

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### **Item 3: Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers**

Thank you,

Right Livelihood thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report and deplores the global increase in practices that undermine, limit and restrict the practice of law. We are particularly alarmed by the situation in Guatemala, where Attorney General Consuelo Porras was recently reelected for a second term following an unfair process.

Throughout the past four years, instead of fulfilling her professional responsibility to fairly administer justice, Consuelo Porras not only supported the dismantling of judicial institutions, but also systematically blocked any corruption investigations involving President Giammattei. Independent Justice operators, community leaders, journalists and Human rights defenders committed to the fight against corruption networks were prosecuted and persecuted. To date, 24 former Guatemalan independent justice operators have been forced to flee the country due to threats of reprisals.

By selecting Ms. Porras for a second term, President Giammattei chose once again to disregard his country's obligations. The number of criminal cases, imprisonment or forced exiled of those defending justice, democratic values and human rights is likely to continue to increase in the years to come.

We call on the Council to keep Guatemala under close scrutiny and urge its government to align with its international obligations, preserving the independence and impartiality of the Guatemalan judiciary.

Mr. Special Rapporteur,

What role can the Council play in ensuring that reprisals against independent justice operators be better prevented, monitored and that accountability be provided?

Thank you.