

UA: 259/16

AI Index: AMR 34/5144/2016 of 15 November 2016

GUATEMALA: YOUNG HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER SHOT DEAD

Guatemalan human rights defender Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was assassinated on 12 November. He was the Assistant to the Executive Director of the Guatemalan Centre for Legal, Environmental and Social Action (CALAS).

In the afternoon of 12 November, unknown assailants shot Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima twice in the head in Guatemala City, Zone 1, near a very well-known restaurant. The perpetrators did not steal his personal effects, which included two cellphones, his identity card, and a savings card. According to information provided by the Guatemalan Centre for Legal, Environmental and Social Action (CALAS), Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima did not receive any threats in the days prior to the murder. The Unit of Crimes against Life of the General Prosecutor's Office (Fiscalía de Delitos contra la Vida) is in charge of the investigation. CALAS has requested to move the responsibility for the investigation into the Unit of Attacks against Human Rights Activists (Unidad de Ataques contra Activistas de Derechos Humanos).

Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was a former student leader and human rights campaigner. As an Assistant to the Executive Director of CALAS, he was in charge of managing sensitive information related to the high profile cases CALAS is litigating. The investigation into his murder should explore the possibility that he was killed in retaliation for his legitimate human rights work.

Please send a fax, email or letter without delay. (Postage is \$2.50.)

- * Call on the authorities to initiate a prompt, impartial and thorough investigation into the murder of Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima, to identify both the material and intellectual perpetrators and bring those responsible to justice. The investigation should include the hypothesis of the assassination being a possible retaliation for the human rights work of the young leader and his activities in CALAS.
- * Urge them to advance in the adoption of a Public Policy to Protect Defenders in accordance with the minimum criteria set out by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the case Human Rights Defender v. Guatemala.
- * Call on them to condemn the assassination of the young leader, and publicly recognize the important and legitimate work of human rights defenders.

Address your messages to

Attorney General

Thelma Aldana

Fiscal General de la República

15 avenida 15-16 zona 1

Edificio Gerona 8º Nivel

Ciudad de Guatemala, C.P. 01001

Guatemala

Email: taldana@mp.gob.gt

Twitter: @MPguatemala

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/ Estimado señora Fiscal

President

Víctor Hugo Godoy

2da Avenida 10-50, Zona 9

Ciudad de Guatemala

Guatemala

Email: vhgodoy@copredeh.gob.gt

Twitter: @COPREDEH

Salutation: Dear President/ Estimado señor Presidente

Please send a copy to

CALAS

Avenida Mariscal No. 13-59, zona 11

Colonia Mariscal

Ciudad de Guatemala, C.P. 01011

Guatemala

Fax: 001 502 2473 0813

Email: informacion@calas.org.gt

Her Excellency Blanca Rita Josefina Claverie Díaz de Sciolli

Ambassador for the Republic of Guatemala

130 Albert Street, Suite 1010

Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G4

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Guatemalan Centre for Legal, Environmental and Social Action (CALAS) is a Guatemalan non-government organization working to defend and promote the human rights to a healthy environment and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. They provide legal representation and advice to several communities in Guatemala who are promoting human rights in the context of projects for the exploration and exploitation of natural resources.

On 29 August 2011, the director and legal adviser at CALAS, Yuri Melini and Rafael Maldonado, both received envelopes that contained the same documents: a threat; papers from the Office of the Comptroller General (Contraloria General de Cuentas); and mug-shot photographs of 18 men, which appeared to have been taken from police files.

On 8 September 2008, masked men shot CALAS director Yuri Melini, apparently in connection with his work (See UA 248/08, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr34/021/2008/en/>). Following the attack, Yuri Melini and CALAS were granted protection from the state.

According to the civil society organization UDEFEGUA, human rights defenders working on issues of the environment are the main group of activists attacked in Guatemala. For more information, see the report 'We are defending the land with our blood': Defenders of the land, territory and environment in Honduras and Guatemala, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr01/4562/2016/en/>).

Name: Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima
Gender m/f: m