

"Justice is our nation"
Address of 17/03/2011
Visit of United Nations Secretary-General
Ban Ki-Moon to CICIG

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in Guatemala (CICIG).*

Good afternoon, United Nations Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen of the diplomatic corps of donor countries and partners of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), invitees of the United Nations in Guatemala, and CICIG staff.

I would like to welcome the United Nations Secretary-General, who visits us to show his support, at a time when we are overcoming a difficult period of unjustifiable attacks against our work. I must stress that given the current situation in Egypt, Libya and Japan, the Secretary-General had more than enough reasons to cancel his trip to Guatemala and to these CICIG offices. However, his presence here today gives out a clear message: Guatemala is important, and what we are doing for this country is also important.

These officials that are before you today, Mr. Secretary-General, are the majority of a multinational justice force that, on behalf of the United Nations, has been created, with a mix of prosecutors, police officers, security officials and administrative staff, and we work alongside Guatemalans in the fight against impunity in the country.

This international prosecution office has been continually attacked and subjected to smear campaigns, which is a sign of our success. If a prosecution office is free from criticism and attacks, it is a sign that it is not hitting home with its efforts. These difficult times follow those we suffered when investigating economic and political powers as part of the fight against impunity in Guatemala.

As Norman R. Augustine said, the presence of the leader alongside those facing difficult times is important in demonstrating interest in and support for our work, which we believe is one of the priorities of your visit, Mr. Secretary-General.

Your leadership and commitment to justice, democracy, strong institutions and human rights gives hope to the people of Guatemala, and therefore gives meaning to our work.

We pledge to investigate and try members of illegal structures and organized crime groups in Guatemala. We are committed to proposing and promoting bills to streamline the Guatemalan justice system and to transferring the skills of the excellent professional officials working at the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala, who have come to Guatemala with the aim of making a change and creating democracy, freedom and the hope of development for each human being.

Our aim: coordinate the State so it can appropriately fight organized crime when CICIG's mandate ends and its offices close in Guatemala. We know this objective will be on your agenda and we will be able to count on your support. We would like to think that some day, when we are back in our own countries, we will be able to be content knowing that we have contributed to building Guatemalan democracy, under the leadership of Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

Justice is our nation—the sole nation that unites the officials of twenty-six different nationalities that are working in Guatemala, for Guatemala.

Mr. Secretary-General: many thanks for your visit and your support, and once more, welcome!