



November 7, 2017

Solidarity Message for the Asociación Nacional de Familiares de Secuestrados, Detenidos y Desaparecido del Perú (ANFASEP)

The International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED) expresses its utmost support to ANFASEP for its invaluable role and contribution to the historical memory of Peru. For more than three decades, the long and arduous struggle for truth and justice that Angélica "Mamá Angélica" Mendoza de Ascarza (1928-2017) had started with other strong women of Ayacucho has served as a significant inspiration to other victims of enforced disappearance not only in Peru but also in many other countries across the globe, particularly where the scourge of involuntary disappearance remains to be an ongoing and unresolved phenomenon.

One of ANFASEP's greatest achievements in their journey for truth and justice is the establishment of the *Museo de la Memoria* (Museum of Memory), which was built in 2005 with the support of the German Cooperation. Throughout its existence, the Museum of Memory aptly depicting the history and struggle of Peru clearly, has served the purpose of restoring the historical memory of the victims of the harrowing human rights violations that were committed against the people of Ayacucho during its internal conflict in the 1980s.

It is significant to note that on 23 October 2017, the undersigned, representing ICAED visited families of the disappeared in Lima, some of whom were with her in the "Lugar de la Memoria," which captures the darkest history of Peru especially under the Fujimori dictatorship.

Thus, we would like to express our absolute disappointment with the recent statements made by Congressman Octavio Salazar linking this historic institution to terrorism and insurrection. These pronouncements do not only replicate the injustice that was committed against the victims of enforced disappearance and other forms of human rights violations, but also challenge to revise and erase the historical memory of the violence perpetrated by the military forces against the more than 15,000 *desaparecidos*.

Through the years, the *Museo de la Memoria* and its matriarchal founders have stood as the hallmark of truth, justice, and strength in the face of adversity and conflict in Peru. It not only continues to remember and honor the disappeared and other victims of violence, but also persists in its mission of preventing more human rights violations and disappearances from recurring, staying true to its initial vision: “*Para que no se repita* (So that is not repeated).”

It is extremely upsetting to find that with the most recent successes that Peru has achieved in the landscape of human rights, principally the ratification of the United Nations International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (UN ICED) as well as the enactment of the *Ley de Búsqueda de Personas Desaparecidas* (Law on the Search for Disappeared Persons), such a disdainful statement challenges to reduce to mere mockery, the important milestones that have been realized by ANFASEP and other human rights organizations in the country, including Qatary Panituri, ICAED member-organization, in their decades-long struggle. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, a treaty that compels all States Parties to protect all persons from enforced disappearance, states that all victims of this grave human rights violation shall bear **“the right to obtain reparation and moral damages and, where applicable, other forms of reparation such as restitution; rehabilitation; satisfaction, including restoration of dignity and reputation; and guarantees of non-repetition (Article 24, Paragraph 5).”**

It is apparent that Congressman Salazar’s assertions encroach upon the rights of the victims of the disappeared, as he seeks to wipe out the historical memory of the human rights violations committed by the military under former President Alberto Fujimori’s orders,

thereby breeding the culture of impunity and blatantly disregarding the dignity and reputation of those who have been disappeared.

Hence, it is truly vital for human rights advocates and defenders at the national, regional, and global levels of discourse to stand up and speak out against the oppressive influence of the state perpetrators who have not only inflicted unbearable and enduring trauma to the victims of enforced disappearance, but also continually strive to remove and revise the historical memory of their terrible crimes and violations against human rights. May we continue to live by the noble example of the Ayacucho women of ANFASEP who have remained determined and courageous in their constant struggle for truth, justice, reparation, and the restoration of historical memory despite the perennial threat to their dignity and their lives.

In the name of truth and justice, we remain...

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Aileen D. Bacalso". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARY AILEEN D. BACALSO

Focal Person, ICAED