

Her Excellency Ambassador Leeann McKechnie
Embassy of Canada in Guatemala
Guatemala City
Guatemala

April 16, 2010

Dear Ambassador McKechnie,

I represent Karma Coop, a cooperative food store in Toronto, Ontario. Since 1972 Karma's mission has been to provide our members with food and household products that are organic, sustainable and source through equitable means. It is through these endeavours that we have come to know of the dangers facing Leocadio Juracán, via our association with the Comité Campesino del Altiplano (CCDA).

I am writing to thank you and the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala for your diligence in attending to the case involving Mr. Juracán and his role as general coordinator of the CCDA. Mr. Juracán and his family have suffered threats and intimidation as a consequence of their human rights and community development work and Canada's quick action in this case may well have saved Mr. Juracán's life.

However, although Mr. Juracán and his family are now living in Canada, intimidation and harassment of the CCDA continues. Reports have reached us of hooded men coming to the village of Santa Cruz Quixaya, where the CCDA has its national headquarters, of shots being fired in the village late at night and of strangers asking about Mr. Juracán's whereabouts. The promised security perimeter offered by the Human Rights Ombudsoffice and the Presidential Human Rights Commission (COPREDEH) has not materialized.

The threats against Mr. Juracán and his family represent only one of more than 280 cases of intimidation and violence against labour, human rights and social movement leaders in the past two years. We implore you to use Canada's good relationship with the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) to make greater effort to resolve these cases.

Thank you again for your continued support in this matter.

Sincerely,

Danielle Thibodeau
Vice-President, Board of Directors
Karma Coop Food Store