

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS

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Guatemala: CAFTA protests result in 2 deaths and arrest warrants for trade unionists

Brussels, 17 March 2005 (ICFTU Online): The killing of 2 demonstrators in Guatemalan protests against the CAFTA (Free Trade Agreement between United States and Central America and the Caribbean) has met strong condemnation from the international trade union movement. Police, using tear gas and water cannons, reacted to marchers with disproportionate force on Tuesday, said the ICFTU, and have subsequently issued arrest warrants for trade unionists involved in the demonstrations.

The international trade union body, together with its regional organisation for the Americas, ICFTU-ORIT, expressed solidarity with the legitimate protests against the free trade agreement. In its correspondence to President Berger of Guatemala (*), the ICFTU highlighted its serious concerns about the security of all activists wanted for arrest, not least because the "persecution of social leaders in Guatemala has historically had the most tragic of consequences".

The CAFTA, ratified by Guatemalan congress on last Thursday (10th March 2005), has this week met strong opposition in marches across the country.

* Letter (Spanish original)

<http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991221415&Language=ES>

The ICFTU represents 145 million workers in 233 affiliated organisations in 154 countries and territories. ICFTU is also a partner in Global Unions: <http://www.global-unions.org>

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