



Urgent statement to the International Community regarding the duty of the State of Guatemala to guarantee independence and transparency in the Nomination Committees.

We, the undersigned civil society networks, express our most profound concern regarding the ruling issued by the Constitutional Court of Guatemala on February 5, 2014, through which it provisionally grants an appeal on constitutional grounds to a private attorney, thus prematurely ending the term of office of the Attorney General, Claudia Paz and Paz. The ruling is based on transitory articles of the Constitution and disrespects the Government Decision No. 90 of the President of the Republic on November 9, 2010, by which she was nominated for a four year term. Particularly striking is the speed with which they have dismissed the appeals presented by the General Attorney and how rapid Congress was ordered to convoke the Nomination Committee to elect a new Attorney General, sworn in on February 8, 2014.

These decisions constitute a setback in the strengthening of rule of law and judicial independence. Furthermore, it seriously jeopardizes cases of human rights violations investigated by the General Attorney's Office, and it encourages revisionism by extreme groups, jeopardizing hitherto progress to fight impunity.

We reiterate our acknowledgement of the administration of the Public Prosecution's Office by the Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz. She has demonstrated that political will to reduce impunity in all areas can be made reality with the existence of professionalism, dedication, commitment and determination; qualities which have been recognized by the international community and various national actors. We therefore deplore the attacks made through public pronouncements against embassies and international organizations, whose declarations on this matter we do not perceive as external interference, but as a genuine concern for the risks the future of justice in Guatemala faces.

We call on the international community to remain vigilant regarding the development of this process and demand from the Guatemalan state to ensure that the created capacity within the General Attorney's Office is maintained and strengthened. In particular, this is necessary to deepen the relationship with the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala.

We also ask the international community to support the efforts of national organization, thus guaranteeing that they can properly monitor this process.

Finally we urge the international community to remind the Guatemalan state of its' duty to guarantee independent and transparent Nomination Committees, especially for the nomination of the new Attorney General and head of General Attorney's Office, as well as the magistrates for the Supreme Court of Justice and the Appeals Chambers. Professional and ethical criteria must prevail when forming a justice system capable to combat impunity.

International Platform against Impunity
International NGO Forum in Guatemala –FONGI-
Copenhagen Initiative for Central America and Mexico – CIFCA
International alliance of Catholic development agencies - CIDSE

Guatemala, Brussels and Geneva, February 13, 2014