

Network of Concerned Historians				NCH
Campaigns				
Year original	Year follow-up	Circular	Country	Names
2003		31	Guatemala	Fredy Peccerelli, forensic anthropologist, a.o.
	2006			<i>follow-up 3</i>
	2006			<i>follow-up 2</i>
	2005			<i>follow-up 1</i>

Announcement

Amnesty International reports once again about death threats against members of a Guatemalan forensic anthropology team. These teams can be perceived as “protohistorians”: they excavate mass graves to find evidence for the genocide and other crimes against humanity committed during the civil war (1960–96) and are therefore of great concern to the historical profession. We hope that you can send the recommended urgent appeals immediately. Please remember to write in your professional capacity.

P.S.: For a NCH case summary, see NCH #31 (ii). For other NCH actions on Guatemala, see: NCH #13 (bishop Juan Gerardi); NCH #24 (historian Matilde Leonor González Izas); NCH #26 (forensic anthropologists). For other NCH actions related to forensic anthropology, see NCH #29 (Argentinian archeology student Fernanda Sanssone) and NCH #41 (Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania, archeologist, and others). For more news on forensic anthropology and exhumations in other parts of the world, see the news circulars at the NCH website.

URGENT ACTION APPEAL

16 March 2006

UA 238/05 (originally issued 13 January 2006 and re-issued 14 September 2005)

Fear for safety/death threats

GUATEMALA

Fredy Peccerelli (m), head of the Fundacion de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG), Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation.

Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso (f), sister of Fredy Peccerelli

Omar Giron de Leon (m), FAFG Laboratory Coordinator and husband of Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso

Jeannette Peccerelli (f), former wife of Fredy Peccerelli

Other members of the FAFG, Gianni Peccerelli (m), brother of Fredy Peccerelli

Fredy Peccerelli, head of the Guatemala City-based Fundacion de Antropología Forense Guatemala (FAFG), the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, his brother Gianni Peccerelli, his sister Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso and his brother-in-law Omar Giron de León continue to be in grave danger following new death threats made in recent days.

On 15 March, Fredy Peccerelli received an SMS text message on his mobile phone which read, “los tenemos bien controlados antropologo hijo de puta vamos a matar a tus hermanos primero...” (“We are watching you anthropologist son of a bitch we will kill your siblings first...”).

Fredy Peccerelli has told Amnesty International that the Public Prosecutor’s Office has not advanced with the investigation into the death threats made at the beginning of January 2006. On 9 January, he received a death threat by SMS text message aimed at his brother. The following day, a letter was deposited in the mail box at the home of Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso and her husband Omar Giron de Leon, who is the Laboratory coordinator for the FAFG. On 5 January 2006, Jeannette Peccerelli, Fredy Peccerelli’s former wife, was shopping with her two children, accompanied by the police officer protecting her, when an unidentified man began following them. In fear for their safety, they were forced to abandon their shopping trip.

Fredy Peccerelli and other members of the FAFG have been subjected to numerous death threats as a result of their work to exhume mass graves of those killed by the Guatemalan military and their civilian adjuncts in the early 1980s. In 2002, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) ordered that Bianka Peccerelli Monterroso, Omar Giron de Leon, Fredy Peccerelli and other members of the FAFG receive precautionary protection measures. However, concerns remain about the level or efficiency of the protection provided. The level of protection had decreased just before the death threats last January. Since then, they have been given the personal protection requested in terms of police presence, however they report that it has been unreliable.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

expressing grave concern for the safety of Bianka Peccerelli, Gianni Peccerelli, Fredy Peccerelli, Omar Giron de Leon and Jeannette Peccerelli;

urging the authorities to take immediate measures to offer all the protection needed to the individuals named above and the offices of FAFG, in accordance with the 2002 order of the IACHR;

calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into the threats, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;

calling for the authorities to account for their failure to conduct adequate investigations into previous threats against members of the FAFG;

reminding the authorities of the right of human rights defenders to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Vice-Minister of the Interior:

Vice-Ministro de Gobernacion

Julio Cesar Godoy Anleu

6a.Avenida 4-64, zona 4, nivel 2.Ciudad de Guatemala,

Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2361 5914

Salutation: Senor Ministro/ Dear Minister

Head of the Special Prosecutor's Office on Human Rights:

Jefa de la Fiscalia de Seccion de Derechos Humanos

Rosa Maria Salazar Marroquin

7a. Avenida 11-20, Zona 1, Segundo nivel

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2230 5296 (if a voice responds, say ‘por favor, tono de fax’)

Salutation: Estimada Fiscal/ Dear Madam

COPIES TO:

Human rights organization:

Fundacion de Antropologia Forense de Guatemala (FAFG)

Avenida Simon Canas 10-64, Zona 2

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2254 0882/2288 7297/ 2288 7302 (if a voice responds, say ‘por favor, tono de fax’)

Ambassador Jose Guillermo Castillo

Embassy of Guatemala

2220 R St. NW Washington DC 20008

Fax: 1 202 745 1908

Email: info@guatemala-embassy.org

Please send appeals immediately. Check with the Network of Concerned Historians, if sending appeals after April 28, 2006.

Amnesty International is a worldwide grassroots movement that promotes and defends human rights.

This Urgent Action may be reposted if kept intact, including contact information and stop action date (if applicable). Thank you for your help with this appeal.

Urgent Action Network

Amnesty International USA

Email: uan@aiusa.org

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent/>

Phone: 303 258 1170

Fax: 303 258 7881