



This year, our work continued to focus on drawing deeper connections between struggles for social and environmental justice across borders. Guided by the belief that social movements in Guatemala and the U.S. are mutually strengthened by relationships built through international solidarity, we've looked for ways to integrate internationalism into our local activism while continuing to stand with Guatemalan communities fighting for justice and self-determination.

As we look forward to 2018, we remain committed to building accountable, long-term solidarity with Guatemalan communities and creating essential links between their struggles and movements for justice and liberation in the U.S.

2017 Staff and Board Meeting in Guatemala

In the midst of deepening corruption and repression in both the U.S. and Guatemala, our staff and board were called to evaluate and strategize toward strengthening our collective work in 2017. With an interest in investing in the sustainability and continued political relevance of our work in this moment, we turned to the people who have guided our solidarity practices for almost four decades.

In the lead-up to our annual staff and board meeting in Guatemala, our team held in-person conversations with 54 Guatemalan activists from 15 organizations and communities who have partnered with NISGUA in recent years through accompaniment, advocacy, and program work. Together, we discussed the importance of internationalism in our movements and explored opportunities that could be made possible through continued and deepened solidarity. While reflecting on our many years of collaboration, our team received constructive feedback that will continue to drive our strategic planning through 2018, and insights that will renew and inform our commitments for years to come.

"If we lift up the principles of internationalism, we are brothers and sisters in one struggle; the relationship between peoples is more horizontal. There is significant injustice and exclusion of people in the U.S. as well." – From meeting with Association of Communities for Development, Defense of Territory and Natural Resources (ACODET)



During 2017 partner meetings in Guatemala, from left: Aura Elena Farfán and Blanca Hernández of the Families of the Detained-Disappeared (FAMDEGUA); at the peaceful protest camp in Casillas, Santa Rosa, near Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine; NISGUA staff and board with friends.

Justice and Accountability

In support of Guatemalans who seek an end to impunity and justice for crimes committed during the Internal Armed Conflict.

NISGUA's Justice & Accountability program provides information and strategic analysis to our grassroots network and organizational partners to monitor important human rights cases, the political context in Guatemala, the role of the U.S. government, and the ongoing struggle to end impunity for crimes against humanity and genocide. In 2017, we responded to the requests from our Guatemalan partners to share and amplify their messages of resistance, resilience, and hope, continuing to connect their work to global struggles against oppression and impunity.

This year, we:

- Coordinated “Women and the Work of Liberation in Guatemala,” an 8-day delegation with women-led organizations fighting against patriarchy, racism, and state violence. Delegates met with women leaders in movements for justice and self-determination; in meetings with survivors who testified in the historic Sepur Zarco trial, participants personally delivered your solidarity messages, generated from NISGUA's 2016 photo campaign. Through grassroots fundraising, one scholarship was awarded, prioritizing the participation of women of color.
- Celebrated the one-year anniversary of the historic Sepur Zarco ruling and stood with survivors and the Alliance to Break the Silence and End Impunity in their continued struggle for dignified reparations.
- Provided ongoing coverage and analysis of major cases for crimes against humanity, including the Military Zone 21 case – the largest case of forced disappearance in Latin America – and the second re-trial of Ríos Montt and Rodríguez Sánchez. As witnesses return to testify yet again, we continue to amplify the messages of survivors and stand with them in upholding the 2013 verdict that found Ríos Montt guilty of genocide against the Ixil people.

This year, four members of the Association for Justice and Reconciliation passed away before the second re-trial against Ríos Montt began in October. Alongside many others, Miguel Ramírez Matóm, Jacinto de Paz, Cruz Sical Xitumul, and Blas Zetjacobó helped convict Ríos Montt of genocide and crimes against humanity, a ruling that we join survivors in upholding as valid despite retrial proceedings. Like the passing of other witnesses and members of the AJR, their passing underscores the need for a lasting justice. We honor their legacy and continue to stand with the AJR.



“Skylight depends on NISGUA for in-depth and trustworthy information on fast moving events and what’s really happening in Guatemala.”

– Pamela Yates, NISGUA sustaining donor and award-winning documentary director of *500 Years* and *When the Mountains Tremble*

Defense of Life & Territory

Standing with communities as they defend their lives and territories against unjust trade policies and the violent imposition of resource extraction projects.



Members of the NISGUA staff and board meet with the Departmental Assembly of Huehuetenango (ADH).

Our Defense of Life & Territory program continued to provide strategic support to communities standing up against imposed transnational extraction projects and in defense of their communities and Mother Earth. In addition to extensive analysis and timely reporting on local struggles, we took consistent and bold action to say no to defamation, police violence, and other repressive tactics used against those asserting self-determination and fighting for environmental and social justice.

This year we:

- Mobilized over 600 people in the U.S. to call on the Guatemala Attorney General's office to investigate the murder of Sebastián Alonso Juan, an elderly community activist shot and killed in January during a peaceful protest against a proposed hydroelectric project in the Ixquis region of Huehuetenango.



SOLIDARITY = SWIFT ACTION

Within 48 hours of teargas attacks against protestors, 3,000 of you called and/or emailed Tahoe Resources and Guatemalan authorities to demand immediate protection of the peaceful resistance.

- Extensively monitored the social and environmental impacts of Tahoe Resources' Escobal silver mine in southeastern Guatemala; published regular updates on the situation in Casillas, where anti-mining activists in a peaceful encampment have been targeted with police violence and defamation.
- Worked in coalition to mobilize 2,900 people from 59 countries to urge the Guatemalan Public Prosecutor's Office to investigate the April 2014 murder of 16-year old environmental activist and vocal opponent of the Escobal mine, Topacio Reynoso Pacheco.
- Joined 39 other organizations in calling on the U.S. and Canadian embassies to stand up for communities in peaceful resistance to Tahoe Resources, for their right to live in a healthy environment, and to choose the form of development they want.

Guatemala Accompaniment Project (GAP)

Providing a dissuasive presence at the request of Guatemalan organizations and communities who are at risk for their work seeking justice for crimes of the past and defending their lives, culture and territory against the imposition of resource extraction projects.

Through our Guatemala Accompaniment Project (GAP), NISGUA has trained and placed U.S. volunteers to work as international human rights accompaniers in solidarity with Guatemalan activists for over 20 years. Leveraging the privilege linked to having a U.S. passport, accompaniers work to dissuade attacks and increase security by attending trials, visiting communities, sharing stories and action opportunities with their networks, and more. Accompaniers also play a role in shoring up internationalism in U.S. movements for justice, building links between struggles by integrating their experiences into their activism upon returning to the U.S. and supporting NISGUA's political education and advocacy initiatives.

This year, we:

- Developed a Spanish-language workshop series to build intersectional analyses of identity, privilege, and oppression for all volunteers and coordinators in the international ACOGUATE coalition.
- Collaborated with 7 sponsoring communities and 5 accompaniers to share the stories of Guatemalan human rights activists in the U.S. and raise awareness about the impacts of the U.S. state and corporate activities in Guatemala. In addition to reports, newsletters, and articles shared with local and national NISGUA networks, accompaniers published articles in alternative media outlets that included the UTNE Reader and Upside Down World.
- Engaged local communities in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions in over 50 in-person speaking engagements with recently returned accompaniers.



This year, we supported 37 international accompaniers who provided accompaniment to 285 human rights defenders from 26 organizations across Guatemala.

Political Education & Horizontal Exchange

Drawing deeper connections through international solidarity, linking communities in the U.S. and Guatemala in the global movement for justice and self-determination.

As communities in the U.S. faced growing threats under the Trump administration, NISGUA continued to draw meaningful connections between movements in both countries. Guided by the same principles in which our Guatemala solidarity is grounded, NISGUA said “¡Presente!” in local movements for indigenous solidarity, immigrant rights, and anti-militarization, while continuing to deepen our work through political education and horizontal exchange.

This year, we:

- Partnered with Jalapa-based youth organization JODVID for a 16-day U.S. speaking tour, “Guatemalan Youth in Defense of Land and Life.” In collaboration with volunteers and activists in Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, California, and Washington, D.C., youth environmental activist Alex Escobar spoke at 28 events in 9 U.S. cities. Events included strategic meetings with state actors in the nation’s capital; exchanges with activists fighting against environmental racism in Chicago; residents of the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin fighting a proposed iron mine in their territory; young organizers engaged in environmental and queer activism in rural Wisconsin; and an art exchange with Latinx youth in San Francisco’s Mission neighborhood, among others.
- Hosted our first-ever virtual exchange using the Zoom teleconference app, gathering 26 participants in the U.S., Canada, and Guatemala for a conversation with Alex Escobar on youth activism, closing our 2017 speaking tour.
- Collaborated with the Center for Human Rights Legal Action (CALDH) to bring their photography exhibition, “Defending Truth and Memory: The Path Toward Justice” to the U.S. for the first time. The exhibit, which showcases community struggles to preserve historical memory while seeking justice for loved ones lost during the internal armed conflict, was shown in Colorado and California, and will be shown in New Mexico early next year.
- Supported movements local to our Oakland office to demilitarize our communities, such as Stop Urban Shield, rallies to protect DACA and immigrants, and local struggles to defend sacred sites in the San Francisco Bay Area, including coordination of a legal expert letter contesting an Environmental Impact Report threatening the West Berkeley Shellmound.

“Having had the ability to go to Guatemala was a tremendously transformative experience that challenged me to contextualize the varied struggles that women face in the country and further inspire me to continue solidarity work here in the U.S.”

– Gladys Garcia, 2017 delegation scholarship recipient from Los Angeles, CA

Celebrate with us

As we move into our 37th year, we invite you to become a sustaining donor. By enrolling as a monthly donor, you can help ensure that we sustain our advocacy efforts, respond in moments of crisis, and continue our long-term accompaniment of Guatemala human rights defenders.

DONATE ONLINE!

nisgua.org/donate



Alex Escobar, Guatemalan youth activist and member of JODVID joins a #DivesttheGlobe action in Oakland while on our NISGUA 2017 tour, demanding free, prior, informed consent.

About NISGUA

NISGUA builds mutually beneficial grassroots ties between the people of the U.S. and Guatemala and advocates for grassroots alternatives to challenge elite power structures and oppressive U.S. economic and foreign policy.