

Dear Attorney General María Consuelo Porras Argueta:

cc: Canadian Embassy in Guatemala
US Embassy in Guatemala

We are writing to express our profound sadness and anger at the killing of human rights defender Ángel Estuardo Quevedo in the municipality of Santa Rosa de Lima on July 12, 2018. Estuardo resided in the municipality of Casillas and was a member of the Peaceful Resistance of Santa Rosa, Jalapa and Jutiapa. He played an important role in making visible broad community opposition to the Canadian mining investment project, the Escobal silver mine, owned by Tahoe Resources. Estuardo and his fellow human rights defenders have worked tirelessly and at great personal risk to raise awareness about the ways in which Tahoe and its subsidiary Minera San Rafael have violated their human rights.

Before his death, Estuardo spent considerable time in Guatemala City at the peaceful resistance camp set up outside the Constitutional Court to inform the public about the violations of Indigenous rights committed by Tahoe and Minera San Rafael. He was awaiting a crucial Constitutional Court ruling about the future of the Escobal mine when he was killed. Estuardo lived and died as a courageous human rights defender and was part of a community still facing terrible risks to stand up for their rights.

We lament that the State of Guatemala did not protect Estuardo, who had received threats in leading up to his murder. He sadly joins a growing list of human rights defenders killed in Guatemala since the beginning of 2018 for standing up to protect land, water and the environment.

We call on you to thoroughly, impartially and promptly investigate his murder. As outlined in the newly adopted General Instruction to investigate crimes against human rights defenders, your investigation must include the theory that the attack was in retaliation for his legitimate human rights defence work.

In order to show that Guatemala is serious about ending the wave of killings of human rights defenders, you must publicly condemn the murder of Ángel Estuardo Quevedo and insist that attacks, stigmatization, abuse, discrimination or the killing of human rights defenders anywhere in Guatemala will not be tolerated, these killings will be properly investigated, and those responsible will be arrested and brought to justice.

We also urge you to take appropriate measures, in accordance with the group's wishes, to guarantee the safety of other members of the peaceful resistance of Santa Rosa, Jalapa and

Jutiapa, who are facing increasing surveillance, intimidation and threats. Doing so would send a signal that the Guatemalan state recognizes the important and legitimate work of human rights defenders and could prevent further attacks.

As civil society organisations across Canada and the United States we again raise our voices together to demand Guatemala live up to its international obligations to protect human rights defenders and prevent further violence against peaceful protesters.

Signed,