

Network of Concerned Historians				NCH
Campaigns				
Year original	Year follow-up	Circular	Country	Names
2003		31	Guatemala	Fredy Peccerelli, forensic anthropologist, a.o.
	2007			<i>follow-up 4</i>
	2006			<i>follow-up 3</i>
	2006			<i>follow-up 2</i>
	2005			<i>follow-up 1</i>

Announcement

Amnesty International reports once again about death threats against members of a Guatemalan forensic anthropology team: please see below. Forensic anthropology teams can be perceived as “protohistorians”: they excavate mass graves to find historical evidence for genocide and other crimes against humanity committed during the civil war (1960–1996). Therefore, they are of great concern to the historical profession. The Guatemalan forensic anthropologists are in grave danger. We hope that you can send the recommended urgent appeals immediately. Please remember to write in your professional capacity. Thank you for your help with this appeal.

P.S.: This text is also available at: <http://www.concernedhistorians.org/images/ca/31f4.pdf>. For other NCH actions on Guatemala, see: NCH no. 13 (bishop Juan Gerardi); NCH no. 24 (historian Matilde Leonor González Izas); NCH no. 26 (forensic anthropologists). For other NCH actions related to forensic anthropology, see NCH no. 29 (Argentinian archeology student Fernanda Sanssone) and NCH no. 41 (Peruvian archeologist Luis Alberto Rueda Curimania and others). For more news on forensic anthropology and exhumations elsewhere, see the NCH Annual Reports.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

URGENT ACTION APPEAL

30 May 2007

UA 131/07

Fear for safety/Death threats

GUATEMALA

Fredy Peccerelli (m), Director of Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG),
Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation

Jose Samuel Suasnavar (m), FAFG Deputy Director

Omar Bertoni Giron (m), FAFG Laboratory Coordinator

Bianka Peccerelli (f), sister of Fredy, wife of Jose Suasnavar

Gianni Peccerelli, brother of Fredy

Other FAFG staff and other members of Fredy Peccerelli's family

Fredy Peccerelli heads the Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG), Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, which works to identify people massacred and buried in mass graves by the armed forces during the internal armed conflict (1960-1996). He and his colleagues and relatives named above have received death threats. Amnesty International believes they are in grave danger.

On 29 May at 11am Omar Bertoni received a text message on his mobile phone which read "Muerte > van a morir tu hermano, hermana, papas y hijos Fredy hijo de" ("Death > your brother, sister, parents and sons will die Fredy son of").

On 28 May Fredy Peccerelli had received an email headed Carta de placer ("letter of pleasure"), which read: "Los días se estan acabando REVOLUCIONARIO de mierda. Hoy tenemos vijilada a tu hermana tiene pantalon negro y camisa Blanca, va ser mas facil de lo que esperamos. El momento que Omar sepa que la violamos va valer todo, a el lo vamos a torturar hasta que nos diga todo de las exhumaciones. Fredy tu turno viene. Los ANTROPOLOGOS DEBEN MORIR!" ("Your days are running out fucking REVOLUTIONARY. Today we have your sister under surveillance she is wearing black trousers and a white shirt, it is going to be easier than we thought. The moment Omar

knows that we raped her he won't be bothered again, we will torture him until he tells us everything about the exhumations. Freddy your turn is coming up. Anthropologists must die!"). Freddy Peccerelli immediately rang Bianka Pecerelli, his sister, who confirmed that she was wearing black trousers and a white shirt.

On 25 May Freddy Peccerelli, Jose Suasnavar, Omar Bertoni and Bianka Peccerelli received an email headed Carta de saludos ("greetings letter") which read: "Los he vigilado como aguilas, moriran en poco tiempo tenemos un orden para hacer sufrir a ese maldito director de la fafg. Todos en su familia estan vigilados, por un largo tiempo se nos habia escapado la mierda de su hermana que si la vimos en IGSS maldita sufrira por su hermano la violaremos y descuartizaremos por pedazos la encontrara Omar Giron viuda se quedara, Luego sigue el saliendo lo detendremos nunca se lo imaginara. En el fafg estaran de luto no solo por los parientes de Freddy, peor por otros miembros de alto rango. REVOLUCIONARIOS DE MIERDA. Todos deben morir en la Z.12 esta nuestro ataque. La lista es larga pero te llegara tu dia FREDDY despues de darle muerte a toda tu familia." ("I have been watching you all like an eagle, you will die in a short time we have an order to make that fucking fafg director suffer. All in his family are under surveillance, for a long time his shit sister had escaped from us that we did see her at the IGSS [local hospital] she will fucking suffer for his brother we will rape her and dismember her Omar Giron will find her in pieces, and he will become a widow, Then he is next we will stop him while going out he will never imagine it. At the fafg there will be mourning not only for Freddy's relatives, but for other high-level members. SHIT REVOLUTIONARIES. All of you have to die our attack is in Z.12 [the Zone 12 area of Guatemala city]. The list is long but your time will come Freddy after killing all your family").

On 24 May at 2pm four heavily armed men on two old motorbikes without license-plates forced two members of staff driving back from a bank to the FAFG offices to stop. They demanded the occupants' money and guns. The two members of staff did not carry guns but handed over the money that they had just withdrawn. The men hit them in the face, threatened them not to follow them and drove away.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

FAFG staff and some of their relatives have been subjected to numerous death threats over the last five years (see NCH nos. 31, 31 [ii], 31 [iii], 31 [iv]). The government has provided police protection for a number of years. Guatemalan and Spanish courts have filed charges of genocide against a former President and heads of the army and police, and, although there has been no progress in Guatemala, a Spanish judge has issued arrest warrants and will soon visit Guatemala to take testimony from

survivors. Some of the evidence in these cases is the product of FAFG's work. The government is seeking applications from organizations to undertake the exhumation of newly discovered graves in the department of Quiche.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- expressing grave concern for the safety of Fredy Peccerelli, his colleagues Jose Suasnavar and Omar Bertoni, his relatives Bianka Peccerelli and Gianni Peccerelli, and other FAFG staff members and relatives;
- calling for an immediate and thorough investigation into the death threats they have received, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- calling on the authorities to continue to provide police protection to Fredy Peccerelli and the FAFG offices;
- reminding the authorities that human rights defenders have a right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General and Head of the Public Prosecutor's office:

Lic. Juan Luis Florido

Fiscal General de la Republica y Jefe del Ministerio Publico

Edificio Ministerio Publico,

15 Avenida 15-16, Zona 1

Barrio Gerona, 8vo. Nivel

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2411 9124

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Estimado Fiscal General

Minister of Interior:

Adela Camacho de Torrebiarte

Ministra de Gobernacion, 6a. Avenida 13-71, Zona 1

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2413 8658

Salutation: Dear Minister/Estimada Sra. Ministra

COPIES TO:

Presidential Human Rights Office:

Comisión Presidencial de Derechos Humanos (COPREDEH)

Lic. Frank La Rue, 2a avenida 10-50 zona 9

Ciudad de Guatemala, 01009, Guatemala

Fax: 011 502 2334-0119

Human rights organization:

Fundación de Antropología Forense de Guatemala (FAFG)

Avenida Simon Canas 10-64, Zona 2

Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Fax: (if a voice answers, say ‘‘por favor, tono de fax’’)

011 502 2254 0882

011 502 2288 7297

011 502 2253 6296

Ambassador Jose Guillermo Castillo

Embassy of Guatemala

2220 R St. NW

Washington DC 20008

Fax: 1 202 745 1908

Email: info@guatemala-embassy.org

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with NCH if sending appeals after 11 July 2007.

Amnesty International is a worldwide grassroots movement that promotes and defends human rights.

This Urgent Action may be reposted if kept intact, including contact information and stop action date (if applicable). Thank you for your help with this appeal.