

# URGENT ACTION

## ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDER INTIMIDATED

**On the night of 3 April, unidentified people situated in front of human rights defender Rafael Maldonado's house in Guatemala City, shot at a car nearby. Although he was unharmed, the defender believes the incident was intended to intimidate him and is concerned for his safety.**

On 3 April, around 9:20 pm, unidentified people stood in front of human rights defender **Rafael Maldonado's** house and shot at a car located on the other side of a park that is in front of his home in Guatemala City, the capital. The men shot at the car several times while they were in front of the defender's house. Rafael Maldonado did not suffer any injuries, but representatives from the Guatemalan Centre for Environmental, Social and Legal Action (Centro de Acción Legal, Ambiental y Social de Guatemala, CALAS) told Amnesty International that this incident has contributed to his increased emotional distress.

Rafael Maldonado is the Legal Director for CALAS, a Guatemalan NGO working to defend and promote the human rights to a healthy environment and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. They provide legal representation and advice to several communities in Guatemala who are promoting human rights in the context of projects for the exploration and exploitation of natural resources. For years, Rafael Maldonado has faced threatening messages as a consequence of his job providing legal counsel to community defenders, and in litigating environmental cases in diverse tribunals. He is concerned for his safety following this latest act of intimidation against him.

### Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to order an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the incident of intimidation against Rafael Maldonado, make the results public and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging them to take immediate steps to provide full and appropriate protection to Rafael Maldonado, in consultation with the defender and in accordance with his wishes;
- Calling on them to publicly recognize the important and legitimate work of defenders working on land, territory and environmental issues.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 18 MAY 2017 TO:

#### Attorney General

Thelma Aldana  
Fiscal General de la República  
15 avenida 15-16 zona 1  
Edificio Gerona 8º Nivel  
Ciudad de Guatemala, 01001  
Guatemala  
Email: [taldana@mp.gob.gt](mailto:taldana@mp.gob.gt)  
Twitter: @MPguatemala  
**Salutation: Dear Attorney General/  
Estimada Señora Fiscal**

#### Minister of Interior

Francisco Manuel Rivas Lara  
Ministerio de Gobernación  
6 avenida 13-71 zona 1, Guatemala,  
Guatemala  
Email: [smvasquez@mingob.gob.gt](mailto:smvasquez@mingob.gob.gt)  
[vrosales@mingob.gob.gt](mailto:vrosales@mingob.gob.gt)  
[lucreciarosalesad@gmail.com](mailto:lucreciarosalesad@gmail.com)  
Twitter: @mingobguate  
**Salutation: Dear Minister  
Estimado Señor Ministro**

#### And copies to:

#### CALAS

Avenida Mariscal No. 13-59, zona 11  
Colonia Mariscal  
C.P. 01011 Ciudad de Guatemala  
Guatemala  
Fax: +502 2473 0813  
Email: [informacion@calas.org.gt](mailto:informacion@calas.org.gt)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** HIS EXCELLENCY MR ACISCLO VALLADARES MOLINA, Embassy of Guatemala, 13 Fawcett St SW10 9HN, 020 7351 3042, [inglaterra@minex.gob.gt](mailto:inglaterra@minex.gob.gt), [info@guatemalanembassy.co.uk](mailto:info@guatemalanembassy.co.uk)

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Members of the Guatemalan Centre for Legal, Environmental and Social Action (Centro de Acción Legal, Ambiental y Social de Guatemala, CALAS) have reported acts of intimidation and harassment against them, including violent attacks, for many years (See the Urgent Action: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr34/3013/2015/en/>).

On 12 November 2016, human rights defender Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was assassinated (see the Urgent Action: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr34/5144/2016/en/>). He was the Assistant to the Executive Director of CALAS.

On 29 August 2011, the respective Director and Legal Adviser at CALAS, Yuri Melini and Rafael Maldonado, received envelopes at 9:30 am. Each contained the same documents: a threat; papers from the Office of the Comptroller General (Contraloría General de Cuentas); and mug-shot photographs of 18 men that appear to have been taken from police files (see the Urgent Action: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr34/011/2011/en/>).

On 8 September 2008, CALAS director Yuri Melini was shot by masked men, apparently in connection with his work (see the Urgent Action: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documens/amr34/021/2008/en/>). Following the attack, Yuri Melini and CALAS were granted protection from the State.

According to the civil society organization UDEFEGUA, environmental human rights defenders are the main group of activists attacked in Guatemala. For more information, see the Amnesty International report *'We are defending the land with our blood': Defenders of the land, territory and environment in Honduras and Guatemala* (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr01/4562/2016/en/>).

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