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Guatemala: Human Rights Defense Group & Student Leader Report Death Threats

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Oct. 21 in Guatemala City, Mutual Support Group (GAM) president Nineth de Garcia told reporters that civil defense patrol (PAC) members operating in Chichicastenango, El Quiche department had delivered numerous death threats against at least 50 local residents. According to de Garcia, PACs are active in 17 villages in Santo Tomas, Chichicastenango del Quiche. De Garcia said death threats were leveled against 14 persons scheduled to testify in court proceedings pertaining to Santos Coj Rodriguez, charged with 50 murders in Tunaja, El Quiche. In addition, the human rights leader said that PAC members warned residents of Chuguexa II B in Chichicastenango against making reports to GAM connected with the planned exhumation of 25 cadavers at a nearby common grave site. Next, Otto Peralta, secretary general of the University Students Association (AEU), said four students had received numerous death threats. Detailed reports of the threats, he added, were submitted recently to UN human rights investigator Christian Tomuschat. (Basic data from ACAN-EFE, 10/21/91)

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