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Guatemala: Indigenous human rights defender Juana Raymundo killed in Nebaj

On 28 July 2018, the body of indigenous leader and woman human rights defender **Juana Raymundo** was found on the road near Nebaj and Acambalam Village, Guatemala. According to the Farmers' Development Committee (**Comité de Desarrollo Campesino – CODECA**), her body showed signs of torture.

[Juana Raymundo](#), who was 25 years-old at the time of her death, was an indigenous Mayan Ixil, professional nurse and coordinator of [CODECA](#) in the Nebaj Quiché micro-region. CODECA is a human rights organisation of indigenous farmers dedicated to promoting land rights and rural development for indigenous families in Guatemala through social participation, effective advocacy on public policies and participation in inclusive programs to reduce the vulnerability of indigenous communities to human rights violations in the country.

The killing of Juana Raymundo brings the number of human rights defenders killed in Guatemala to at least 14 in 2018. Between 9 May 2018 and 4 June 2018, seven indigenous leaders and human rights defenders were [killed](#) in Guatemala, five of whom were members of CODECA. A few days after a public rally on 2 May 2018, during which Guatemalan president Jimmy Morales referred to CODECA as a criminal organisation, human rights defenders from the organisation began to be targeted and killed.

Front Line Defenders strongly condemns the killing of indigenous human rights defender Juana Raymundo, as it believes that it is linked to her legitimate human rights work. Front Line Defenders expresses further concern over the criminalisation, systematic killings, attacks and smear campaigns against CODECA and its members.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Guatemala to:

1. Strongly condemn the killing of human rights defender Juana Raymundo;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of CODECA members, in coordination with the defenders;
3. Take measures to ensure that government officials or other public figures refrain from making statements or declaration stigmatising the legitimate work of human rights defenders;
4. Carry out an immediate, thorough, and impartial investigation into the killing of Juana Raymundo, and all CODECA members' killings, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
5. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Guatemala are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.