CICIG AND THE RULE OF LAW
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**FOREWORD**

The International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), the foreign entity at the heart of Guatemala’s political and legal system, is actually near its closely-held goal of establishing itself as the director of Guatemala’s destiny. These reports are meant to open the curtain and let things be seen. | Web Version / PDF Version

**Part 1 | Murder by Diplomatic Immunity**

A police force directed by the CICIG and its handmaiden, Guatemala’s Justice Ministry (MP), makes an illegal pre-dawn raid against a residence in the capital city and kills the wrong man. In response to a lawsuit, the CICIG invokes diplomatic immunity, absolving itself; while the MP says no crime occurred. | Web Version / PDF Version

**Part 2 | The President Versus the Commissioner**

Guatemala’s President Morales, as part of his power to expel any diplomat, orders the CICIG commissioner, Iván Velásquez, to leave the country. In violation of national and international law, Guatemala’s high court reverses the president’s order and puts Velásquez above any justice. | Web Version / PDF Version

**Part 3 | From Here to Eternity: The Pavón Prison Cases**

In 2006, Guatemalan forces re-established order in the country’s toughest prison. The country’s human-rights ombudsman – who at first praised the operation, in which seven inmates died – later asked the CICIG to prosecute. The result is a travesty that violates the norms of justice and continues to this day. | Web Version / PDF Version

**Part 4 | The Case of the Disappearing Attorney General**

Working with Guatemala’s president, its high court, and the US ambassador, the CICIG engineers a judicial coup that removes Attorney General Conrado Reyes from office. This 2010 coup marks the first of the CICIG’s efforts to remake the country’s political and legal system in its own image. | Web Version / PDF Version

**Part 5 | Soviet Show-Trials in the Americas: The Case of the CICIG versus Moisés Galindo**

With the help of Guatemala’s justice ministry and judges, the CICIG goes after Moisés Galindo, an attorney who has opposed the commission in court. The CICIG breaks a lawful bond between the attorney and his client, imprisons Galindo, confiscates his property, and prosecutes against the rules. | Web Version / PDF Version
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FOREWORD

The International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) is the predominant and most powerful institution in Guatemala. It has generated plenty of coverage – but only in the superficial mode of present-day journalism.

Reporters have taken the commission largely at its word, while scrutiny has gone missing. The purpose behind the following series of narratives is to open the way to scrutiny.

Ever since the beginning of its charmed career, the CICIG – acronym pronounced «see-SEEG» – has been awash in buzzwords. In describing itself and its mission, the CICIG has invariably used terms like anti-impunity, anti-corruption, pro-human rights, pro-indigenous rights, pro-women’s rights, and others of the kind. These also happen to be the buzzwords of an international political movement which identifies itself as “progressive” and which regards the CICIG as a crucial component.

In the narratives that follow, we will not judge the labels that the CICIG has affixed to itself; nor will we propose other labels. We will simply recount a series of legal or law-enforcement situations in which the CICIG has chosen to involve itself. To provide contrast, we will describe at least one situation in which the CICIG chose not to involve itself.

These narratives are aimed at policymakers, at journalists, at students, and at the interested general reader. With subjects chosen by legal experts, they are based on court documents, on direct or primary sources, and on news reports.

Our aim is not one of ‘exposing’ the CICIG in a journalistic sense. It is, rather, to draw the curtain aside and let the reader form his or her own impressions. These pieces are not scholarly works, nor are they lawyer’s treatises. Across the various episodes, a coherent picture does take shape, which readers may discover at their own pace.

We do not hope or pretend that our portrayals will be to everybody’s liking. The field that these narratives treat is a highly charged and politicized one, with issues that touch on life and death. Our writing on these matters is also an invitation to a dialogue about them.

Our aim, rather than controversy, is to raise curiosity. We don’t demand to be taken at our word, as others in this field sometimes do. If we inspire readers to explore the issues on their own, our highest goal will have been attained.

We will release the first of our pieces tomorrow, and we will continue to release them at intervals during the next few weeks.

1. See the Judicial Watch video on the CICIG: http://bit.ly/2uEwSa9