

For the rule of law, democracy and peace in Guatemala

The ecumenical and faith-based organisations and members of ACT Alliance express our concern over the decisions of the Guatemalan government to not renew the mandate of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) once it ends in September 2019, and the decision to ban the CICIG Commissioner from entering the country.

As the ACT Alliance Guatemala Forum:

- We regret and reject this decision. In recent years, the CICIG has been instrumental in the progress made towards justice in Guatemala and has systematically contributed to the strengthening of institutional capacities and conditions of the Guatemalan justice system, returning hope and trust to the people of a country who have faced alarming levels of impunity. The decisions taken by Guatemala's executive power present serious setbacks for justice and will deteriorate the rule of law, democratic institutions, respect for human rights, the pursuit of justice and the struggle against corruption and impunity in the country.
- We deeply reject the signs of the militarisation of public security demonstrated by the increase in military security, armoured vehicles and other publically visible military equipment, which deters and threatens the potential to fully exercise civil liberties. At the same time, we condemn the actions of monitoring, intimidation and criminalisation against human rights defenders, which have been reported in recent days.
- We are concerned by the Congress of the Republic's attempts to reverse advances to justice, promoting impunity and weakening democratic institutions. In particular, we are concerned about the legal initiative of "5300" which aims to weaken the process that has been established to remove the legal immunity of public officials that are linked to cases of corruption.

The actions described above are causing an adverse and regressive environment for democratic institutions, the rule of law, justice and human rights in Guatemala, and constitute a serious threat to the fight against corruption and impunity. For these reasons, we urge:

1. The constitutional President of the Republic of Guatemala to revoke his decision regarding the CICIG mandate, and to guarantee the security and physical integrity of CICIG staff, enabling the continuation of their crucial work in supporting national institutions in the fight against impunity.
2. The State of Guatemala to guarantee the independence of the national organs of justice and to respect the roles that correspond to the Constitutional Court (CC), the Public Prosecutor (MP) and the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH), respecting the rule of law and the human rights of the Guatemalan people.
3. Guatemala's civil society to critically analyse the situation, to organise, and to present shared proposals for a peaceful way out of the crisis, avoiding any incitement to violence.

"Learn to do good; commit yourselves to seeking justice. Make right for the world's most vulnerable— the oppressed." Isaiah 1:17 (VOICE)

Geneva, September 14, 2018