections;

Given that indigenous and rural community leaders are increasingly criminalised and threatened with regards to their lives and livelihoods; accused on vague juridical pretences, leaving them unable to carry out their activities;

Given that the population that peacefully supports both the president-elect and the indigenous and social leaders is increasingly living in fear;

Given the ongoing attempts to declare the elections unconstitutional, with the aim of annulling the results of the election, even though observatory missions conducted by the international community have shown firmly that there was no indication of fraud,

Given the recent resolution by the Constitutional Court of Guatemala on 14 December that urges to guarantee all elected officials can start their term on 14 January, but at the same time leaves the possibility to continue investigation towards those elected;

Given that the European Parliament adopted the resolution (2023/3031(RSP)), we call on the European Parliament and on the Parliament of Switzerland:

- To closely monitor compliance with the recommendations of the European Resolution, dd 13-12-2023,
- To continue monitoring political developments in Guatemala, with the aim of ensuring that the democratically elected President Bernardo Arévalo and his Vice-President Karin Herrera are officially inaugurated on 14 January 2024 and are not further criminalised on legal pretences,

¹ CIDSE is an international family of Catholic social justice organisations from Europe and North America.

² https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0485_ES.pdf.

- To keep advocating for an end to the criminalisation and prosecution of opposition politicians, human rights defenders³ and independent judges and jurists so that the Supreme Electoral Court can function normally again,
- To closely monitor the political developments during the upcoming Holiday season in Guatemala, with the aim of preventing increased repression and baseless accusations of opponents of the current government.

Additional information

Guatemala: Sustained attempts to undermine democracy:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/guatemala-sustained-attempts-undermine-democratic-process-extremely-worrying>

The Struggle for Democracy in Guatemala:

<https://www.cidse.org/2023/11/15/the-struggle-for-democracy-and-the-rule-of-law-in-guatemala/>

Civil Society Statement on Guatemala

<https://www.lawg.org/civil-society-statement-of-solidarity-with-democracy-movement-in-guatemala/>

EP Plenary speech by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell on the situation in Guatemala following the elections:

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ep-plenary-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-situation-guatemala-following_en?s=187

AR/VP: Josep Borrell – Guatemala:

<https://youtu.be/uzSm9ZISVPY>

Guatemala - ein Land im Umbruch, Austrian TV report, 17 December 2023:

<https://tvthek.orf.at/profile/Orientierung/1366/Orientierung/14205671/Guatemala-ein-Land-im-Umbruch/15531912>

³ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/fdfa/publikationen/alle-publikationen.html/content/publikationen/en/eda/menschenrechte-humanitaeres-migration/Leitlinien-zum-Schutz-von-HRD>; https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eu_guidelines_hrd_en.pdf.