

Situation Report # 1

Country/Location: Guatemala

Title of emergency: Political crisis in Guatemala

Dates covered by report: August 28, 2017

Situation Report No: 1

1. General overview (for EXTERNAL use)

On morning of Sunday August 27 during a televised speech President Jimmy Morales declared Iván Velásquez, head of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), “persona non grata” calling for him to leave the country immediately. Iván Velasquez has been responsible for dismantling corruption in practically all sectors and in State organisms. This decision was rejected by dozens of sectors who were in disbelief that the President had made such decision.

Morales made this announcement two days after Velásquez and Attorney General Thelma Aldana presented evidence that Jimmy Morales may have been involved in illicit electoral financing actions during his 2015 campaign.

The legal grounds, the declaration of persona non-grata and the request to immediately leave the country presented by President Jimmy Morales against the head of the CICIG, Iván Velasquez, were temporarily suspended by the Constitutional Court under the request of legal protection by the country’s ombudsman, the Guatemala UNOHCHR office, and the Attorney General office.

Morales started to lose support of his administration last Thursday when Prosecutor-General Annabella Morfin made public her support to Iván Velásquez and the resignation of several ministers. All of this has positioned the country in a state of political crisis.

Some sectors fear a state of siege could be declared by the president. Social, student, civil society groups and indigenous leaders have announced that starting today opposition will take place and public demonstrations, including blocking roadways in hopes that Morales will reconsider his decision¹.

“The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights expresses its growing concern in light of Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales’ decision and for the lack of substantiation of the decision”²

¹ Prensa Libre, August 28, 2017

² <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2017/127.asp>

2. Overview of ChildFund response (for EXTERNAL use)

Currently ChildFund Guatemala is monitoring the political situation in the country which could generate some risk in the operation and interventions in communities.

At present we are communicating with local partners to learn about the current situation in communities.

The protests in Guatemala City are concentrated around the National Palace.

We have received information on road blocks in the following points:
Protests in Suchitepéquez and Retalhuleu, road blocks in km 177, km 148 and km 127 of the Inter American highway.

SECTIONS BELOW ARE FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

I1. Security and Logistics

ChildFund's operational infrastructure is not at risk at present.

I2. Partnership and Coordination

We activated communication channels and possible coordination with local partners.

I3. Program

We have taken the necessary measures with local partners to guarantee the implementation of monitoring communities. No risky situations in communities have been reported.

I4. Staffing

All relevant means to guarantee the security of ChildFund personnel in Guatemala City and field has been taken.

I5. Communications

Internal communication chain has been activated (WhatsApp-Staff) and with local partners (e-mail).

I6. Finance

ChildFund Guatemala's financial infrastructure is not at risk at present.

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