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Guatemala: President Cerezo & Interior Minister Morales Dismiss Reports On Increasing Human Rights Abuses

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During a July 17 press conference in Mexico City, Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo dismissed as "simply untrue" reports on rising human rights abuses by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, the US State Department and Americas Watch. Interior Minister Gen. Carlos Morales suggested that the highly conservative estimate of 30,000 "disappeared" Guatemalans is "small" relative to the country's population. [The Guatemalan population is estimated at approximately 8 million.] According to Morales, all the disappeared eventually "appear." Morales mentioned as evidence of the "tremendous freedom" prevailing in Guatemala the existence of the Mutual Support Group for Relatives of the Disappeared (GAM), and the National Widows' Coordinator (CONAVIGUA). (Basic data from Cerigua Weekly Briefs, 07/16-22/90)

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