



Urgent Action: End the Violence and Impunity in Guatemala

Banana Link



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Repeated killings of Guatemalan banana union leaders

- In March 2008, Miguel Angel Ramirez, founder of the new SITRABANSUR union on the 'Olga Maria' plantation in the Pacific South of Guatemala, was shot dead.
- In April 2008 SITRABI union member Enrique Cruz Hernandez was shot during his lunch break.
- In February 2008 the daughter of the General Secretary of SITRABANSUR was raped by a gang of armed men.

These are just a few of the many recent cases of violence against banana union leaders in Guatemala, which have been escalating since the murder of SITRABI union leader, Marco Tulio Ramirez in September 2007. SITRABI General Secretary, Noé Ramirez, reported that at least five banana workers were killed between February and April 2008. Union leaders and members in other sectors have also been victims of the increasingly generalised violence.

Pressure must be put on the Guatemalan government to ensure that the people responsible for these killings are brought to justice and the systematic violations of labour rights are put to a stop. As a result of a previous international campaign led by the IUF, EUROBAN and COLSIBA, the new Guatemalan president, Alvaro Colom, promised to take action to ensure that the murder of SITRABI union leader Marco Tulio Ramirez was investigated by the authorities. However the subsequent lack of action by the Guatemalan government on these violent and shocking cases of trade union repression now necessitates political pressure from EU governments to ensure that Alvaro Colom sticks to his commitments to end impunity and violence in Guatemala.

To: His Excellency Ian Hughes,

British Ambassador in Guatemala

I am writing to you with reference to the recent violence towards banana union leaders Marco Tulio Ramirez (SITRABI), murdered in September 07, Miguel Angel Ramirez, (SITRABANSUR), murdered in March 08, Enrique Cruz Hernandez, (SITRABI), murdered in April 08, among other banana union members who have been killed in recent months. In the face of a rapidly deteriorating security situation in Guatemala, I am writing to ask you to take action to ensure a full and open investigation and the subsequent prosecution of those responsible for these acts of violence. I hope that, as representative of the British Government in Guatemala, you will be active in the fight to put an end to this pattern of rising anti-union violence and institutional impunity in Guatemala.

Signed:

Date:

Name:

Email:



To: His Excellency Ian Hughes,
British Ambassador in Guatemala

c/o Banana Link,
38 Exchange Street,
Norwich,
NR2 1AX

Please send this postcard to **BananaLink**. We will then send all signed postcards to Ambassador **Ian Hughes**.

For any further information please contact:
info@bananalink.org.uk

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