



# Casa Quivira

*“Providing Hope for the Children of Guatemala”*

## PRESS STATEMENT

18 August 2007

### **Guatemalan President’s Office for Social Welfare accusations sink to new low.**

With a case against Casa Quivira that is founded on baseless accusations, the Guatemalan government’s tactics have turned to an even lower level of emotionally charged lies. Carmen Alicia Maldonado de Wennier, head of the Guatemalan President’s Office for Social Welfare (Secretaria de Bienestar Social de la Presidencia), stated in a press article released today in Guatemala that Casa Quivira operates “clandestinely” and that the adoptions that have been completed by Casa Quivira are linked to a “sexual exploitation network.”

These desperate accusations by the Guatemalan authorities are the latest comments in a week-long campaign by the government to illegally seize the private property and occupy Casa Quivira Children’s Home, in Antigua, Guatemala. During this occupation, these same authorities have refused to allow specialized formulas and other supplies from Casa Quivira staff to enter the home; compromised the health of the infants by not following basic practices of infection control; refused to permit the doctor for the children to examine or treat them; allowed the basic hygienic status of the home to deteriorate; and intimidated the care-givers of the children.

Casa Quivira is recognized as an exemplary program for adoption and social welfare. The reasons for this ongoing and escalating harassment by the Guatemalan government remain a mystery. However, such outrageous comments as those made by Ms. Maldonado de Wennier will not go unanswered. As stated by Estuardo Castellanos, an attorney for Casa Quivira, “The state realizes that they have a very, very weak legal case against us so they are going to try to win a propaganda battle instead.” They have picked the wrong target for this type of activity. Casa Quivira remains firmly resolved in its commitment to the children of Guatemala which includes the opening of the children’s community health clinic that had been slated for end of this year.

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