



For Immediate Release  
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**JUDGE IN GUATEMALAN GENOCIDE CASE ISSUES ARREST WARRANTS  
AND FREEZES ASSETS OF RIOS MONTT AND OTHER DEFENDANTS**

*Madrid, Spain; July 7, 2006:* Spanish National Court Judge Santiago Pedraz today issued arrest warrants for the eight defendants named in the Guatemalan Genocide case, including former president Efraín Ríos Montt. The judge also issued an order to freeze the defendants' assets.

Judge Pedraz took this action after returning from Guatemala where he had expected to interrogate the defendants but was thwarted by their last minute legal maneuvers. The eight defendants named on the arrest warrants are Ríos Montt, Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores, Ángel Aníbal Guevara Rodriguez, Donaldó Álvarez Ruiz, German Chupina Barahona, Pedro García Arredondo, Benedicto Lucas García, and Romeo Lucas García, who reportedly died in May but remains a defendant until the judge receives official notification of his death.

On June 24 Judge Pedraz, prosecutor Jesús Alonso, and two private prosecutors, including Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) attorney Almudena Bernabeu, traveled to Guatemala to take testimony from the defendants. Upon their arrival, lawyers for the defendants filed several appeals forcing the Guatemalan Constitutional Court to indefinitely suspend the proceedings.

In the order issuing the arrest warrants, Judge Pedraz stated that his decision is based on the “obstructionist attitude of the defendants and because there is sufficient evidence that the crimes of genocide, terrorism, torture, murder and illegal detention were committed by the defendants.”

In 1999 Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum and other victims filed a criminal complaint in the Spanish National Court (SNC) against the senior Guatemalan government officials charging them with terrorism, genocide and systematic torture. CJA joined the complaint in 2004 on behalf of two torture survivors. The case, known as the Guatemalan Genocide Case, is modeled on the Pinochet case which was also brought before the SNC.

CJA Attorney Bernabeu, a private prosecutor in the case, states, “Judge Pedraz’s order represents a historic step toward accountability and justice for the tens of thousands of victims of the Guatemalan Genocide. We look forward to the execution of this order and

the prosecution of these defendants for the atrocities committed in Guatemala in the 1980s.”

CJA is a San Francisco-based non-profit organization which works to deter torture and other severe human rights abuses through impact litigation, education and outreach. CJA is the only U.S. based human rights legal organization solely devoted to seeking justice and accountability on behalf of torture survivors against their perpetrators in the courts.