

5th HUMAN RIGHTS FILM SERIES

DISCOVERING DOMINGA

Resource Page¹

Guatemala's recent history has been one of the bloodiest histories in Central America. For over 30 years Guatemala suffered through a civil war that resulted in over 200,000 deaths or disappearances, of which 83% of the victims were native Mayan Indians.² Human rights violations included arbitrary executions, massacres of entire villages, scorched earth operations, rapes, kidnappings, forced disappearances, and forced displacements. A large proportion of the male Mayan population above the age of fifteen was forced to participate in atrocious acts at gunpoint, including the raping of women, torturing other community members, defiling corpses, and killing their neighbors. During the confrontation, many Mayans were forced to conceal their ethnic identity by abandoning their traditional dress, language, celebrations and rituals, resulting in fractured families and communities and the weakening of cultural ties. In 1994, the UN-sponsored Peace Accords ended the civil war, and created the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) to objectively document the stories of the victims. *To learn more about the issue and what you can do, please visit the following websites:*

Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law – Project on Indigenous Rights & Indian Law

<http://www.wcl.american.edu/humright/center/indigenous.cfm>

Each year the Center conducts conferences and trainings on Indigenous Rights, Indian Law, and the intersection of these issues with other cutting-edge legal issues, such as Prior Informed Consent, Public International Law and Intellectual Property.

Amnesty International USA - www.amnestyusa.org/justearth/indigenous_people/guatemala.html

This site provides a comprehensive background to the situation in Guatemala as well as up-to-date news on human rights abuses.

Guatemalan Human Rights Commission/USA – www.ghrc-usa.org

This organization was founded in 1982 to monitor, document and report on the human rights situation in Guatemala. It also promotes advocacy for and aid to victims of human rights violations in Guatemala.

International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism-Guatemala Project -

www.imadr.org/project/guatemala

IMADR is an international human rights organization devoted to eliminating all forms of discrimination around the world, forging international solidarity among discriminated minorities and advancing the international regime of human rights. They have a special project on the Empowerment of Rural Maya Communities.

Latin American Working Group – www.lawg.org

LAWG is one of the nation's longest-standing coalitions dedicated to foreign policy. They carry out the coalition's mission to encourage US policies towards Latin America that promote human rights, justice, peace and sustainable development.

NativeWeb (Resources for Indigenous Cultures Around the World) - www.nativeweb.org

NativeWeb is an international educational organization dedicated to using telecommunications to disseminate information from and about indigenous nations, peoples, and organizations around the world and to foster communication between native and non-native peoples.

Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA) – www.nisgua.org

NISGUA was formed to coordinate local activism on Guatemala in the US. It is one of the strongest and steadiest grassroots voices for responsible U.S. policy in the region.

¹ Special thanks to Sarah Mengers for writing this resource page.

² **Guatemala: Memory of Silence, Report of the Commission for Historical Clarification** (AAAS Science and Human Rights Program)
<http://shr.aas.org/guatemala/ceh/report/english/toc.html>.