

Local CU school story from a friend: “Yesterday some of the kids picked up food from the pantry for next week [Spring Break]. I delivered them in the evening. When I got to the last house the student came outside to help me with his bags.

He asked me about the conferences that some of his teachers were taking about. After I explained what parent-teacher conferences are he said: “oh ok.. so I don’t have to do anything if my mom is not here?” His brother lives with him but he works all day so he can’t attend conferences.

‘Do you think your brother would mind if I attend conferences with you next time? After conferences we can meet with your brother on his day off to share the information we get from your teachers.’

A different student and I had called his mom when she wanted to find out how he was doing in school. Before we were able to call he had to put money on her phone account and then she would message him to let him know when she was ready to receive the call. His mom has to go to a higher area in her town in Guatemala to be able to get a signal. The image of that woman walking to the top of the hill to wait for our call always warmed my heart.”

Guatemala since the 1996 Peace Accords (according to Janice)

1998 “Truth Commissions” and the Reconciliation Question take the stage

Justice slow moving: Genocide and Crimes against Humanity Trials continue today

The Cultural campaign, museums and memorials to the war another area of activism

2001 War on Terror “securitizes” US foreign policy globally. US less interested in Human Rights

Surveillance, policing and border control replace democracy promotion in US policy

2005 CAFTA. Central American Free Trade Agreement brings new power to business sector

(who is protected in CAFTA? Investors, not small landholders or communal lands)

2008 Global Economic Crisis cuts in social safety net, remittances fall, econ crisis leads to new migration surge

2014-5 Child and family migration a new dynamic, Cartels, etc. preying on the new migration industry.

2016 – 2020 The 21st c. “Coup” of Criminalization” Land Activists, journalists, NGOs, Indigenous leaders, Judges.

Ex military worried about HR trials and business sector worried about anti corruption find common cause.

New strategy uses some violence to intimidate and silence, but mostly uses a takeover of the courts. Neutralize opponents with trumped up legal charges against them. Legal experts fleeing to exile.

2018-9 Caravans – the Crisis made visible. A sign of revolt by migrants – a refusal to be invisible.

2020s Covid shock – econ crisis in Guat.; Rising Hurricane damage; and transformation of Agriculture to Commercial Export production pushing more people off their land; campaigns to criminalize increasing.



The Recovery of Historical Memory Project (*Nunca Mas*) was forced to defend its pursuit of testimonies:

“The victims have not forgotten. The war silenced their human right to speak of their experiences.”

“Memory must be recovered in a context acknowledging state terrorism and building a shared understanding of the past.”

“Memorials without justice are merely monuments to remind the victims of the perpetrators power.”

(Left: Achi Women Case, 2021)

Unearthing the Crimes 2000-2013.

Development of Forensic Anthropology in Guatemala as part of the Legal Campaign. Sadly, the profession receiving lots of development in these years (Bosnia, Rwanda...)

Genocide: Worse than War. 2009 film 20-22 min (forensics)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsMe7QvqpaU> Efraim rios Montt 128-132 Kate Doyle, GWU National security Archives on Project Victoria
- 2013 Rios Montt convicted of Genocide(overtured by Supreme Court 10 days later) <https://casadelamemoria.org.gt/> (virtual museum episode on internal war justice)
- Scenes of the Rios Montt ruling <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RBN-9zhC4U&t=217s> (min 3)

Right: Guatemalan Foundation of Forensic Anthropology working on a mass grave site.
Below: Fredy Peccerelli (below, left), who was 9 when his family fled Guatemala after death threats in 1980, now heads the investigations.





Ixil Triangle exhumations, 2012. Community members reclaiming bodies for burial.

Diario Militar case drags on from 1998-2023



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Death Squad Dossier (Diario Militar)

[Guatemala project >>](#)



Arrests Create First Possibility of Justice for Death Squad Dossier Victims

June 4, 2021



Update: The Guatemalan Death Squad Diary and the Right to Truth

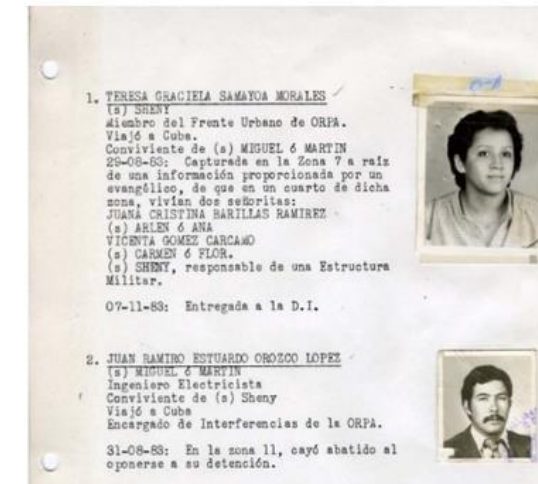
National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 378

May 3, 2012



Remains of Two of Guatemala's Death Squad Diary

The Death Squad Dossier



For years cases lagged as the Military and police insisted there were no records (as it had not been systematic violence).

Then, in 2005, The Guatemalan Police Archives were discovered during an unrelated search of a warehouse for arms.

80 million documents is the estimate...





Newly-discovered Guatemalan police records fill dozens of rooms in five buildings on an active police compound in Zone 6, downtown



2013 The Efrain Rios Montt
Trial is the turning point

Rios Montt Conviction for genocide was overturned ten days later - Genocide Deniers Emerge from the Shadows

In May 2014 Guatemala's Congress approved a resolution which officially denied that genocide occurred during the country's civil war. (Congress of Guatemala, 2014: 20)

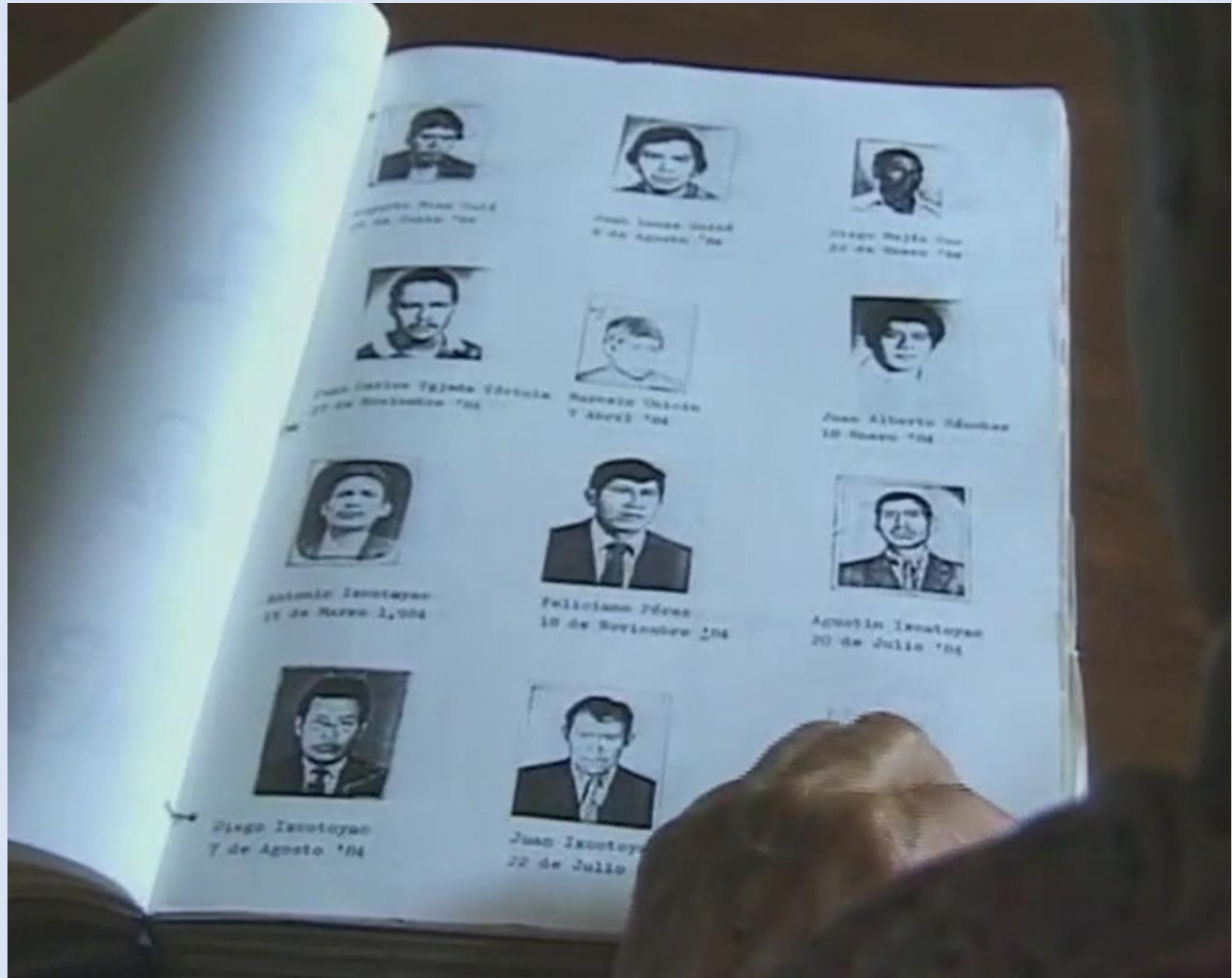
Right: protesters hold "There was no Genocide in Guatemala" flyers.

The business and ex-military realize a common interest in shutting down the legal investigations.



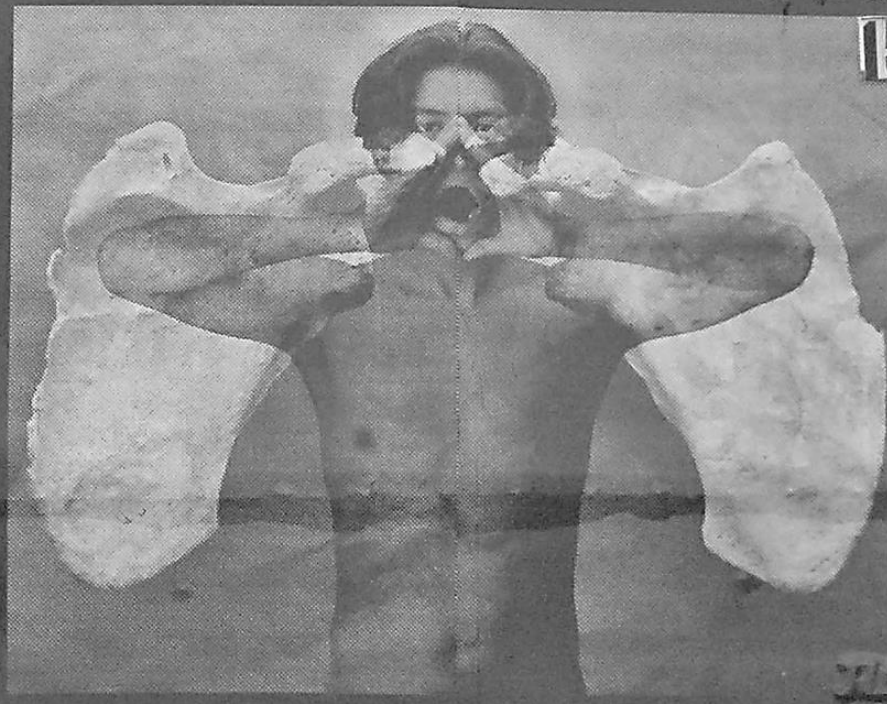
HR community realizes the need to shape a broader cultural campaign to protect the “Recovered Memory” of Genocide

Most of the 200,000 killed
were known only to their
family and friends, new
campaigns bring their faces to
the public. (Photo: Book of
the Disappeared)



SI HUBO GENOCIDIO

1556



Chrysler

9CF7

IES

AS DE JUEGOS
CONOS Y VARIADAD DE
CHINAS ORIGINALES

ONDA

765CGB



The House of Memory, Guatemala City.

New museum tells Guatemalan history from the perspective of the oppressed, opened in 2018.

(at the Center for Legal Defense of Human Rights CALDH)

This 2022 photo shows another campaign – to bring the faces of the disappeared to public awareness. Across the city flyers showed portraits of the victims.

- <https://casadelamemoria.org.gt/>
Virtual tour in Spanish

“The Internal War”

(Casa de
Memoria
exhibit
recreates
the
aftermath of
a military
raid)



**CANDO
MILIA**
APARECIDOS POR EL ESTADO

un buscador

**ESTOY BUSCANDO
A MI FAMILIA**
SOY UNO DE LOS 5,000 NIÑOS Y NIÑAS DESAPARECIDOS POR EL ESTADO



**Soy Manuel Victor Lemus Salazar,
unx de ellxs, un secuestrado, un buscador**

Soy uno de los niños y niñas robados en el Hospital Eliza Martínez de 1989 a 1990. Fuí dado "en adopción" 1989 a una familia de Québec, Canadá. Cuando tenía 2 años más o menos, en día con mi familia en un momento en el que, por el lugar de dónde y mi país. Fui para trabajar en una casa de cambio y al día siguiente la policía me capturó y me llevaron al Hospital. Entre 1990 y a mi familia, esto se pasó en silencio.

Para más información comunícale a: estadoscapi@scap.net

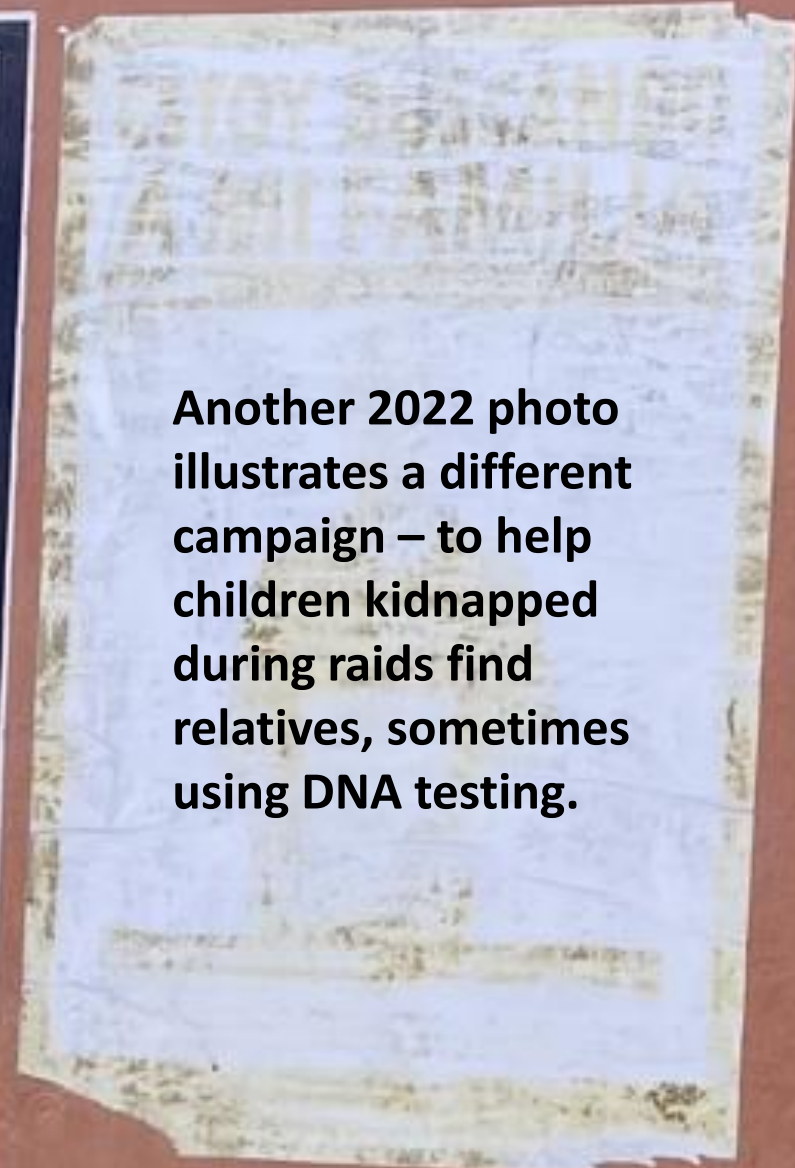
**ESTOY BUSCANDO
A MI MADRE**
SOY UNO DE LOS 5,000 NIÑOS Y NIÑAS DESAPARECIDOS POR EL ESTADO



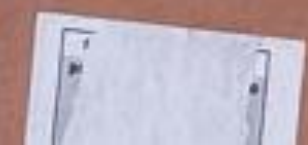
**Soy Christian Hernández, unx de ellxs,
un secuestrado, un buscador**

La madre de la foto es mi madre, su nombre es María Gregorio Hernández. Yo nací en Cuatrecasas en 1990 y fui dado "en adopción" a una familia de Québec, Canadá, tenía a apenas unos meses. Mi madre se está buscando, tengo mucho que contarle, quiero verla y conocerla. No sé nada de mi familia y quiero comunicarla.

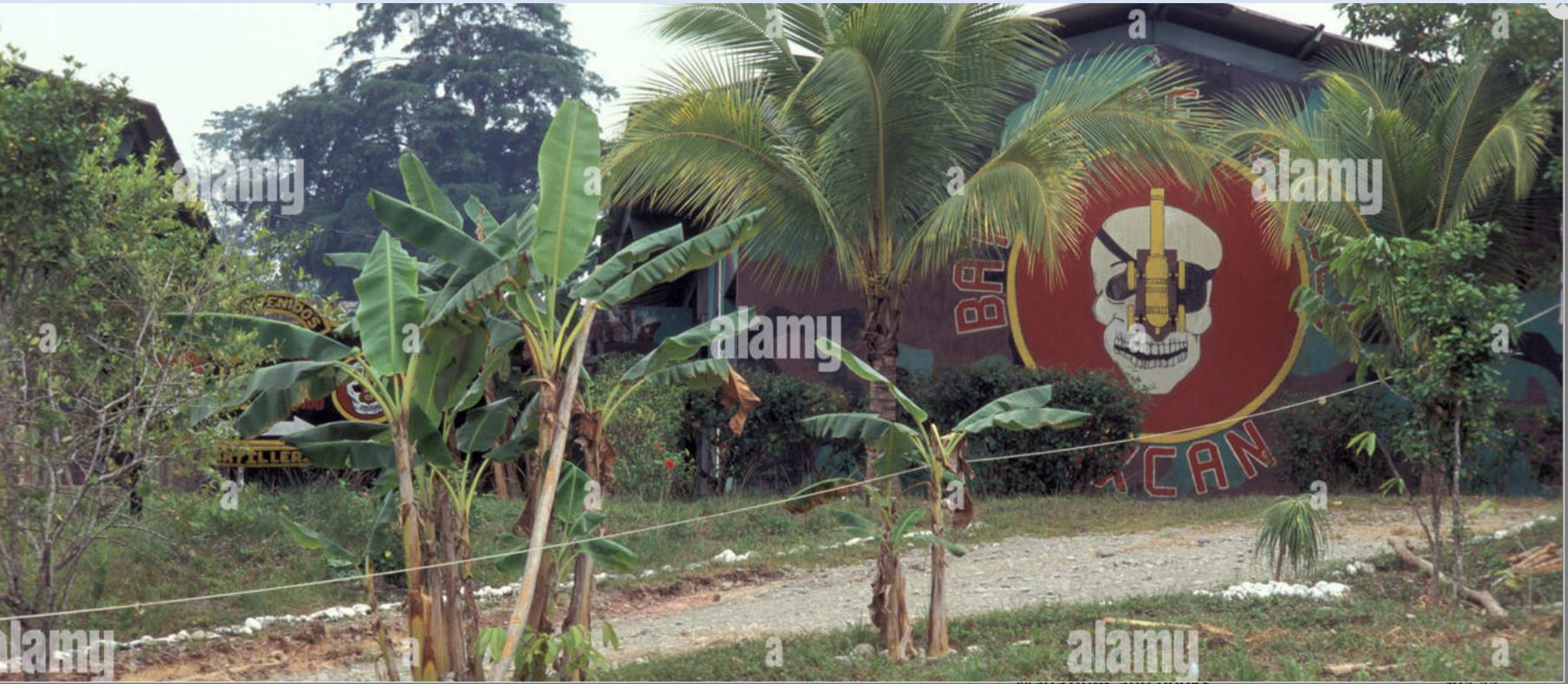
Para más información comunícale a: estadoscapi@scap.net



Another 2022 photo illustrates a different campaign – to help children kidnapped during raids find relatives, sometimes using DNA testing.



Ixcán, Kaibiles military post 2009. By Brian Atkinson. The Kaibiles (their symbol on public display in an area of former massacres) were a unit infamous for their scorched earth raids. Victims live with these state reminders, which continues the intimidation.



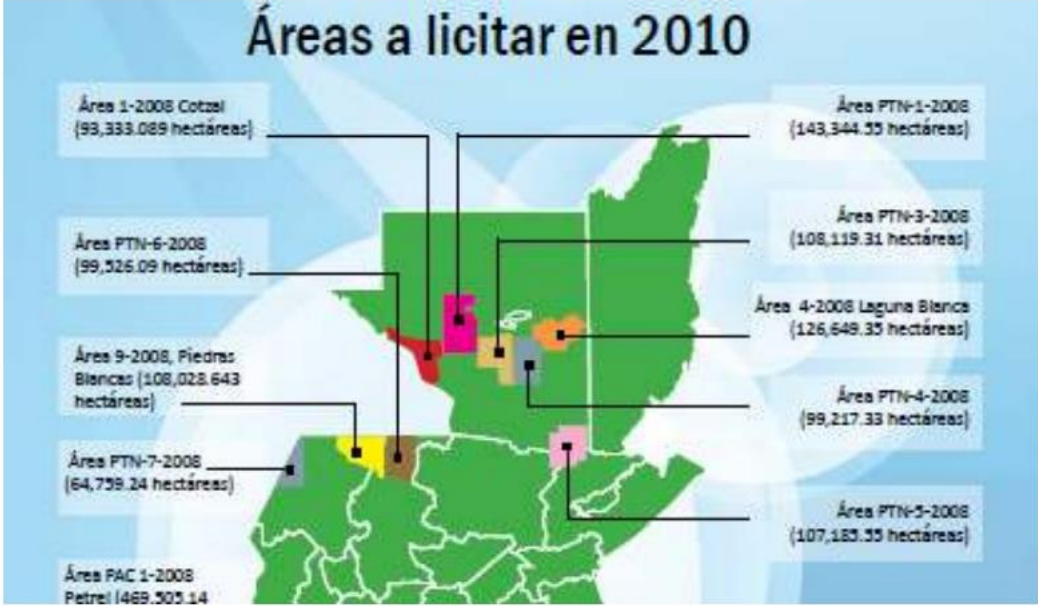
The end of the Civil War reopened the Northern Development Zone (FTN) to oil and energy investment.

Mapa XIV. Proyecto de interconexión eléctrica y anillo hidroeléctrico



Fuente: Invest in Guatemala.

V. Áreas petroleras licitadas en 2011.



Fuente: Ministerio de Energía y Minas (MEM).

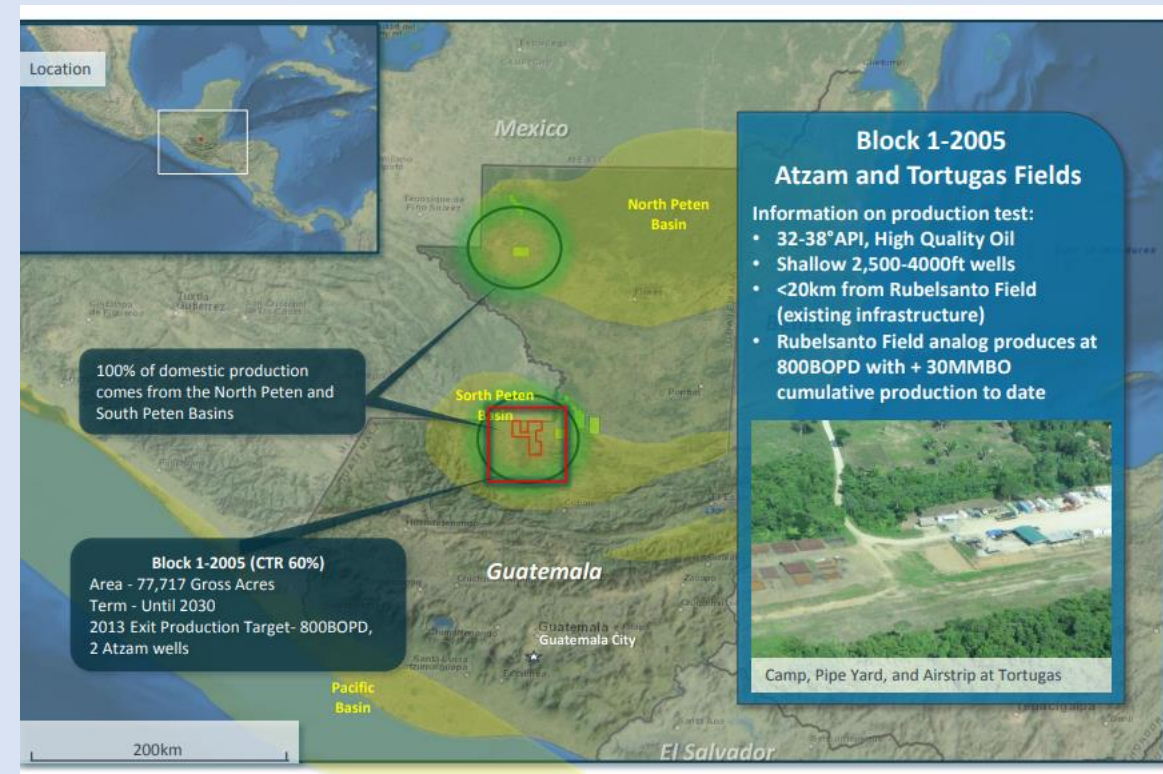
Post CAFTA and 2008 bring new concern with investment and global image. Lots of “Branding” and consultants. (This 2013 oil brochure made me laugh/cry)

CITATION RESOURCES Guatemala Overview

- Land management is well legislated in Guatemala
 - By constitution, the State of Guatemala is owner of all natural resources that are in the subsurface, while the individual land owners in Guatemala control the surface and access rights to the land
- Guatemala has a favourable business climate for oil companies
 - Base royalty of 20%, increases with oil quality
 - 31% corporate tax rate
 - 100% of capital expenditures are recoverable
- Guatemala is politically stable
 - Democratically elected Governments since 1983

Country Facts⁽¹⁾

Population:	13.8 MM
Literacy Rate:	69.1%
Labour Force:	4.26 MM
Unemployment Rate:	3.2%
GDP:	\$70.3 bn
GDP per Capita:	\$5,200
GDP Growth:	2.2%
Inflation:	3.9%



Oil Investment Presentation. Citation Resources, 2013:
https://web.archive.org/web/20150218010548/http://www.oilcouncil.com/sites/default/files/Citation%20Mike%20ORealini_0.pdf

Acul, a former military relocation camp, successfully reinvented as “model resort village” on Tripadvisor. Also an interesting rewriting of history. Who destroyed the villages not mentioned, nor that population (minus many men who were killed) forced to move at gunpoint to Acul)

Acul ★★★★★ 5/5 (1 review)

Things to see · Things to do in Guatemala · Things to do in Quiché · Things to do in Nebaj · Acul



2 photos of Acul

3 reviews of Acul

of the best cheeses in the country. Their farms have guest rooms and you can get to taste the cheese, do with children like animals milked and made cheese, or simply relax in this beautiful place. The weekend families come pijas Guatemala, so do not be surprised if suddenly a helicopter or one of these huge terrain vehicles keeps back arrives. Next door is the village of Acul itself, a town that was built from nothing after the guerrillas. The villages around had been pillaged and destroyed, so the population moved to Acul, who had a perfect meadow. The large

<https://www.minube.net/place/acul--a30503>

How did this effect the home community of many CU migrants? Good example is the struggle over the Hydro Santa Cruz Project in Barillas 2006-2018

- 2006 Project began. The community twice rejected it in referendums, but construction began anyway.
- Two land defenders have been killed; one, Andres Francisco Miguel, was shot by security guards of the company in 2012, and another, teacher Daniel Pedro Mateo, was kidnapped while on his way to a community meeting training environmental defenders in 2013. His body was found with signs of torture.

<https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/barillas-Guatemala>; <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/guatemala-denounced-world-bank>



“We are all Barillas”



<https://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/06/we-are-all-barillas-a-new-moment-in-guatemalas-anti-extraction-movement/>



Waqib' Kej

President Otto Perez
Molina, in Barillas 2012.

The government
declared a “state of
siege” in 2012 in
response to the
community protests,
sent in troops and
tanks. began to target
opposition organizers,
create its own
community councils.

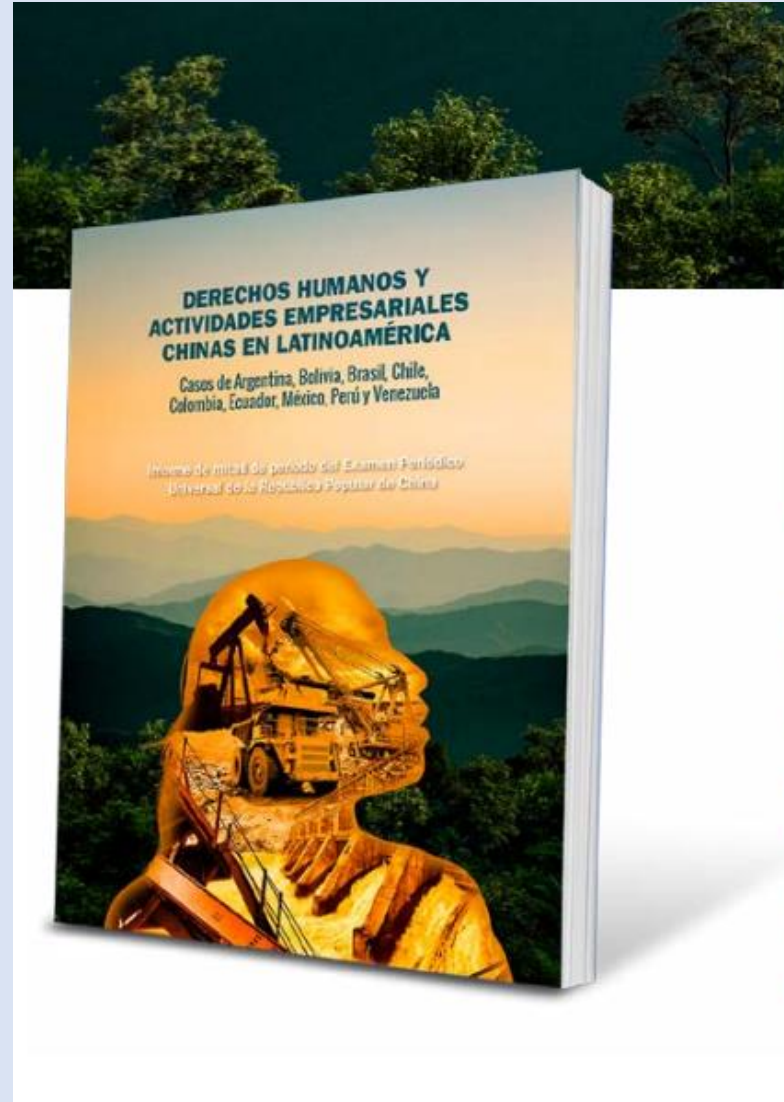


2015 The World Bank pulls financing (due to failure to carry out community consultation, poor environmental impact reviews)



But the World Bank not the only Bank in town anymore....many options in private capital funds as well as international funds, such as from China which has less stringent requirements than the World Bank.

2022 Report
<https://amazonwatch.org/assets/files/2022-executive-summary-human-rights-and-chinese-business-activities-in-latin-america.pdf>



HUMAN RIGHTS AND CHINESE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Midterm Report on the Universal Periodic Review of the People's Republic of China

More than 60 civil society organizations present a new report that evaluates the social and environmental impacts of Chinese financing and investments in nine Latin American countries and demonstrates the existence of a pattern of noncompliance of the Chinese State with international standards in the areas of human rights and environment.

2018 legal victory for Barillas but the justice system is increasingly vulnerable. If the project goes to court again the land defense system is much weaker now.

(Investors also create alternative “community councils,” activists imprisoned on false charges, judges targeted...)

News > Guatemala

Guatemala Court Favors Maya Q'anjob'al Against Hydroelectric



Q'anjob'al traditional authorities in press conference regarding the court's ruling. Guatemala City. Nov. 23, 2018. | Photo: @PrensaComunitar

Published 24 November 2018

0 Comments

AA - FA

The people of Santa Eulalia, Huehuetenango, filed an appeal against the hydroelectric plant for violating their right to self-determination.

Mongabay Series: [Endangered Environmentalists](#), [Global Palm Oil](#)

Guatemalan activist murdered after court suspends palm oil company operations

by [Sandra Cuffe](#) on 30 September 2015



- *Reforestadora de Palmas del Petén, S.A. (REPSA) is allegedly responsible for a massive fish kill along a 100-mile stretch of the La Pasión River in June. Massive overflows of organic matter from the company's palm-oil mill effluent ponds are suspected of causing the asphyxiation of fish and other aquatic life. A government agency referred to the incident as "ecocide."*

We're a nonprofit

[Donate](#)

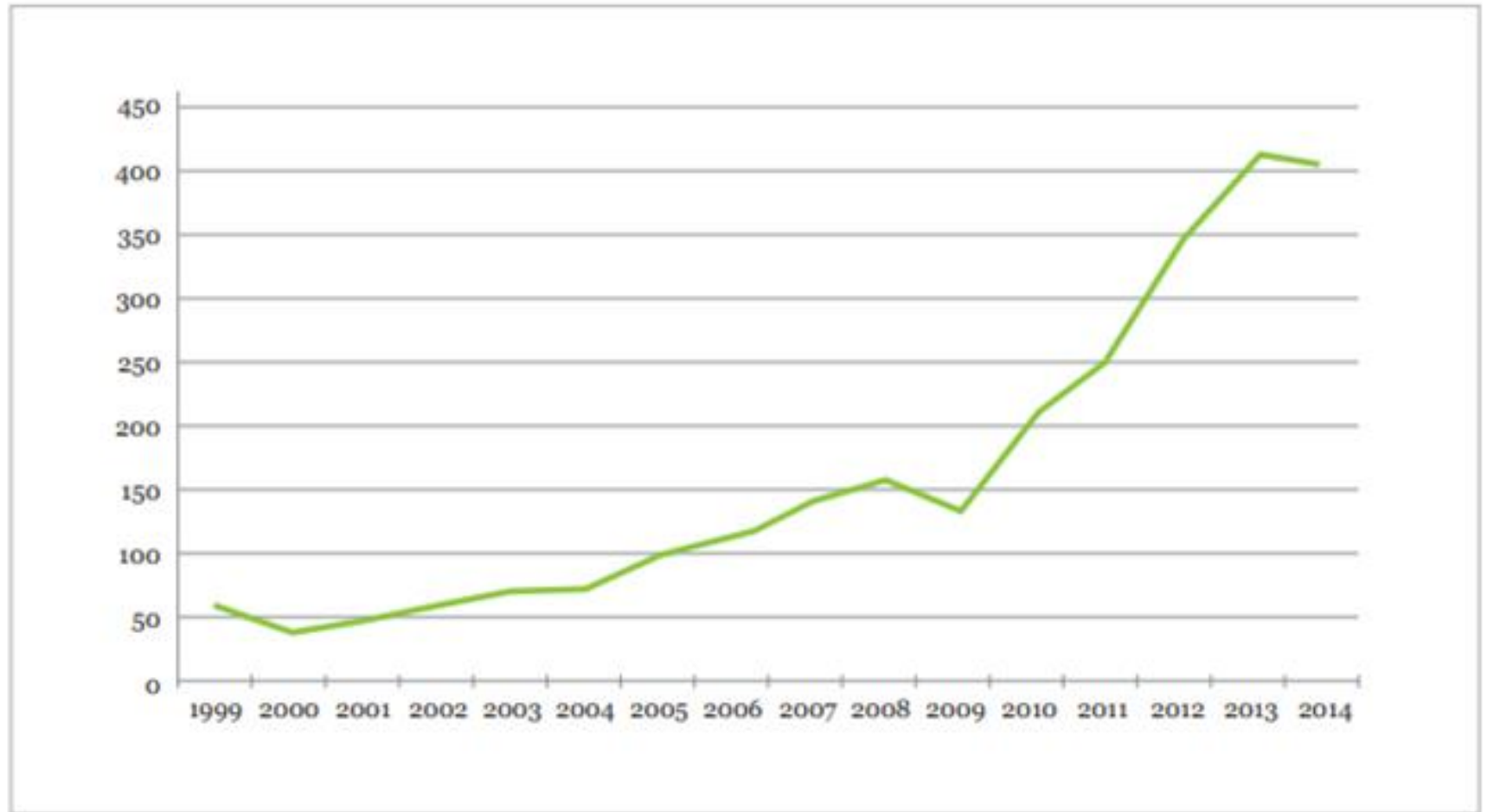
Land
Defenders
become the
new targets
of
repression in
the post
CAFTA years

Not just extractive industries, but commercial agriculture focused on export also booming after CAFTA.

Right: Palm Oil exports after CAFTA

<http://www.albedrio.org/hm/otrosdocs/comunicados/EnfoqueNo.36-PalmaafricanaFTN-2015.pdf>

Gráfica 2
Guatemala: Tendencia de las exportaciones de aceite de palma en el período 1999-2014.
En miles de toneladas métricas.



Fuente: elaboración propia, con base en datos de indexmundi.com

Palm Oil Cultivation expansion areas affect Barillas

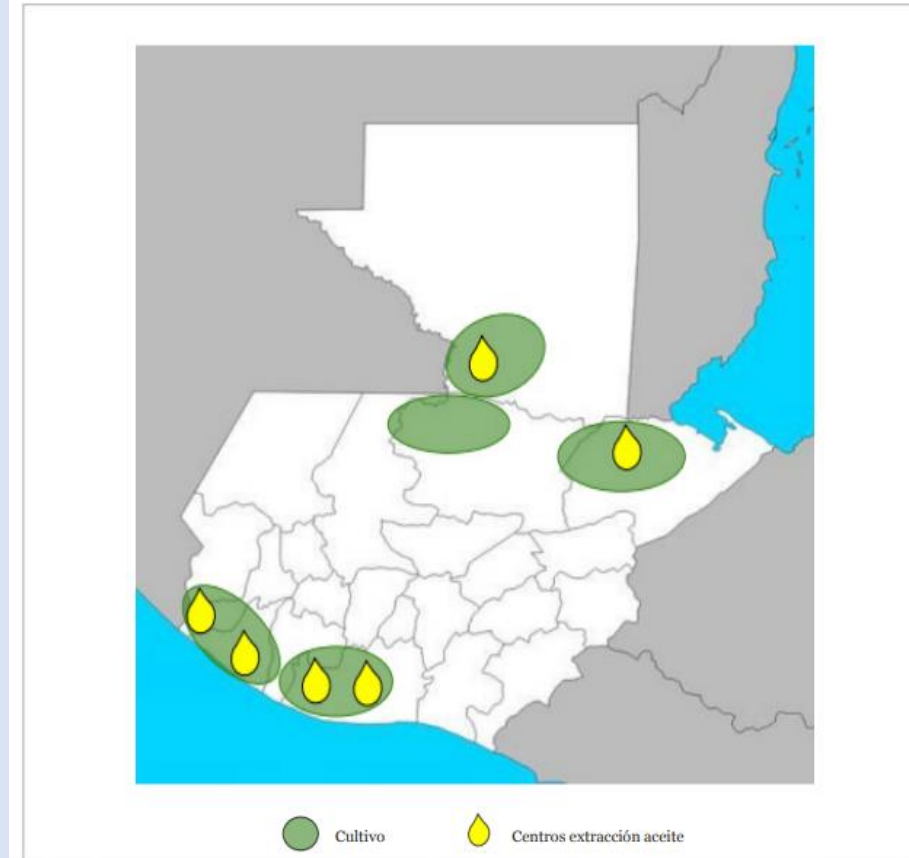
Mapa XVII. Plantaciones de palma africana a lo largo de la FTN



Fuente: Elaboración propia. Mapa de SEGEPLAN.

<http://www.albedrio.org/hm/documentos/EstudioFranjaTransversalNorteCEDFOG.pdf>

Mapa 1
Guatemala: áreas de cultivo de palma y de extracción de aceite.



CAFTA 2005 and the Globalized Food Market

2013 Rambutans (an Asian fruit) 1st shipped to US market
2018 Blueberry exports from Guatemala!

(new technology, new markets opened up after CAFTA, create new exports, but little/no benefit for rural Guatemalans who are losing land to these crops.



The first shipment will be ready in September

Guatemala to export blueberries to the US for the first time ever

Guatemalan producers will export blueberries for the first time to the United States, thanks the high demand for this product in that country. The project seeks to supply supermarket chains and restaurants.

Guatemala Balance of Trade

Summary

Stats

Download ▾



1Y

5Y

10Y

25Y

MAX



Chart



Compare



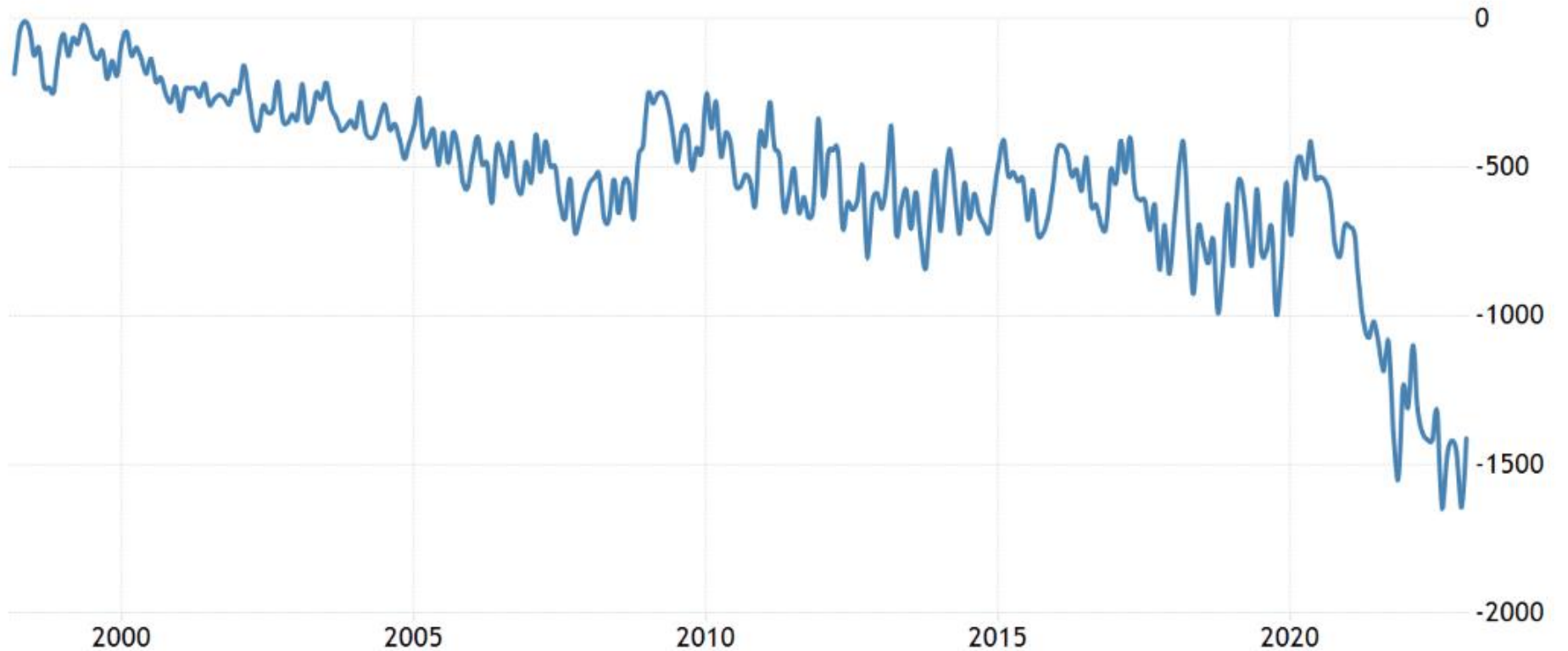
Export



API



Embed



Some segments of the population are benefitting from the export economy, but overall Guatemala is more dependent on imports, including food imports.

Guatemala's Growing Food Crisis,

The expansion of export crops has contributed to the food crisis. In 2023 Guatemala is Importing Corn, Soybeans, Meat and Dairy – which were traditional staples of Guatemalan agriculture.

“The population in the worst conditions is made up mainly of small subsistence/subsistence farmers. Many households have been forced to use crisis strategies to solve their food gaps, such as the sale of assets and the use of their savings.” (2022 quote from Relief Web.)

Ukraine impact making it worse: higher fuel and fertilizer costs affect small merchants, lead to rising food prices, reduced employment....



Guatemala Remittances

Summary

Stats

Download ▾



1Y

5Y

10Y

25Y

MAX



Chart



Compare



Export



API



Embed



<https://tradingeconomics.com/guatemala/remittances>

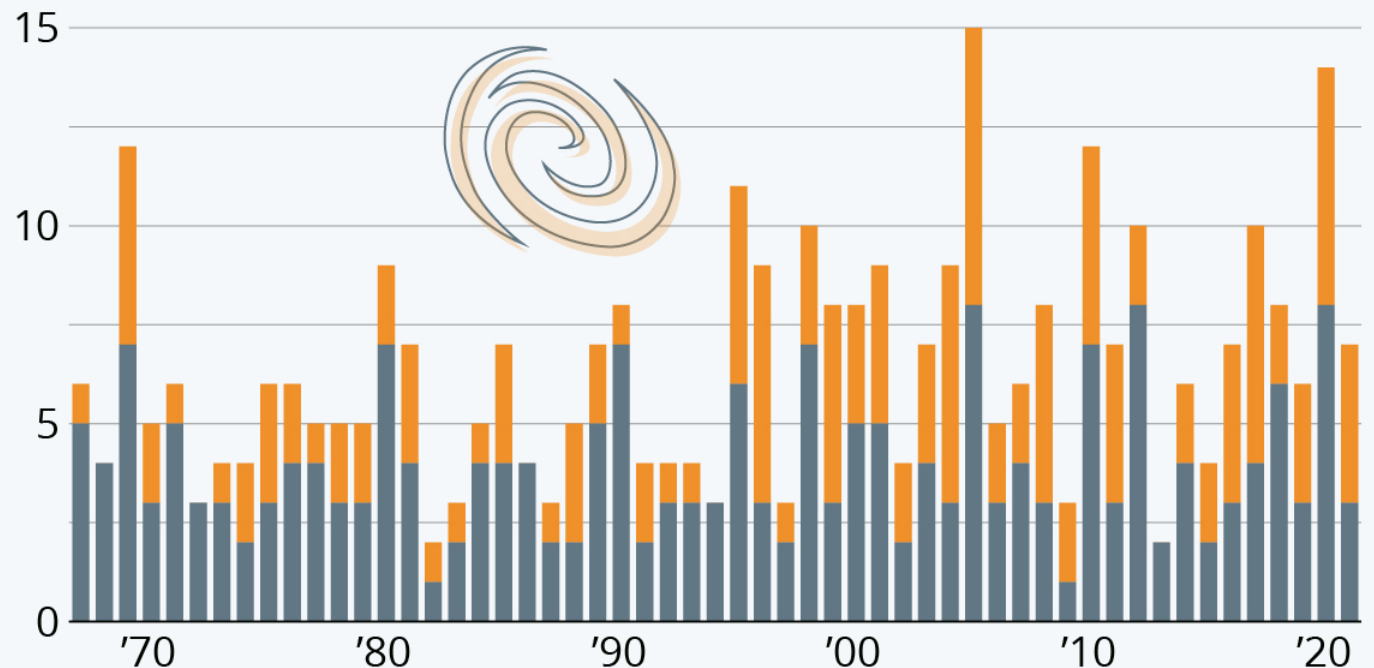
TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | BANK OF GUATEMALA

One way to see the way conditions are worsening within the country is to see the rise in remittances.

Number of Major Hurricanes Over Atlantic Rises

Number of tropical cyclones over the Atlantic basin 1967-2021, by Saffir-Simpson scale category

■ Hurricanes (Cat. 1 or 2) ■ Major hurricanes (Cat. 3, 4 or 5)



Sources: AOML, NOAA, III





Policy Brief

March 2022 | <http://dcid.sanford.duke.edu>

Root Causes of Migration from Guatemala: Analysis of Subnational Trends

Sarah Bermeo, David Leblang, and Gabriela Nagle Alverio ¹

Executive Summary

This analysis shows that the increase in family migration from Guatemala to the United States has been disproportionately driven by people leaving departments (states) with large rural populations. Increased agricultural stress, such as that caused by recent droughts in Central America, is a key factor contributing to migration. We analyze U.S. government data on department of birth for Guatemalans apprehended at the U.S. southern border while traveling as part of a family unit from fiscal years 2012-2019. These data are linked to

Key Points

- **Guatemalan migration to the United States rose sharply in 2018 and 2019, with a substantial increase in migration of family units.** Apprehensions of Guatemalans at the U.S. southern border averaged 61,000 people from 2012-2017, rising to 116,000 in 2018 and 264,000 in 2019, an increase of more than 400%. The percent of total apprehensions accounted for by people arriving as part of family units rose from less than 20% through 2014 to 44% in 2018 and 70% in 2019.

The rise in family migration reflects the significant worsening of rural conditions. Migration no longer about an economic support option, but about escape.

<https://dcid.sanford.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/03/Migration-Policy-Brief-Guatemala-FINAL.pdf>

Even the famously neoliberal Brookings Institution agrees something is wrong with the export driven model of development.

BROOKINGS

CLIMATE AI CITIES & REGIONS GLOBAL DEV INTL AFFAIRS U.S.



FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Rural poverty, climate change, and family migration from Guatemala

For next week: Both a Guatemalan and Global Moment in Human Movement

- The internet – levels the playing field between David and Goliath? Human rights, migrants, cartels, extractive financing – all benefit from new tech.
- 9-11? Guatemala another of the casualties of the War on Terror. Anti-corruption and HR accountability goes out the window. Much easier for critics to label land defenders, etc, “terrorists”...(once they labeled all communists).
- CAFTA a symptom of the shift from Human rights to corporate rights (But it is not just a Guatemalan issue: the Snail Darter in TN and the Keystone Pipeline are US cases that show similar dynamics.
- Climate Change is Real. Drought, destructive hurricanes...
- Human movement globally in a new phase. Globalized labor markets. Whereas once migrants went to the coffee fields for a few months to supplement income, now they travel across the globe. Building soccer stadiums in Qatar or putting roofs on houses in CU.