

UA 63/19

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## GUATEMALA LAWYER OF XINCA PEOPLE UNDER THREAT

Quelvin Jiménez has recently received death threats. He has been targeted with smear campaigns, intimidation and surveillance for defending the rights to land and territory of the Xinca People in the context of mining activities in the south of Guatemala.

The latest threats include phone calls indicating he was to die, the presence of an armed man near his home, and an attempt of intimidation as he approached his house on 6 May. The man seen near his house chased Quelvin on a motorcycle attempting to make his vehicle slow down. In late April, he was alerted to a plan to kill him. The investigations of previous attacks are still pending and the police have yet to enforce security measures ordered by the Public Prosecutor's office to protect him.

Amnesty International urges the Public Prosecutor's office to carry out investigation into all the attacks and provide protection for Quelvin Jiménez.



*Quelvin Jiménez via Twitter*

**Please send a tweet or email to the Attorney General.** (There is no postal service into Guatemala.)

- \* Express concern for the safety of the lawyer of the Xinca People, Quelvin Jiménez, given the number and variety of threats against him for his work in defense of the land and territory of the Xinca People.
- \* Urge her to conduct a prompt, independent, effective and impartial investigation into all the threats and attacks against Quelvin Jiménez, and to bring all those responsible to justice.
- \* Insist that she guarantees the protection of Quelvin Jiménez by the police, in accordance with his wishes and needs.

### Write to

Consuelo Porras, Attorney General for Guatemala

Email: [carrecis@mp.gob.gt](mailto:carrecis@mp.gob.gt) ( This is Mrs Porras' private secretary.)

Twitter: @MPguatemala

Salutation: Dear General Attorney

## **Please copy**

His Excellency Carlos Humberto Jiménez Licona  
Ambassador for the Republic of Guatemala  
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## **Additional information**

On 2 May 2013, the government of Guatemala declared a state of emergency in and around San Rafael las Flores, a town some 90 kilometres from the capital, following a series of violent incidents around the mining operation of Minera San Rafael, a subsidiary of the Canada and US-based Tahoe Resources Inc. In January 2013, unknown armed men attacked the mine site resulting in the deaths of two security guards and another person, presumed to be part of the group attacking the site. For more information, see: *Mining in Guatemala: Rights at risk* (<http://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/mining-in-guatemala-rights-at-risk-eng.pdf>).

Members of the Centre for Environmental, Social and Legal Action (CALAS) who have previously defended the rights of communities affected by the San Rafael mining company have also reported reiterated acts of intimidation and harassment against them. For more information see Urgent Action: *Smear Campaign against Human rights defenders* (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr34/6680/2017/en/>)

According to our research, human rights defenders in Guatemala carry out their activities in an extremely hostile environment, particularly those working on rights related to land, territory and the environment. They face continuous threats, intimidation and attacks. The Unit for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Guatemala (UDEFEQUA) reported 26 human rights defenders were killed in 2018. Defenders are also regularly targeted with smear campaigns aimed at stigmatizing and discrediting them by private actors and the Guatemalan authorities. The criminal justice system is regularly misused, defenders are falsely accused and prosecuted trying keep them silent and to break up movements and organizations. For more information, see the Amnesty International 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/>)