

# PRESS RELEASE

Guatemala, February 5, 2014

## THE SIGNATORY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO GUATEMALAN SOCIETY

As to the process to be undertaken by the Nominating Committee to select the 40 candidates to be considered for judge positions at the Supreme Electoral Court by members of the Congress of the Republic, we believe it is crucial the Court is comprised of suitable professionals, with proven abilities and recognized integrity—key qualities in order to work at the Supreme Electoral Court. Therefore, we have decided to join forces with the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) to monitor these elections, support the decision-makers and, in particular, prevent illegal interest groups from coopting this type of processes, as traditionally has been the case.

Today, in the exercise of our right to social audit, some of the signatory organizations will present objective and verifiable information to the Nominating Committee so that the latter can determine if the candidates have the aforementioned qualities. We respect the decision made by civil society organizations to present specific and substantiated information regarding the candidates who they believe do not meet the requirements stipulated by law and set forth in the call for applicants.

We respectfully request that the Nominating Committee verifies and analyzes all the information presented by civil society within this allocated timeframe; it gives the roster of candidates legitimacy and contributes to the selection of the ideal candidates needed to lead the Supreme Electoral Court.

Upon completion of work with the Nominating Committee, we will follow up and propose the appropriate means of ensuring that Congress makes transparent decisions regarding the nominations. We request that Congress wholly complies with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic, which stipulates that the

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appointment of individuals to public office shall be based solely on substantiated **capacities, appropriateness and honesty**.

We thank CICIG for acting as link between the different civil society organizations and generating harmonious relations based on an interest to strengthen democracy. We are committed to closely following the appointments procedure through the proposals made by the nominating committees and we call upon civil society organizations, professional guilds and sectoral groups to join these efforts. We firmly believe these procedures will determine the strengthening of our public institutions, which play a key role in enhancing the democracy of our country.