

September 2017

## **GUATEMALA: Protect land and water defenders**

Guatemala is a country rich in minerals such as gold, silver and iron. Companies both inside and outside the country want those riches.

Sometimes the companies don't ask permission before they start taking the minerals. Sometimes their operations destroy the forests and farmland, and pollute the rivers.

Defenders of water and land need help to protect their right to a healthy environment.

One person they can count on is Rafael Maldonado. He runs an organization called CALAS (the Centre for Environmental, Social and Legal Action).

But not everyone respects the important work that Rafael and members of CALAS do.

They have been threatened in social media posts and in newspaper articles. The threats said they would be killed if they continue their work.



Rafael Maldonado is one of the brave human rights defenders who works at CALAS.

They have been threatened at work too, and even at home. Last November, someone shot and killed a man who worked at CALAS. And last April, someone fired shots outside Rafael's house.

Rafael and others at CALAS refuse to be silent even though they are in great danger. We cannot be silent when people like Rafael are threatened just for using peaceful ways to try and protect their environment.

Tell the government to keep them safe.

Your letter could be a lifesaver!

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Please write to Guatemala's Attorney General, Thelma Aldana.

- Start your letter Dear Attorney General.
- In your first sentence, tell her something about yourself. For example, you could write about your efforts to protect your own environment.
- Then explain your concern about the attacks and threats against Rafael Maldonado and other members of CALAS.
- In your last sentence, ask the Attorney General to take action that will keep them safe and will make sure they can continue their important work to defend their land and water.



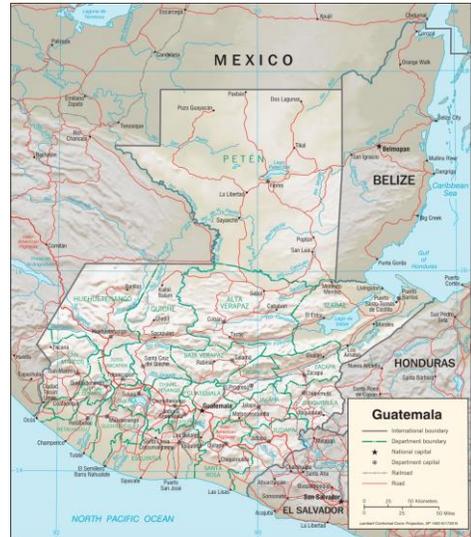
## WHERE DO I SEND MY MESSAGE?

Canada Post is not delivering mail to Guatemala, so please send your message to

Thelma Aldana  
c/o Amnesty International  
3-1992 Yonge Street  
Toronto, Canada M4S 1Z7

We will send all her mail by courier in mid-October.

Or you may email her directly at [taldana@mp.gob.gt](mailto:taldana@mp.gob.gt)



## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Rafael Maldonado and his staff at CALAS would be pleased to know there are people in Canada who support their efforts to protect their land and their water. Please send them a drawing, postcard, photo or letter. You could decorate your message with trees, rivers, animals or mountains. If you want to write something in Spanish, "Your work is so important" is "Su labor es muy importante." Send your message to

CALAS  
c/o Amnesty International  
3-1992 Yonge Street  
Toronto, Canada M4S 1Z7

Or email directly to [informacion@calas.org.gt](mailto:informacion@calas.org.gt).

If you have not received this Lifesaver directly from Amnesty International's Toronto office and would like future actions, reach us at the contact information in the header. There is no cost.