

16 November 2016

Guatemala – Killing of environmental defender, Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima

On 12 November 2016, human rights defender Mr. **Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima** was shot and killed in Guatemala City.

[Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima](#) was an environmental rights defender working as the Assistant to the General Director of the *Center for Environmental and Social Legal Action of Guatemala- CALAS (Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental y Social de Guatemala)*. [CALAS](#) is a human rights organisation based in Guatemala City, which was founded in 2011 by [Yuri Melini](#), who was the winner of the 2009 Front Line Defenders Award. CALAS has been active in denouncing abuses committed by mining companies in the region, and has been working to protect environmental rights.

On the afternoon of 12 November, in the centre of Guatemala city, Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was shot at by two unidentified assailants on a motorcycle. The human rights defender died of his injuries. The identity of the killers is still unknown.

Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima was 22 years old. Before joining CALAS, he was a student leader, and active in the normalista (teacher training) movement. Although the human rights defender did not report having received any personal threats before being murdered, other members of CALAS have been subjected to intimidations, attacks and attempted assassinations in the past. On 30 November 2015, human rights defender [Pedro Rafael Maldonado Flores](#), Legal Director for CALAS, received death threats via his twitter account. A few months earlier, on 29 July 2015, Pedro Rafael was in the offices of CALAS, when an unknown gunman on a motorcycle fired a number of shots outside. CALAS Director Yuri Melini also suffered an assassination attempt in 2008, when he was shot outside the home of a family member.

In the first 11 months of 2016, Front Line Defenders has recorded at least 11 killings of human rights defenders in Guatemala. As reported in the latest [Front Line Defenders Annual Report](#), environmental, indigenous peoples' and land rights defenders are those most at risk and in 2015 they were the target of 41 per cent of the killings in Latin America.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the killing of human rights defender Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima, which it considers to be in retaliation against his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights. Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the dangerous and often deadly environment for human rights defenders working in defence of environmental, indigenous peoples' and land rights in Guatemala and urges the State to provide adequate and effective protective measures to guarantee their safety and security.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Guatemala to:

1. Strongly condemn the killing of human rights defender Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of Jeremy Abraham Barrios Lima, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
3. Immediately take all necessary measures, in consultation with the defenders, to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of all human rights defenders, including members of CALAS;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Honduras are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.