



REMEMBERING THE FUTURE: WHERE WE COME FROM AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

Photo by NISGUA. August 30th, 2023. Guatemala City. International Day of the Victims of Forced Disappearance

Times are changing. Crises multiply across the world, including in Guatemala, and so are resistance movements that challenge violent systems and create alternatives. This year, Guatemala faced the illegal and corrupt repression of political parties, an ongoing national strike led by Indigenous Peoples, and much more. While this crisis caught the world's attention, NISGUA's partners continue to lead struggles that come from long before and will long outlast this moment. The same can be said for NISGUA's solidarity with them. The last 6 months prove once again that Guatemala can't just rely on the state or political parties. We need strong grassroots networks to continue growing in order to outlive single moments in our long struggle for justice, dignity, memory and life. For these reasons this brief report will look back and look forward, both for NISGUA and Guatemala. Times are changing, and our memory is a light on the path towards the future.

NISGUA'S 2023 WORK AT A GLANCE

POLITICAL ORGANIZING AND EDUCATION:

- 82 publications: translations, solidarity updates, original reports, infographics, and analysis from our Guatemalan partners.
- 8 political education sessions and teach-ins with varied U.S. groups on Guatemala's political moment.
- 7 strategy meetings with key actors and allied organizations.
- 7 "Interwoven Wisdom" political formation sessions with NISGUA members and base
- 6 publications of "Accompanier Perspectives"
- 2 "House Parties" in the U.S. for fundraising and political education
- 2 "emergency responses" mobilizing support upon arrests of our partners

ADVOCACY:

- 2 meetings with the U.S. Embassy to advocate for our partners' concerns and petitions.
- 2 "take actions campaigns" with hundreds of signatures from our base.
- 9 organizational sign-ons, press releases and statements with like-minded organizations
- Presentation of solidarity photos and letters to 45 family members of the Military Diary Case.

"NISGUA CONTINUES TO STAND WITH THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF GUATEMALA WHO SAY NO TO DICTATORSHIP, YES TO DEMOCRACY, YES TO SOLIDARITY, YES TO JUSTICE."
REBECA ZÚÑIGA-HAMLIN, DIRECTOR OF DENVER JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMITTEE



Photo by CPR-Urbana. Instagram:@cpr.u. X:@puebloresiste.
Sepur Zarco, Cahabón, Alta Verapaz. 2019.

GUATEMALA ACCOMPANIMENT PROJECT

Our GAP Internacionalista program continues providing long-term international accompaniment to hundreds of Guatemalan activists on the front lines of Indigenous self-determination, environmental defense, and historical memory. This year, 2 former volunteers returned for short-term periods, joining 4 long-term volunteers. Together they had:

- 198 phone calls, text messages and digital contacts with our partners.
- 35 meetings to exchange information, and coordinate accompaniment and activities.
- 24 physical accompaniments to territories and actions across Guatemala.
- 14 accompaniments to court hearings in cases of transitional justice for crimes committed during the Internal Armed Conflict.



INTERWOVEN WISDOM

This year NISGUA prioritized political formation. In monthly gatherings amongst staff, board, base, partners, and friends, we reflected, studied and dialogued. The goal was to deepen our collective wisdom on how to practice our political principles in the changing world we are in. We discussed topics such as: the effects of militarization in Guatemala; criminalization of accompaniment organizations; the Guatemalan elections; the role of organizers in cultivating deep human relationships; grassroots internationalism, and more.

We want to continue learning and building together in 2024. We invite you to join this space of interweaving wisdom by emailing nisgua@gmail.com with the subject: "Interest: Interwoven Wisdom."

Photo by NISGUA. October 2023. Los Angeles, United States. Vigil in solidarity with Guatemalan national strike

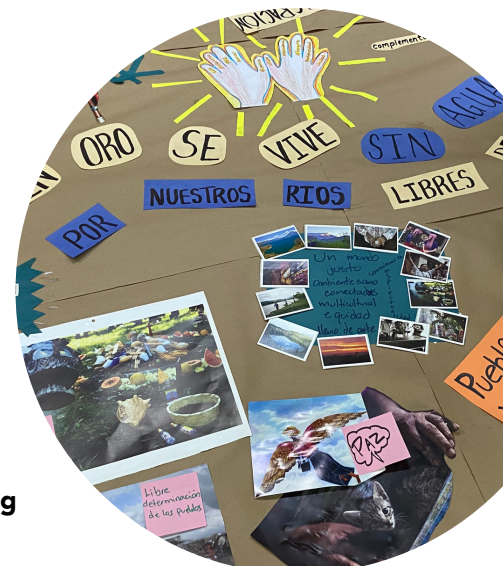
TRANS-TERRITORIAL GATHERING

This year, we took our organizing to a whole new level. For the first time in NISGUA's 42 year history, we gathered as many of our partners as possible into one physical space. Over three days, in the mountainous regions of northern Guatemala, we discussed the changing times Guatemala and the US are in – from the surprise victory of Semilla Party and what it means to grassroots organizations, to the immediate dangers of Guatemalan state corruption, and more. We analyzed the historical moment, strategized together, and began new collaborations.

TRANS-TERRITORIAL TABLE

This year we organized the second annual Trans-Territorial Table, a space for eight grassroots groups at the front lines of transitional justice, indigenous land defense and migrant justice in Guatemala and the diaspora. Over four months they each developed projects to strengthen their struggles, receiving practical support from NISGUA. They met once a month for a knowledge exchange about their struggles and to strengthen relationships, collaborations and strategies. This space has been rich because of all the experience that the participants have. We wish we could share more details, but because of the political crisis in Guatemala it is a safety measure to keep more information confidential for now.

Photo by NISGUA. July 2023. Trans-Territorial Gathering



NISGUA PROGRAMS IN CHANGING TIMES

The state corruption of the last 10 years has come to a head this year, marking a possible turning point in Guatemalan history. The conviction of former-dictator Rios Montt in 2013 on charges of genocide represented a victory for many. For others, it represented a threat to their power. Since 2013, reactionary attacks by corrupt and criminal networks have targeted anyone fighting for justice, memory, and life. The popular opposition to corruption has also grown though, as the democratic election of Semilla shows, though it's uncertain if they'll be allowed to take power in January.

Guatemala is in times of change: Will the people's will be respected not only at the polls, but also in their respective struggles? Guatemalans are not simply voters, but families, communities, survivors, and leaders who are working to defend justice, memory, territory and life. In Guatemala and in the U.S., we must strengthen our trans-territorial unity in these times to survive whatever is to come, and to weave our visions and goals together to build a dignified Guatemala and diaspora. This is what NISGUA aims for.

JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Guatemala faces enormous obstacles in seeking justice through legal channels due to the co-optation of the justice system, with dozens of independent judges, lawyers and activists politically exiled over the last 4 years. Despite the risks, NISGUA's "Justice and Accountability" program continues to accompany the survivors and families of victims of the Internal Armed Conflict in the courts, at memorials, in their communities, and in the streets. With humility and admiration we walk at their side, reminding them that they are not alone and that there is an international presence bearing witness to their struggles and achievements, and working to ensure their safety. We admire the tenacity and love with which our partners weave the struggle for justice for new generations.

"WE AS CHILDREN HAVE TO CONTINUE OUR PARENTS' STRUGGLE. THESE ARE VERY PAINFUL MATTERS. WE AS YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF WHAT OUR PARENTS LIVED THROUGH, TO MAKE THE FACTS KNOWN. THEY [THE CORRUPT AND THEIR NETWORKS] WANT TO DESTROY OUR ORGANIZATIONS BUT WE HAVE TO STAND FIRM, HAVE MORE STRENGTH THAN THEY DO, AND CONTINUE MOVING FORWARD." – ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION MEMBER, RABINAL REGION.

DEFENSE OF LIFE AND TERRITORY

NISGUA's "Defense of Life and Territory" program continues accompanying partners, such as the Xinka Parliament, who actively defend Mother Earth against extractive projects that destroy the environment and break community's social bonds, like the Pan American Silver mine. Our partners also defend democracy during the national strike, and they are criminalized for this work. Recently, one leader of the Xinka Parliament who was active in the strike, Noé Gomez Barrera, was murdered. NISGUA is closely accompanying his grieving community and supporting the Xinka Parliament's denunciation of this crime to the International Commission on Human Rights.

NOÉ GÓMEZ BARRERA
¡PRESENTE!



Illustration by: **Isa Villalón (former NISGUA accompanier)**
Instagram: @HoopsLoopsAndOtherScoops

WHAT NEXT? 2024 AND BEYOND

As this report shows, NISGUA's projects this year have both continued our long term commitments, like accompaniment – the linchpin of our solidarity – and experimented with new projects, like the Trans-Territorial Gathering and the second ever Trans-Territorial Table. Our goal is to keep strengthening the foundation of any successful struggle: relationships which make for strong solidarity over the long haul.

In 2024 NISGUA will enter a "strategic planning" process with staff, board, and partners. We will dedicate time to evaluate what areas of our solidarity work continue to be relevant to Guatemalan struggles, and which we need to compost and reimagine in new ways. Whatever comes, for NISGUA and for Guatemala, we need your continued solidarity – politically, socially, financially! You are a part of this long struggle for justice, dignity, and life. Thank you for walking with us!

INTERVIEW SERIES

In 2024, NISGUA is partnering with the North American Congress on Latin America (nacla.org), a leading continent wide publication that has examined justice and oppression across Latin America and the Caribbean since 1966. Look out for a three part interview series with three of our partners in January, where they will discuss what this political moment in Guatemala means to their organizations, to Guatemala, and to our collective future!

Photo by NISGUA: October 2023. Guatemala National strike

2024 CALENDAR

Our 2024 calendar - Interwoven Wisdom - uplifts diverse and interconnected ways of knowing. We celebrate the wisdom of weaving and learning, offering and feasting, creating and dancing, mobilizing and proclaiming, providing and organizing, protecting and honoring.

Photo by Jonás Moller. Meeting of the Communities of Population in Resistance of the Ixcán.

Scan to order now!



END OF YEAR EVENT

Join us for our end of year fundraising event: Interweaving Struggles in Times of change! Listen to participants of the Trans-Territorial Table, mingle with other NISGUA folks, have fun!

December 12th, 2023 // 5:00pm-7:00pm PST

Illustration by: Isa Villalón. Instagram:@HoopsLoopsAndOtherScoops

Scan to register now!



EXTRAORDINARY DONATIONS

Having looked to the past and as we look to the future, we cannot deny the financial pressures for a grassroots organization like ours. We invite you to give an extraordinary donation so we can continue our work! Thank you! We couldn't do this without you!

Photo by NISGUA: July 2023. Aniversary of Assembly of the People of Huehuetenango

Scan to donate now!

