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It's happening

It's happening and it's no laughing matter. The Guatemalan justice system is changing, it's shifting. It is akin to a mathematical equation: the challenge ahead equals the extent of corruption encrusted in the justice system plus the deep-rooted resistance to change. However, in the words of Galileo Galilei, *eppur si muove*, i.e. it moves, however. If we continue the good work, albeit it in this sole area, it will be more significant for the country than some of us had ever imagined, and for the general public, it would be greater than winning the World Cup.

CAROLINA ESCOBAR SARTI

The possibility of ordinary people believing in their country's justice system is closer to becoming a reality. We also know that great injustices can be committed in the name of excessive legalisms and legal dogmas. However, I am not even going to touch the topic here, because, first things first, in Guatemala, the law must be known, understood, enforced and upheld. It is not so much a matter of creating a judicial or police state, but rather a State where the rule of law reigns.

The footfall of big animals can clearly be seen in the territory of Guatemalan justice. The fact the Supreme Court of Justice unanimously ruled to process eight applications to lift immunity against six judges and four senior judges denounced by the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) is a sign that tectonic plates are shifting. When plates move, the ground shakes. Therefore, the fact some courts are reluctant and plan to abstain from hearing cases where CICIG participates as a complementary prosecutor is not a sign of war, but the natural consequence of a correlation of powers that are expressing themselves and standing up to be seen. A necessary exercise in a period of transition.

Further signs of change in the justice sector? The case of Cristina Siekavizza, where a former judge (the mother of the alleged murdered) is implicated, has been remitted to a high-impact court—as is only fitting to prevent evidence from being tampered with and to impede a straightforward acquittal for the accused.

And maybe the clearest example is the historic opportunity people have to join, opine about, attend and learn about the genocide trial of Efraín Ríos Montt and Mauricio Rodríguez. The importance of the matter does not stem from bringing such individuals to justice, a watershed in its own right, but from the fact it is being achieved in Guatemala. To do so in Guatemala, the efficiency and functioning of the judicial machinery must be guaranteed.

Obviously, there is an order that refuses to lie down and die, digging its claws in deeply. The patriarchs of the order and its bureaucratic serfdom do not realize they are failing to understand, because, as Argentine poet Antonio Porchia would say, "they do not understand the river's cry, because they are lacking a tear of their own". It is definitely happening: the people are receiving a sort of crash course on justice and beginning to understand the purpose of each legal institution, how they operate and how they are all interlinked. There is still a great amount of work to be done, but the chance of achieving legal certainty is greater than in times gone by and tomorrow it will be greater than today, hopefully.