

58th Human Rights Council Session, 7th of March 2025

ID with Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing

Mr. President,

We greatly appreciate this important report.

From PBI, we want to highlight how violations of the right to a dignified life are at the root of many cases of migration. In Guatemala, particularly in the department of Alta Verapaz, violent forced evictions—both judicial and extrajudicial—continue to take place without adhering to international standards, including the right to temporary or emergency shelter. These evictions occur even in cases where land ownership by communities has been confirmed. The most recent example of this is the eviction of the Lajeb Kej community on January 22 of this year.

According to the OHCHR report, in 2024 alone, the Public Prosecutor's Office, led by Attorney General Consuelo Porras and her chief advisor Angel Pineda—both sanctioned by the U.S. and the EU for corruption and undermining democracy—ordered 111 evictions.

In an environment of extreme poverty, which exceeds 80% in the department of Alta Verapaz, evictions under these conditions create humanitarian emergencies and situations of extreme vulnerability, forcing many families to migrate. Several studies highlight a significant increase in migration of the Maya Q'eqchi' population over the past decade due to land and housing dispossession.

We view the upcoming visit of the UN Special Rapporteur to Guatemala as strategically important and we sincerely appreciate any recommendations and contributions that may help improve the critical housing crisis affecting many communities and families in the country.

Thank you