**Guatemala  
Eleven Former Members of the Military Arrested for Crimes against Humanity   
in the Death Squad Diary Case**

On May 27, 2021, the human rights unit of the Public Prosecutor’s Office and the National Civil Police in Guatemala unexpectedly arrested 11 former members of the military charged with forced disappearance and crimes against humanity committed against 183 people that appear in the military intelligence document known as the Death Squad Diary. The arrested individuals are: Gustavo Oliva, José Monterroso, Edgar Corado Samayoa, Marco Antonio González, Enrique Cifuentes, Víctor Augusto Vásquez, Juan Francisco Cifuentes, Eliseo Barrios, Edgar De León, Mavilio Castañeda and Rone René Lara. The Human Rights Prosecutor’s Office has accused the former military personnel of forced disappearance, torture, sexual violence, murder, and crimes against humanity.

***The Death Squad Diary (Diario Militar)***

The Death Squad Diary or “dossier of death” is a military intelligence document first revealed to the public in 1999 through investigative journalism work. The document includes the names of 183 people – 24 women and 159 men – who were forcibly disappeared between August 1983 and March 1985. First published in May of 1999 by Harper Magazine, the document demonstrates the systematic way that forced disappearances were carried out during the internal armed conflict in Guatemala.

The Death Squad Diary consists of 73 pages with typewritten information and photographs of the victims. The name of each victim is written in capital letters and underlined, followed by a description with the person’s alias, the suspected organization to which they belonged, the date of detention, a brief description of how they were detained, and a numeric code with a specific meaning. The victims were workers, unionists, students, teachers/professors, and other civilians whom the Army suspected of collaborating with the guerrilla.

In 2012, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights condemned the State of Guatemala for the crimes committed in the Case of Gudiel Álvarez et al. (Diario Militar). The Court ordered the State of Guatemala to investigate the crimes in order to ensure the right to justice and determine the whereabouts of the victims.

Finally, nine years after the Inter-American Court judgement, the Public Prosecutor’s Office arrested 11 people involved in the crimes, among them military officials who held high-ranking positions in the 1980s. This is an important step for the families of the victims who continue to fight tirelessly in the search for the remains of their loved ones. This is also an important step for justice in Guatemala, a country that continues to grapple with a past of serious atrocities committed under military dictatorships.