



Monthly Information Pack Guatemala

Number 131 – August 2014

1. THE CURRENT SITUATION

Monthly selection of news on the situation in Guatemala as highlighted by the press, related to the main thematic areas of PBI Guatemala's work: the fight against impunity, land issues and the negative effects of globalization on human rights.

Rejection of The Law for the Protection of New Plant Varieties, the so-called Monsanto Law¹

This month, Guatemalan civil society and indigenous united in their rejection of the Law for the Protection of New Plant Varieties, approved by Congress on 10th June (Decree 19-2014, published in 26th June). They not only criticised the content of the law itself, but the manner in which the decree was adopted; behind closed doors and not taking into account public opinion. In terms of the content of the law, they consider an affront to “food sovereignty” in that it seeks to control and privatise the production of staple food seeds such as bean and maize varieties. Amongst other forms of protest, an “amparo” was lodged at the Constitutional Court (CC) and there was a protest outside Congress calling for the law to be quashed.¹

The law, which came into force on 26th September, grants companies or individuals the right to patent seed varieties that they have “discovered” or created. As the patent holder they have exclusive rights to make, reproduce, use or sell the patented “product” for a period of 25 years. The sanction for unlawfully using a patented product is up to four years imprisonment, and a fine ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 Quetzales.²

As well as action from civil society and indigenous communities, other public figures have become involved, many posting and signing a petition in August calling for the repeal of the aforementioned Decree on the basis that it is unconstitutional and caters only to the needs of large transnational companies (such as Monsanto). The “Alliance for the Protection of Biodiversity in Guatemala” stated that, “the law puts the interests and rights of the patent holder before the rights of the people to use seeds (...). It’s a direct attack against ancestral practices that have been passed down through the generations, an attack against biodiversity, life, culture, and the campesino economy, an affront to Cosmovision, and food sovereignty.”³

In the public forum, “Implications of the Law for the Protection of New Plant Varieties”, academics noted with disappointment that major universities had not been consulted at the time the law was on the table, and have criticised the law for being “incomprehensible”; among other concerns, they saw it as an attempt to criminalise small-scale, typically indigenous, farmers, and highlighted the social conflict that the law could cause. The Dean of the Agriculture Department at the San Carlos University (“USAC”) said, “Pollen floats in the airs for miles, and can pollinate distant fields and crops. Under this law, a company with a patent of that particular seed could then arrive at these fields and allege a violation of their ownership rights of that seed. This has already happened in other countries.⁴ Amongst other indigenous communities who have rejected the law, the “48 Cantones of Totonicapán” expressed their disapproval saying that it will bring about “the death of the Pueblo.”⁵

¹ Prensa Libre, 'Preparan protesta por rechazo a ley de obtención de vegetales', 24.08.2014 http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/politica/Alianza_por_la_vida-Ley_Monsanto-Guatemala-Congreso_0_1199280154.html

² Prensa Libre, 'Pulso político por derogar Ley de Vegetales', 28.08.2014. http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/justicia/ley_monsanto-amparo-corte_de_constitucionalidad-consejo_del_pueblo_maya_0_1200480044.html

³ El Periódico, 'Figuras públicas de Guatemala, en contra de la denominada Ley Monsanto en el país.' 16.08.2014. <http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20140816/pais/483/Figuras-p%C3%BAblicas-de-Guatemala-en-contra-de-la-denominada-Ley-Monsanto-en-el-pa%C3%ADs.htm>

⁴ Prensa Libre, 'Ley de vegetales traerá conflictividad social', 21.08.2014. http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/politica/ley_monsanto-decreto_19-2014-ley_de_obetenciones_vegetales-analistas_0_1197480313.html

⁵ Prensa Libre, 'Autoridades comunitarias de Totonicapán se oponen a Ley Monsanto', 30.08.2014.

On 29th August the CC provisionally suspended article 46 of the Decree, which provided for an increase in funding by 550 million Quetzales for the Ministry of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing to be used for roadworks. The approval of these funds had been included in the Monsanto-law and was rejected on the basis that there were no grounds to justify any increase.⁶

During the culmination of the many protests outside Congress, the law was finally laid to rest and repealed in full on 4th September by Decree 21-2014. Over two thirds of the members of Congress (117) voted in favour of the repeal, stating that it was necessary "to review every aspect of this law in order to ensure compatibility with Guatemala's international obligations."⁷ Approval of the law had originally been justified as adherent to the free trade agreement between Guatemala and the U.S.A.

Guatemala discussed before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACoHR) in Mexico⁸

The IACoHR held its 152th Session in August in Mexico, where there were a total of seven public sessions on the general human rights situation in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama; over 60 civil society organisations from Central America participated.

In the session dedicated to Guatemala, civil society organisations from Guatemala spoke of factors impeding the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms by various sectors of Guatemalan society. They drew attention to the fact that there had been 691 attacks registered against human rights defenders between January and July of that year, a figure almost equal to the number of attacks registered throughout the whole of 2013. This figure includes the use of force during peaceful social protests. They also aired their concerns about the government's attitude towards foreign human rights defenders.

The main concerns raised by civil society were as follows: the stigmatisation of human rights defenders; the increase in attacks against those working in communications; attack against members of the LGBTI community, including raiding of their offices; the situation of *de facto* impunity caused by the paralysis of investigations relating to human rights violations committed during the internal armed conflict under the "National Reconciliation Law."

According to their analysis, the state body in charge of dealing with attacks against human rights defenders (the "Instancia de Análisis de Ataques contra Defensoras y Defensores") is not adopting preventative measures, and that the section of the Public Ministry in charge of investigating attacks against human rights defenders is closing cases where investigations have not started or have not been concluded. They spoke of the need to devise a way of affording protection to human rights defenders and those working in communications as per international standards. The importance of ensuring indigenous communities are consulted prior to the implementation of mega projects in their territories.

Representatives of the Guatemalan government stated that they did respect the work of human rights defenders. In relation to human rights violations that remain investigated and unpunished, they referred to the amnesty law saying that it was up to the courts to determine "the cases where this should apply in order to achieve peace."

The IACoHR reiterated the importance of achieving reconciliation, but added that denying access to justice can never be a solution for victims. They expressed their concern over the increase in attacks against journalists and human rights defenders. Further information was requested from the Guatemalan government in relation to the measures adopted to implement decisions by the Inter-American Court and Commission.

2. ACOMPANIMENT

PBI accompanies social organizations and individuals who have received threats for their work in the defence and promotion of human rights. In this context

http://www.prensalibre.com/totonicapan/Totonicapan-manifestacion-pueblos-autoridades-comunales-ley_monsanto_0_1202879837.html

⁶ Prensa Libre, 'Gasto millonario queda en suspenso', 30.08.2014. http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/justicia/ampliacion_presupuestaria-ley_monsanto-corte_de_constitucionalidad-resolucion_0_1202279877.html

⁷ Prensa comunitaria, "Derogado el decreto 19-2014 'Ley Monsanto': La lucha por el maíz hoy planta su semilla", 5.09.2014 <http://comunitariapress.wordpress.com/2014/09/05/derogado-el-decreto-19-2014-ley-monsanto-la-lucha-por-el-maiz-hoy-planta-su-semilla/>

⁸ CIDH, CIDH culmina el 152º Período Extraordinario de Sesiones, 15.08.2014. <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2014/086.asp>

*we are accompanying social processes in the fight against impunity, land inequality and the negative impacts of globalisation on human rights.*⁹

During August we maintained regular contact with the **Central Campesino Chórtí New Day (CCCND)**. There has been a worrying upsurge in attacks and threats against the organisation and its members along with continued criminalisation. PBI has increased its protective accompaniment of CCCND. At the beginning of August we visited Jocotán (Chiquimula), and were present during the official inscription of Las Flores as an indigenous community by the municipality (see the table).

Between 20th and 22nd, we held meetings with members of CCCND and we accompanied them during their various activities, for example, a conference regarding malnutrition in the region and a community meetings in the village of El Rodeo (Chiquimula).

Las Flores, Jocotán, officially recognised as a “maya chórtí” indigenous community by the municipality

6th August, in Jocotán, we observed the official act of recognition by the municipality of Las Flores as an indigenous community, encompassing the village of Las Flores and some surrounding villages. It is the first official recognition of its kind in Jocotán.

The 20th we were also present in the celebration of the same in Las Flores. This recognition is seen as going some way to recovering the historical memory and in helping towards ensuring to protect the rights of indigenous communities.



Ceremony of the registration of Las Flores as an indigenous community, 20.08.2014, Photo: PBI 2014

In August we paid weekly visits to the **Bufete Jurídico de Derechos Humanos** (the “Human Rights Law Firm”). On 4th August we accompanied lawyers from the firm to the Supreme Court of Justice (SCJ), where they attended a hearing in relation to the amparo they had lodged objecting to Claudia Paz y Paz’s (the ex Chief of Public Prosecutions) ousting before the end of her term.¹⁰ The hearing was suspended.

On 11th we accompanied the Bufete to a hearing in the “Cotzal” case, in which there have already been several convictions of state officials for human rights violations committed in 2009, including the country’s first ever conviction for torture.¹¹ On this occasion, we observed the trial of two accused: Miguel Chamat López was convicted of aggravated false imprisonment, aiding and abetting, and abuse of power; Cristobal Torres de La Cruz was convicted of aggravated false imprisonment and abuse of power. The sentence included a component of reparation to the victims: they must publicly apologise to the community in the central park of the town where the crimes were committed at a date to be set by the prosecution service. They will serve a 5 year suspended prison sentence due to the fact that they do not have a criminal records, and both were released.

18th August we accompanied lawyers from the Bufete to the trial of members of **the Peaceful Resistance at La Puya**. We kept in daily contact with members of the Resistance, which continues its peaceful protest next to the mining facilities at La Puya, and visited the same five times during August. We also had several meetings with a prominent member of the Resistance, Yolanda Oqueli.

We continued our accompaniment of the Verapaz **Union of Campesino Organisations** (“UVOC”). We visited Jorge Luis Morales’

⁹ General information about accompaniment of organizations and individuals can be found on our website: <http://www.pbi-guatemala.org/field-projects/pbi-guatemala/who-we-accompany/>

¹⁰ Background: see the “Political Situation” segment of PIM number 127, April 2014: “Claudia Paz y Paz, excluded from the short list of candidates by the Postulation Commission for chief of the Public Ministry.” http://www.pbi-guatemala.org/fileadmin/user_files/projects/guatemala/files/spanish/PIM_No_127

¹¹ In this case from January 2013, José Pérez Chen, defunct mayor of San Juan Cotzal (El Quiché), had been sentenced to 79 years imprisonment for abuse of authority, torture, and extrajudicial execution. A year later, in January 2014, we observed another hearing in this case in which an ex policeman was sentenced in relation to aggravated false imprisonment of two people in San Juan Cotzal. The sentence also obliged the convict to apologise publicly in the Cotzal central park, and prohibited him from making contact with the victims of his crime, as argued for by the Bufete. He was given a suspended four year prison sentence, as requested by the prosecutors: his freedom is conditional for the next two years. During these two years he must not provoke, incite, or commit any criminal offences. If he does he will be imprisoned for the full four years of his sentence (to be added to the sentence of any further crimes committed). See PIM numbers 112, 124 from January 2013 and January 2014 respectively. <http://www.pbi-guatemala.org/field-projects/pbi-guatemala/publications/monthly-information-package/>

office weekly and three times in August we visited their head office in Alta Verapaz, making visible PBI's international accompaniment of UVOC.

5th August we accompanied Jorge Luis Morales on a trip to Alta Verapaz, where he visited seven community members of the Finca La Primavera facing trial. The hearing was suspended; the trials is set to resume 24th March 2015.

We kept in regular contact and had several meetings with the **Twelve Kaqchikel Communities of San Juan Sacatepeéquez**. On 12th August we attended a press conference they held: two days prior, community members had been accused of setting fire to heavy machinery used in constructing a ringroad (known as the Anillo Regional) in the area. These accusations were made by the project overseer from the state department responsible for the construction of public highways (the "Dirección General de Caminos") in the press¹².

In their press conference and a following press release, the Twelve Kaqchikel Communities reiterated their concerns regarding the cement factory and ring road, and refuted the aforementioned accusations levelled against them, calling them unfounded, malicious, and not the product of any investigation. They added that at all times the machinery in question was being guarded by the company's private security, and at the time of the incident community leaders were about to enter a meeting with government officials in the first of what was to be a series of roundtable meetings to discuss the details of the ring road project and the problems that had been caused by the same¹³. The Twelve Kaqchikel Communities insist that the government give effect to their demands which they set out in a meeting with them in June. At the end of August PBI were present at their weekly meeting in Santa Fe Ocaña.



We maintained telephone contact with the **Association of Indigenous Women of Santa Maria Xalapánm Jalapa ("AMISMAXJ")**. We accompanied a group of their members to Huehuetenango at the end of August where they attended a "healing exercise" meeting with the respective wives of Saul Mendéz and Rogelio Velásquez, political prisoners currently in custody due to their involvement in the community resistance movement in Barillas, where the long-contested issue is the installation of a hydroelectric power plant, resisted by some of the local population for the past 12 years.

The women of AMISMAXJ accompanying the wives of the political prisoners, Barillas, Huehuetenango

27.08.14. Photo: PBI 2014

We also continued accompanying the **Council of Communities from Cunén ("CCC")**. We accompanied members of the organisation to the community of La Hacienda and El Barranco, in Cunén (El Quiché), where they shared information in relation to legislation currently being debated by Congress (the "Water Law" and the "Law for the Protection of New Plant Varieties", the so-called Monsanto-Law) and evaluated the possible impact of these laws on life in the area. Towards the end of the month we met with members of the Council in their central office in Cunén.

During August, we kept in frequent telephone contact with the **National Coordinator of Guatemalan Widows ("CONAVIGUA")**. At the end of the month we accompanied CONAVIGUA to regional meetings in Joyabaj and Chiché (El Quiché).

We maintained regular telephone contact with members of the **Council of K'iche' Pueblos ("CPK")**. On 5th August we accompanied members of CPK to a hearing forming part of the trial of two people accused of the murder of Silverio Vicente, a former member of the CPK, in July 2013. The hearing was suspended until 27th August due to absence of the judge. Again, we traveled to Santa Cruz del Quiché (Quiché) for the re-scheduled hearing, but it was again put back, this time due to the absence of the state prosecutor.

3. INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATION

PBI Guatemala provides international observation of those public events in which Guatemalan social organizations request it, to show international attention

¹² Prensa Libre, 'Lanzan bomba contra maquinaria del proyecto Anillo Regional', 10.08.2014.
http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/personas-incendian-maquinaria-proyecto_0_1190881000.html

¹³ Doce comunidades de San Juan Sacatepéquez. 'Sospechosos incidentes pretenden ocultar ilegalidades'. 12.08.2014
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0UHqQ6AaQM>

and interest and to communicate outside the country what we observe.

On 6th August we attended the trial of journalist **Francisca Gómez Grijalva** held at the Constitutional Court. She was being sued for defamation by the cement company Cementos Progresos S.A, and had been granted an “amparo” in the case.

PBI has been following closely the situation in **Monte Olivo** (Cobán), and has been present in the area observing several activities in August. The situation worsened over the month of August: over the space of two days, 1,500 police were dispatched to villages in the area that have opposed the construction of the Santa Rita hydro power plant. The press has reported on some worrying acts on behalf of the police present in the area: during the eviction of Monte Olivo and Semococh there were several acts of physical aggression against community members, including the launching of tear gas grenades into crowds, affecting many people. Firearms were also used during the eviction, resulting in the death of three people. Five community members were also evicted. The eviction of the community Nueve de Febrero resulted in people taking refuge in the mountains. Two policemen were also reported injured.

PBI visited the region from 14th to 16th August. We observed a meeting between civil society organisations in Cobán. On 15th we attended a hearing in Cobán in the trial of Timoteo Chen from Monte Olivo, considered to be a political prisoner, being a member of the community resistance movement against the Santa Rita hydro plant. The hearing was suspended.

On 21st we observed a press conference regarding in the communities of Alta Verapaz. At the end of the month we observed the hearing in Coban against five people in the community of Monte Olivo who had been detained on 14th August.

The **Centre of Independent Media (“CMI”)**, independent media in Guatemala, had been publishing articles and videos on the aforementioned events in Alta Verapaz. One of their journalists was attacked due to his coverage of these events. For more information see below (Secion 5: NGOs: CMI reports attacks against their journalist following coverage of events in Alta Verapaz).

In the east of the country we visited the village of **La Trementina** in Zacapa. The community continue to complain that water pipes serving many communities in the Las Granadillas mountain are being routinely destroyed. Since April 2014, they have been destroyed at least 16 times, particularly worrying given that Zacapa is one of the driest areas in the country. On 26th August we observed a meeting of the **Ecumenical Assembly** on the Jupilingo bridge, in Camotán (Chiquimula).

At the end of the month, the **national meeting of human rights defenders** from around the country took place in Huehuetenango, organised jointly PBI Guatemala and Diakonia. Human rights defenders participated in a risk analysis exercise and security measures that they can adopt. Also in Huehuetenango we observed the trial of Saul Mendéz, Rogelio Velásquez, members of the community resistance movement in Barillas. They have been in prison for over a year.

4. POLITICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

Meetings and other contact with the diplomatic bodies, international organisations and Guatemalan authorities

Meetings with national and international authorities are an important way for PBI to make known what we do and what our objectives are. Through these meetings, where necessary and in a reserved manner, we share our concerns about worrying situations that we have witnessed first hand from the work we do in the field.

This month we have met with several diplomatic staff and international organisations present in Guatemala. Earlier this month we met with **German Ambassador** Matthias Sonn, along with the person responsible for business at the embassy, Arturo Brunner. Later in August we met with the Ambassador of the European Union (EU), Stella Zervoudaki, with whom we shared our concerns regarding the situation of the **CCCND**. We also met with Catherine Lleras, **Human Rights Officer at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**.

Throughout August we met with public institutions and Guatemalan authorities. We held meetings with various branches of the **National Civil Police Force (PNC)**, both at the national and regional level: at the beginning of the month we met Arango Angel Rivera, First Official of the Division for Protection and Safety (DPPS); on 12th we met with Pedro Esteban López García, Director General of Operations, and Luis Herrera, the Official second at the Office for Human Rights (OHR), Office of Professional Responsibility (ORP). At the regional level we held meetings with Edgar Marroquin Leonel Morales, chief of the PNC substation in San Cristobal, and the head of the Substation in Santa Cruz, both in the department of Alta Verapaz. Finally, we met with Galeano Luna, deputy head of the PNC in Chiquimula.

This month we maintained our close contact with regional municipal authorities. On 5th, we met with the **Mayor of Santa Cruz Quiche (Quiche)**, José Francisco Pérez Reyes, and on 18th met with the **Mayor of San Pedro Ayampuc**, Beto Aquino. On 21st, we met with Luis Alfonso Palma, **Governor of Guatemala**. We also held meetings with the national office of the **Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH)**: on 11th August with its Director, Jorge de León Duque, and on 20th with Mario Minera, Director of the Ombudsman's advocacy divisions. At the regional level, we met with the assistant of the PDH representative in Quiché, Ricardo Raúl Rodríguez Fernández. We also held meetings with the Quiché representative of the **Presidential Commission on Human Rights (COPREDEH)** on 5th August, Onofre Carrillo, and towards the end of the month with Edgar Tum and Margarita Reyes, respectively consultant and regional promoter of COPREDEH in **Alta Verapaz**.

We met with representatives from the **Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN)**: in the capital with the **Minister, Michelle Martinez** on 6th August; on 22nd with the representative of MARN in Chiquimula, Carla Carrera.

We also met with Victor Maldonado, coordinator of **the Guatemalan Land Registry (RIC)**, and other members of the RIC.

Meetings with civil society

The field team meets regularly with civil society in order to monitor the situation of human rights defenders human rights, inform each other about the work being done and to gather information to help analyse the internal situation. We maintain opportunities for co-ordination in the field of international accompaniment.

Throughout August we held regular meetings with the **Human Rights Defenders Protection Unit (UDEFEQUA)**; we regularly visited their headquarters, and the offices of the **Womans' Sector** and **Madre Selva**.

On 25th we met with **Monsignor Ramazzini**.

We also held meetings with civil society, foreign and international present organisations in Guatemala. Throughout August we had contact with the **Coordination of International Accompaniment in Guatemala (ACOGUATE)**, with the **Guatemala Human Rights Commission (GHRC)** with **Protection International**, as well as the **Forum of International Non-Governmental Organisations (FONGI)** and the **International Platform Against Impunity**.

5. ACTIVITIES OF PBI GUATEMALA OUTSIDE GUATEMALA

Outside the country we constantly develop and strengthen the network of support for the Guatemalan PBI project, as this is one of the essential tools necessary to protect defenders of human rights. Regional Representatives, the Project Office Coordinator and other members of the committee and the Project Office and national groups of PBI, conduct public relations campaigns with many NGOs, agencies and national governments, parliamentarians and others. In this context we develop actions and public relations campaigns, and / or advocacy aimed at protecting defenders of human rights.

In August, personnel from PBI Guatemala met in Germany with Stefan Reeb, from the **Ministry of International Economic and Development Cooperation**, and Nils Warner, **head of the Civil Peace Service Programme** in the same Ministry.

6. NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In this section we publish statements (some abbreviated) from human rights organisations in which they express their concerns regarding recent events.

CMI denuncia ataques en su contra tras cobertura en Alta Verapaz

Guatemala, 29 de agosto de 2014

Desde el inicio de la cobertura que realizó un equipo del Centro de Medios Independientes de Guatemala (CMI-G) acerca de los más recientes desalojos en el departamento de Alta Verapaz, realizados por agentes de la Policía Nacional Civil, ejército y algunos civiles que irregularmente los acompañaban, se inició una cadena de ataques, entre ellos informáticos, que impidieron publicar de forma inmediata la **MIP, august 2014**

información recopilada durante los acontecimientos.¹ En esa acción, fueron desplazadas más de cien familias, se capturó a cinco líderes comunitarios y tres campesinos fueron asesinados, en hechos hasta ahora no esclarecidos.

En dicha región del norte del país, hay fuertes intereses creados alrededor de megaproyectos hidroeléctricos; extracción petrolera y minera; así como mono-cultivos para producir agrocombustibles y otros productos.²

En ese contexto, la noche del 23 de agosto sucedió el secuestro de una persona (por seguridad omitimos su nombre) que habita en la misma vivienda de los reporteros que cubrieron los desalojos mencionados, a quien retuvieron por varias horas, amenazaron, golpearon y vejaron. Junto a la golpiza fueron realizadas amenazas directas contra Gustavo Illescas, autor de los artículos sobre los desalojos y al trabajo del CMI-G. Por esta acción hay dos denuncias presentadas en el Ministerio Público.

Estos ataques no ha sido los primeros. El colectivo Emancipa Producciones, parte del CMI, sufrió persecuciones en su cobertura de las movilizaciones normalistas, asimismo se le acosó durante la realización de un reportaje sobre la instalación de la hidroeléctrica Saqja' (Purulhá) y se le trató de impedir la proyección en un festival de cine, de la documental "La Propuesta Impuesta". Además, durante las diferentes coberturas de la resistencia anti-minera en "La Puya", San José del Golfo, existieron intimidaciones, amenazas, e intentos de censura, que en su momento fueron denunciados en tribunales. Este proceso judicial –interpuesto junto a otros comunicadores alternativos– tuvo como resultado una sentencia condenatoria a personeros de la minera Exmingua.

Las agresiones han coincidido con desalojos o represión a comunidades y movimientos sociales, hechos por las fuerzas públicas, donde los medios de prensa empresariales han dado poca o nula cobertura o repiten de manera sesgada el discurso del gobierno.³ Tampoco ha sido el CMI-G el único atacado. Ricard Busquets, comunicador del Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC), ha sido criminalizado y hostigado en varias ocasiones; Francisca Gómez Grijalva pretende ser llevada a juicio por una columna de opinión donde señala el abuso de poder de Cementos Progreso, entre otros casos.

El CMI-G considera que estos ataques son preocupantes e indican una tendencia en ascenso desde el inicio de este gobierno. Las declaraciones del Ministro de Gobernación acerca de intentar regular los contenidos críticos vertidos en redes sociales y la iniciativa de ley 4843 presentada por el partido LIDER, representan el intento de creación de un marco legal que sirva para acusar de espionaje, terrorismo y otros delitos a personas comunicadoras sociales que aborden ciertos temas. Estas medidas buscan provocar la autocensura, y promover la desinformación y el aislamiento de las comunidades ante un escenario de mayor conflictividad y represión.

Como consecuencia de lo expuesto, denunciamos públicamente estos ataques; y manifestamos nuestra solidaridad ante las personas y colectivos que sufren la represión, persecución y censura gubernamental. Exigimos una investigación pronta y efectiva al Ministerio Público; y al gobierno, que respete el derecho a la libre expresión y emisión del pensamiento, respetando la integridad física y el trabajo de todas las personas que documentan e informan hechos que atentan contra la dignidad y los derechos humanos. Sin estas garantías es imposible una democracia real.

1 La intensidad del ataque puede ser visualizada en la gráfica que se muestra en <http://cmiguate.org/ataque-ddos>

2 Esta información se encuentra publicada en <http://cmiguate.org/monte-olivo-o-monte-olvido-2-anos-de-represion/>

3 Como ejemplo, ver los titulares de http://www.prensalibre.com/alta-verapaz/alta-verapaz-bloqueos-carreteras-chisec-desalojo-campesinos-codeca_0_1194480567.html y http://www.mingob.gob.gt/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=7461:rescatan-a-policias-en-raxruha-alta-verapaz&Itemid=103

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