

OPEN LETTER

Latent risk of state of siege in Guatemala following expulsion order issued by President Jimmy Morales against International Commissioner against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)

Mesoamerica August 28, 2017 – We, of the **Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders (IM-Defensoras)**, made up of 837 women human rights defenders in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, share our indignation over the serious attacks and violation of constitutional guarantees perpetrated by **President Jimmy Morales** against **Iván Velásquez**, the **International Commissioner against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)**, and we also support the demands raised by organizations and individual human rights defenders regarding these attacks.

After a long smear campaign and attacks denounced in alerts issued by **IM-Defensoras** last March, on Sunday, August 25th, **President Jimmy Morales** ordered the expulsion of the **CICIG Commissioner** after labeling him “persona non grata”. According to the current legal framework, the President does not have the authority to do this, and has violated International Law and the administrative due process established in the agreement between the **United Nations (UN)** and the government of **Guatemala** that created the **International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)**.

The **CICIG** and its Commissioner, **Iván Velásquez**, have played a critical role in the struggle against impunity and corruption in Guatemala. As human rights organizations in Guatemala have noted, this illegitimate decision of the President has to do with charges that he and direct family members face just before a pretrial hearing requested by the Public Prosecutor, based on accusations of the flagrant and intolerable placing of private interests above the collective good, and an obvious conflict of interests.

After verifying the legitimate level of exasperation in the civil society over such acts, Guatemalan organizations and individuals in defense of human rights have shared their concern over a possible government decree of a State of Exception aimed at impeding and repressing the right to protest and the constitutional guarantees of the people of Guatemala.

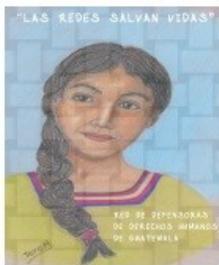
Accordingly, we of **IM-Defensoras** support the decision of the Constitutional Court to grant a stay and suspend the order issued by the President. We also demand compliance with the accord signed



**INICIATIVA MESOAMERICANA
de Mujeres Defensoras
DE DERECHOS HUMANOS**

with the **United Nations (UN)** for the creation of the **CICIG**, as well as constitutional guarantees, the right to protest, and the safety and security of the Guatemalan people.

And lastly, we call for international solidarity with the people of Guatemala.



**RED NACIONAL de
DEFENSORAS de
DERECHOS HUMANOS
en MEXICO**

