

Rights Action – March 18, 2012

## **GUATEMALA – Truth, Memory & Justice for Plan de Sanchez massacre victims**

“On July 18, 1982, members of the Army carried out a massacre, after raping a number of women and torturing others. Assault guns were used in the massacre. The bodies were subsequently burned with gasoline. A coup de grace was administered to victims...”

“Memory, truth, justice and reparations form the fundamental base of the restitution of the social fabric and an authentic reconciliation.” (Inscription on wall of Plan de Sanchez chapel)

### **BELOW**

A Guatemalan news article (translated for Rights Action by Rosalind Gill) concerning trials, in Guatemalan courts, against material authors of the July 18, 1982 “Plan de Sanchez” massacres

### **CHIPPING AWAY AT GUATEMALAN IMPUNITY**

In Guatemala, it remains a general rule that most crimes are never solved, let alone investigated. Though few “intellectual” authors of Guatemala's genocide and state repression of the 1970s and 80s have been tried or jailed, the Plan de Sanchez massacre trial remains profoundly important in terms of chipping away at impunity, even as the newly installed president, former General Otto Perez Molina, is himself an alleged “intellectual” and “material” author of the genocide and state repression!

Since 1994, Rights Action has been honored to fund and support a range of Plan de Sanchez projects related to telling the truth, recovering the historic memory and pursuing justice.

### **THE PLAN DE SANCHEZ SURVIVORS TOOK THE SPOT OF THEIR WORSE ATROCITY AND CONVERTED IT INTO THE COMMUNITY'S MOST SACRED, REVERED PLACE**



On March 12, 2012, a Rights Action delegation visited with Juan Manuel Geronimo, in the small Plan de Sanchez chapel (municipality of Rabinal, department of Baja Verapaz) that was built on the very spot of the July 18, 1982 massacre; Juan Manuel lost 28 direct and extended family members in the massacre. Of a community population of 260 villagers, 240 were savagely killed that day. Part of the writing on the wall reads: "Memory, truth, justice and reparations form the fundamental base of the restitution of the social fabric and an authentic reconciliation." (Photo, March 12, 2012, by Grahame Russell)



The remains of most of the Plan de Sanches massacre victims, exhumed in 1994-1995 by the first Guatemala Exhumation Team (EAFG), were reburied in the ground under the very spot where the chapel now sits. (Photo, March 12, 2012, by Grahame Russell)

- Please re-post and re-publish this information
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## WHAT TO DO

To come on educational solidarity delegations to Guatemala and Honduras, and to support work for truth, memory and justice in Guatemala, see below.

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## GUATEMALA: FIVE FORMER MILITARY OFFICERS ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATING IN THE MASSACRE IN PLAN DE SÁNCHEZ, BAJA VERAPAZ

by Hugo Alvarado, <http://noticiascomunicarte.blogspot.com/>, March 14, 2012

GUATEMALA CITY – Today, the First Court B of High Risk opens the case against five former members of the Army who are accused of participating in the massacre in Plan de Sánchez, Baja Verapaz. A military commissioner and four former civil (PAC) patrollers are facing charges for allegedly participating in the massacre of 256 people in the community of Plan de Sánchez, Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, in 1982. The accused, Commissioner Lucas Tecún and ex PAC patrollers Santos Rosales García and Eusebio Geleano and two brothers, Julián y Mario Acoj, face charges for murder and crimes against humanity for the slaughter of 256 members of the community of Plan de Sanchez.



(Photo, March 14, 2012, by Arturo Albizures, COMUNICARTE)

The Public Ministry memo indicates that on July 18, 1982, members of the Army carried out a massacre, after raping a number of women and torturing others. Assault guns were used in the massacre. The bodies were subsequently burned with gasoline. A coup de grace was administered to victims, which proves there was no confrontation.

The Public Ministry determined that the five accused helped, guided and provided information to the Army to enable it to carry out its counterinsurgency plan. The Ministry also states that the accused participated directly in the massacre. The investigation revealed that the decision to eliminate this community was based on information received by the ex PAC members that members of this community were collaborating with guerrilla groups operating in the area and that as well, they had refused to participate in civil patrols.

Publicado por Asociación COMUNICARTE, <http://noticiascomunicarte.blogspot.com/>

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### **HONDURAS DELEGATION, MAY 19-28, 2012**

"The Coup vs. Democracy: Struggle of the Popular Movements"  
Write to: [afgj@afgj.org](mailto:afgj@afgj.org)

### **GUATEMALA DELEGATION, JULY 7-15, 2012**

"Community well-being, human rights & the environment \* versus \* mining companies that moil for gold (silver & nickel)"  
Write to: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

### **TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS**

for indigenous and campesino organizations (like the people of Plan de Sanchez) working for truth, memory and justice, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS can be made (anonymously): [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)

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