

Guatemala Forms Task Force to Combat Femicide



Demonstrators in Guatemala demand that the disappearance of women be investigated. Photo credit: Danilo Valladares/IPS

Guatemala has one of the highest rates of femicides in the world. From 2000 to 2010, 5,200 women were killed in Guatemala as a result of gender-related violence, [according to police figures](#). The alarming female murder rate in Guatemala has prompted actions from both civil society and the government to curb violence.

Newly inaugurated President Otto Pérez Molina has formed a task force to combat femicides, which is a term used to denote gender-motivated killings. The task force will be headed by former Prosecutor Mirna Carrera and will focus on intelligence and investigative efforts with the aim of reducing the number of femicides by 25 percent this year.

UN Women Director for Latin America Gladys Acosta has called on the international community to take action against the femicide epidemic because of the enormous number of women who are being murdered and the viciousness of the abuses.

Guatemala's civil society has organized several demonstrations to demand justice for the victims. Most recently, more than [12,000 people scaled Volcán de Agua](#) to protest violence against women. This activity—the first of its kind in Guatemala—was staged by numerous civil society organizations, youth movements, private sector companies, and foreign embassies accredited in the country.