



Casa Quivira

"Providing Hope for the Children of Guatemala"

PRESS STATEMENT

8 September 2007

Today marks the fourth week that the Casa Quivira Children's Home was unjustly raided by Guatemalan authorities and the 46 children legally under their care subsequently transferred to orphanages throughout Guatemala. Since the raid and takeover of the private property by the Guatemalan government not a single petition relating to the health and well being of the children has been answered, staff and owners of the home are banned from entering the property and any clarification regarding the accusations against the duly recognized organization remain unanswered by the state.

The 11 days which the adoption attorneys for Casa Quivira, Vilma Zamora and Patricia Leonardo, were illegally detained -- violating their civil and human rights -- has yet to be answered for by the government. The Ministerio Publico, MP, (District Attorney's Office) only late this week allowed CQ attorneys access to the case against the organization, having violated Article 14 of the Guatemalan Constitution. Documents presented by the MP to the criminal court have been altered and CQ attorneys have asked that criminal charges be considered by the judge against the MP.

U.S. Members of Congress sign on to help shed light on this tragic situation.

In light of the continuing lack of response from the Guatemalan government, the prospective adoptive parents and parents that have adopted through Casa Quivira in the past united this week to bring awareness of the unjust situation to their members of Congress and citizens of the U.S. Adoptive parents in thirteen states were able to brief more than forty Senate and House members on the situation and request immediate action. Many members of Congress have sent letters of inquiry to Guatemala's Ambassador to the U.S., Guillermo Castillo, as well as to the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala and directly to President Oscar Berger of Guatemala demanding a speedy resolution to this unjust crisis. Additionally, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) will be following up with a letter signed by CCAI members to all of these entities. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute membership includes over 200 Members of the U.S. Congress.

The requests of Casa Quivira families and supporters remain the same:

- That all 42 remaining children who were transferred from Casa Quivira immediately be returned to the facility.
- That the notarial process by which these children are being adopted be allowed to continue to completion as specified under Guatemalan law.

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