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April 9, 2007

Congressman Rubén Darío Morales Veliz  
Chairman of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala  
Congreso de la República de Guatemala  
9ª Avenida 9-44 Zona 1  
Guatemala City, Guatemala 01001

Dear Chairman Morales:

As senior members of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, we are aware of the important advances that have been made in Guatemala since the end of the 36 year long civil war. Given the ever developing and changing environment in your region, it is no small victory to maintain a legitimate democracy that can build on important basic principles and uphold democratic values.

Guatemala truly is a remarkable country with striking potential. A few of us were lucky enough to have had the opportunity to visit your country last year and we received a warm-hearted welcome that further established our gratitude and respect for your great country. Our hope in sending this letter is to communicate common desires shared between your legislature and the United States Congress. We do not wish to volunteer our views about legislation pending in another country's parliament, but rather, as fellow representatives from a closely allied nation, to share our perspective on possible future benefits for Guatemala, the United States, and our Hemisphere as a whole.

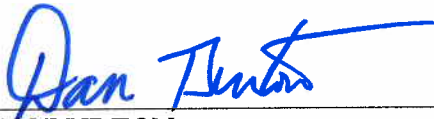
The agreement to establish the United Nations International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) is a tremendous accomplishment for Guatemala that we hope will help dismantle the clandestine groups that have compromised the rule of law in Guatemala. In addition to this accomplishment, we commend the Guatemalan Congress for recently allocating initial funding for the establishment of the National Institute of Forensic Sciences (INACIF). This shows that you continue to focus efforts in a direction which will allow Guatemala to use state-of-the-art technology and guarantee justice for all citizens. As legislators, you hold the power to provide the funds necessary to propel Guatemala into this next stage of development.

Given recent developments in Guatemala that have placed a spotlight on the obstacles of halting the infiltration of organized crime into the police and judicial system, there seems to be no better time for action. The CICIG appears to be the correct mechanism to get at the root of these problems with which Guatemala continues to struggle. If the Guatemalan Legislature is able to combine current international support for the CICIG with legislative action that allows the INACIF and the CICIG to progress, the immense task of tackling such obstacles will become increasingly less burdensome. At this point the Guatemalan Congress's approval of the CICIG will allow such advancements to take place.

Some members of Congress have reached out to USAID to request additional aid to assist in fully establishing the INACIF, and to support the creation of the CICIG if and when the agreement is approved. As legislators and individuals concerned about the well-being of our country and our neighbors, we all recognize the importance of allocating money for programs that provide for an environment for progress.

The Guatemalan Congress is in a powerful position to provide a better, safer country for the people of Guatemala. We hope to be able to be of assistance in your endeavors, to see Guatemala evolve, and to work with you further to see Guatemala institute a higher level of technological development and a lower level of impunity. We also look forward to some future opportunity to visit Guatemala again in order to witness such advancements first hand.

Most sincerely,



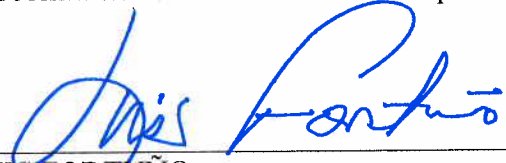
DAN BURTON  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere



ELIOT ENGEL  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere



CONNIE MACK  
Member  
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere



LUIS FORTUÑO  
Member  
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere

cc: Congresswoman Zury Rios  
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission