

Constitutional President of the Republic of Guatemala  
Ingeniero Álvaro Colom Caballeros  
Casa Presidencial  
6 a. Avenida, 4-18 Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Dear President Colom,

As a supporter of human rights in my own country and around the world, I am very pleased to know that Guatemalans may soon enjoy the right to free expression via community radio stations. I am writing to encourage you to support the "Ley de Medios de Comunicacion Comunitaria," which was introduced on August 3rd 2009 to the Guatemalan Congress. I feel strongly about the rights of indigenous peoples in Guatemala and urge you to take this step towards protecting their rights.

As you know, the passage of this law would provide a licensing process for community radio stations in Guatemala, ending the police raids and closures which have threatened the stations' continued operation. This right is already embedded in Guatemalan Peace Accords, Article 35 of the Guatemalan constitution, Article 16 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, ILO Convention 169 and reinforced by the recommendations of the OAS in 2004.

Community radio stations are essential to indigenous peoples in Guatemala because they broadcast in indigenous languages, often providing the only means of access to important information about health, education, and current events.

I appreciate the work you have done to protect human rights and promote democracy in Guatemala, such as your anti-impunity measures and declassification of Civil War documents. I strongly urge you to continue to advocate for human rights by supporting the Ley de Medios de Comunicacion Comunitaria. Your immediate attention to this matter will ensure that community radio stations continue to operate as powerful tools for democracy and human rights.

Please do everything within your power to secure passage of this important bill. Human rights advocates around the world are eager to celebrate this important step forward for human rights in Guatemala.

Sincerely,