1-24-1992

Guatemala: Human Rights Update

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.
Guatemala: Human Rights Update

by Deborah Tyroler

Category/Department: General

Published: Friday, January 24, 1992

Dec. 19: Prison director Mynor Guzman said that death threats had been received addressed to inmate Noel de Jesus Beteta Alvarez, prime suspect in the Mirna Mack Chang murder case. Guzman added that in order to guarantee the prisoner's safety, he had refused to transport him to court proceedings on Dec. 18. Dec. 22: Two members of the Quetzaltenango Workers Union (UTQ) received death threats signed by the Secret Anti-Communist Army (ESA) death squad.

Dec. 24-28: The Guatemala Human Rights Commission (GHRC) reported that four persons were assassinated in Guatemala and Escuintla departments. Two of the victims had been tortured. According to the GHRC, the US Embassy was investigating whether an unidentified male corpse found Dec. 28 in El Mirador, Guatemala department, was that of a US citizen. The victim was shot four times in the head, his tongue had been cut out, and he had cigarette and other second- and third-degree burns all over his body. Dec. 26: In a letter, the ESA threatened to kill trade union leader Jose Mercedes Sotz Cate if he failed to leave the country within 48 hours. Dec. 28: Prison director Guzman said that at least 30 Guatemalan and foreign journalists covering the investigation and judicial proceedings in the Mack case had received death threats.

Dec. 30: In a TV broadcast by Notisiete, Attorney General Acisclo Valladares said Mynor Guzman had been removed from his post for having provided "personal and paternalistic care [to Beteta]." Valladares added that death squads had issued warnings against judges and lawyers working on the Mack case.

Dec. 31: Ernesto Corzantes Cruz, a court official involved in the Mack case, said he received a death threat from two armed men, one of whom identified himself as Enrique Zamora Hernandez, a member of the presidential security guard unit. According to the army's press office, Zamora is neither a member of the presidential guard nor the army.

Jan. 13: Spokespersons for Judge Maria Eugenia Villasenor reported that she had received anonymous death threats. Villasenor is assigned to the Mirna Mack case, an investigation of possible irregularities in the purchase of helicopters from Saudi Arabia by the administration of former president Vinicio Cerezo, and a case involving a motorcycle gang accused of killing two police officers and six civilians.

Jan. 15: In a joint communique, the Mutual Support Group (GAM), Rujunel Junam Ethnic Communities Council (CERJ) and the Campesino Unity Committee (CUC) denounced intimidation and abuse of civilian members by the civilian defense patrols operating in El Quiche department. Abuses included imposition of a 10:00 p.m. curfew in several villages in the Chichicastenango area; intimidation to dissuade local residents from participating in the CERJ, CUC, and GAM; and, threats against persons active in efforts to carry out exhumations of clandestine grave sites.

Jan. 17: GAM spokespersons reported over 796 assassinations in 1991, and 18 murders during the first two weeks of 1992. Most of the victims were tortured and then killed execution-style. Christian Democrat Deputy Claudio Coxaj denounced the abduction and murder of party leader Rojelio Grave in Joyabaj, El Quiche department.


[Basic data from Notimex, 12/28/91; Cerigua Weekly Briefs, 12/22/91-01/04/92; 01/08/92]
report by Guatemala Human Rights Commission (Washington, DC); ACAN-EFE, 01/08/92, 01/15/92, 01/17/92, 01/19/92, 01/21/92, 01/22/92]

-- End --