

## **Take Action to Demand Justice for Assassination of Xinka Leader Noé Gómez Barrera**

On Saturday October 28, 2023, Xinka community leader, 69-year old Noé Gómez Barrera was murdered in the department of Jutiapa, Guatemala. Mr. Noé, much loved and respected by the community, was a member of the ancestral authorities of the Xinka Parliament of Guatemala, and since 2002 fought for Xinka rights in Jutiapa against the company Renewable Energy Alternative (Alternativa de Energía Renovable in Spanish). In recent weeks, he participated actively in the indefinite National Strike for democracy against the efforts of the “Covenant of the Corrupt” to remain in power following the election of Bernardo Arévalo whose inauguration is scheduled for January 14, 2024 and who has committed to end corruption in the country.

This criminal act takes place in the context of violence, threats and heightened security risks for territory defenders in Guatemala, including specifically in Xinka territory of Jutiapa, Santa Rosa and Jalapa. During recent years, the Xinka people have maintained a broad and ongoing struggle to defend their health, water, forests, lands, and territory against the threat of megaprojects including the Renewable Energy Alternative company, as well as the Escobal mine owned by Canadian mining company Pan American Silver, which is currently subject to a consultation process. For their commitment to the defense of collective rights, the Xinka people have faced intimidation, defamation, criminalization, attacks, and assassinations, such as what has just once again tragically taken place.

In September of this year, U.S. Congresswoman Cori Bush and 12 other members of the U.S. Congress sent a letter to the U.S. Department of State in which they expressed profound concern for the security of the Xinka people. The Representatives called for the State Department to play an active role to ensure an effective response to any further act of repression against the Xinka people. Also, since mid October, the Ancestral Indigenous Authorities of Guatemala have requested precautionary measures from the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) given the risks they face for exercising their rights.

Following the brutal assassination of Mr. Noé, the Xinka Parliament of Guatemala has called on the Guatemalan Public Prosecutors Office to take action and to investigate this crime, stating: “Stop the criminalization and violence against Xinka leaders and human rights defenders.”

We express our solidarity with the Xinka Parliament of Guatemala and the human rights defenders who are part of the Peaceful Resistance of Santa Rosa, Jalapa and Jutiapa, who exercise and work for the full enjoyment and respect for their fundamental collective and individual rights.

We urge:

- Guatemalan authorities to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for this atrocious act of violence.
- The Inter American Commission on Human Rights to immediately grant precautionary measures to protect the Ancestral Authorities that are leading the National Strike in Guatemala.
- The U.S. Department of State in coordination with its Embassy in Guatemala to advocate of the immediate investigation into this assassination and for those

responsible to be brought to justice; for the prompt implementation of the precautionary measures in favor of the Ancestral Indigenous Authorities at risk for exercising their right to peaceful protest, as well as for the five Xinka leaders who requested precautionary measures from the IACHR in 2021; as well as to publicly denounce the violence against Ancestral Indigenous Authorities and reaffirm the importance of protections for peaceful demonstration and the rights to self-determination and free, prior and informed consent.

- The government of Canada in coordination with its Embassy in Guatemala to pay special attention to the risks that the Ancestral Indigenous Authorities face, particularly the Xinka People who are peacefully demonstrating in defense of life and democracy. We also call on Canada to continue to publicly express concern for the situation in Guatemala in order to ensure respect for democratic governance.

Sincerely,

Latin America

*Asociación Interamericana para la Defensa del Ambiente (AIDA)*

*Grupo Regional para una Transición Energética Justa en América Latina y el Caribe (GRTEJ ALC)*

Argentina

*Asamblea no a la mina Esquel*

*H.I.J.O.S. Córdoba*

*H.I.J.O.S. La Matanza*

*H.I.J.O.S. Regional Necochea*

*H.I.J.O.S. La Plata*

*H.I.J.O.S. Bahía Blanca*

*H.I.J.O.S. Escobar Campana Zárate*

*H.I.J.O.S. Concordia*

*H.I.J.O.S. Ciudad de Buenos Aires*

Germany

*H.I.J.O.S. Alemania*

Australia

*Aid/Watch*

Brasil

*Environmental Defender Law Center*

*Instituto Cordilheira*

Canadá

*Associates Sisters of Providence*

*Atlantic Regional Solidarity Network (ARSN)*

*Amigos de la Tierra*

*Maritimes- Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network*

*BC Casa/Cafe Justicia*

*Comité para los Derechos Humanos en América Latina (CDHAL)*

*Canadian Union of Public Employees*

*Choosethical*

*Decolonized International Solidarity Network DISN Tkaronto- Iximulew*

*Education in Action*

*Rights Action*

*Friends of the Earth Canada*

*Groupe de recherche interdisciplinaire sur les territoires de l'extractivisme (GRITE)*

*Plataforma Canada Guatemala Exiliadxs por Terrorismo de Estado*

RATTMAQ

*Montreal Elders for Environmental Justice*

*Plataforma Guatemaltecos-Guatemaltecas Exiliados por Terrorismo de Estado*

*Todos por Guatemala Montréal*

*KAIROS Halifax*

*MiningWatch Canadá*

*Mining Justice Alliance*

*Mining Injustice Solidarity Network (MISN)*

*Saint Mary's University*

*Solidaridad sin fronteras Sherbrooke*

*GRAN (Grandmothers Advocacy Network)*

*SLAM (Solidarité Laurentides Amérique centrale)*

Colombia

*Colectivo y semillero Pacha Paqta*

*Semillero y Colectivo de Investigación, Acción Pedagógica y Abogacía Popular  
(Universidad Industrial de Santander)*

*Grupo de Investigación en Derechos Colectivos y Ambientales (GIDCA)*

Chile

*Mujeres por el Maipo*

Ecuador

*Cabildo por las Mujeres de Cuenca-Ecuador*

*Yasunidxs Cuenca*

*Yasunidos Guapondelig*

España

*Salva la Selva*

United States

*Alliance for Democracy*

*Colectivo Guatemalteco, Los Angeles CA*

*Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)*

*Cooperation Operation*

*Center for Human Rights and Environment (CHRE)*

*Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN)*

*Environmental Defender Law Center*

*Earthworks*

*Due Process of Law Foundation*

*Institute for Policy Studies - Global Economy Program*

*International Rivers*

*New Hampshire/Vermont Guatemala Accompaniment Project*

*International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)*

*Nicaragua Center for Community Action*

*Denver Justice and Peace Committee (DJPC)*

*McCain Institute*

*Global Labor Justice-International Labor Rights Forum*

*St. Louis Interfaith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA)*

*Feminist Task Force*

*Loretto Link*

*McCain Institute*

*North American Congress on Latin America*

*Unitarian Universalist Society of West Burke*

*GuateMaya LA Mujeres en Resistencia*

*Resistencia Comunitaria*

*Religious community of Sisters*  
*Quechua Collective of New York*  
*Provincial Council Clerics of St. Viator*  
*Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)*  
*Maryknoll Sisters*  
*Latin America Working Group (LAWG)*  
*Oxfam*  
*Santa Elena Project of Accompaniment*  
*Servicio Internacional para los Derechos Humanos (ISHR)*  
*Francia*  
*Collectif Guatemala*  
*Guatemala*  
*AMERINDIA GUATEMALA*  
*Asociación Colectivo Noj*  
*Asociación Procrece*  
*American Friends Service Committee*  
*Concejo Maya Komon Ajq'ijab'*  
*Comité de Unidad Campesina (CUC)*  
*Parroquia Sangre de Cristo*  
*Red Nacional por la Defensa de la Soberanía Alimentaria REDSAG*  
*H.I.J.O.S. Guatemala*  
*Latin America Solidarity Committee—Milwaukee*  
*Trinity Lutheran church*  
*Protection International Mesoamérica*  
*María Tecun*  
*Observatorio de Industrias Extractivas*  
*Honduras*  
*Cehprodec*  
*Holanda*  
*H.I.J.O.S. Holanda*  
*Liberia*  
*Natural Resource Women Platform*  
*Alliance for Rural Democracy (ARD)*  
*México*  
*Espacio de Encuentro de las Culturas Originarias*  
*ARTICLE 19 México and Central América Office*  
*Otros Mundos Chiapas*  
*Geocomunes*  
*Bios Iguana A.C.*  
*Red Mexicana de Afectadas/os por la Minería (REMA)*  
*Frente Popular en Defensa del Soconusco (FPDS)*  
*H.I.J.O.S. México*  
*Perú*  
*H.I.J.X.S de Perú*  
*UK*  
*Roots2Justice*  
*London Mining Network*  
*South Africa*  
*The Gaia Foundation*  
*Suiza*  
*International Platform against Impunity*

*KM207 Guatemala-Suiza*

*Uganda*

*AfricanDefenders (Pan African Human Rights Defenders Network)*

*Oil Refinery Residents Association-ORRA*

*Tasha Research Institute Africa*