

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO GUATEMALA (SECOND BATCH)

BELGIUM

- The CICIG (Comisión Internacional contra la Impunidad en Guatemala) plays a critical role in the fight against impunity in Guatemala. What steps is the Government of Guatemala taking to ensure that CICIG can further carry out its mandate?
- In 2013, the Committee against Torture (CAT) expressed concerns over the unknown fate of over 40.000 alleged victims of enforced disappearance during the armed conflict. In 2006, law proposal 3590, which intends to create a National Commission for the Search for Victims of Disappearance, was presented to Congress for the first time. What timetable can be expected for the adoption of this bill? Parallel to this national initiative, is Guatemala considering to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance?
- Concerns have been raised over the persistent attacks and threats against human rights defenders, in particular those who focus on justice and impunity, indigenous peoples' rights, environmental and land rights. How is the Government of Guatemala protecting these human rights defenders and what measures will it take to bring those responsible to justice?
- As a strong proponent of the abolition of the death penalty, Belgium welcomes the fact that no execution has taken place in Guatemala since 2000. Does the government consider replacing the existing *de facto* moratorium on the death penalty by an *official* moratorium as a first step? We eventually hope that the Government of Guatemala will join the group of more than 80 countries that have ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.
- The maternal mortality rate remains very high in Guatemala and is often caused by the practice of unsafe illegal abortion. Would Guatemala consider expanding the exceptions to the prohibition on abortion, for example in case of rape, incest or when the fetus is unviable?