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ORAL STATEMENT - Item 3

Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence

UN Human Rights Council
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Mr President,

This oral statement is delivered in partnership with Fundación Myrna Mack.

We thank you for the opportunity to address the Council and express our satisfaction with the report prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice and reparation on the issue of transitional justice. As pointed out by the Special Rapporteur, there are significant challenges in harmonizing spheres of justice that are connected but rarely coordinated with transitional justice. Such is the case in Guatemala. We welcome the Special Rapporteur's focus on the fight against impunity and the establishment (or renewal) of trust as integral components of transitional justice processes.

Mr President,

Despite having signed the Peace Agreement over 20 years ago, after 36 years of internal conflict, crimes of the past continue to affect the families of the victims and society as a whole in Guatemala. The judicial processes involving military personnel accused of grave human rights violations have become spaces to validate their actions and to disqualify the search for justice. Human rights workers are constantly attacked, stigmatized and assaulted.

It is troubling that the Executive, Legislative and Judicial powers have been co-opted to such an extent that the highest authorities reproduce this discourse. Today, the situation of economic, social and cultural rights continues unattended and the most vulnerable population suffers the consequences. High levels of corruption have further contributed to the country's socio-political crisis.

The partnership between the Public Prosecutor's office and the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) has allowed for important advances in cases related to human rights violations and corruption. The discontinuation of the International Commission, by President Jimmy Morales and the reinforcement of the military power in a civil government are troubling developments which open a dangerous precedent against the United Nations system in the region and beyond.

We urge the Council to closely monitor the events in Guatemala to ensure that this ongoing crisis does not lead to further human rights violations.

Thank you.