

GUATEMALA: THE SWEARING IN OF THE NEW AUTHORITIES OF THE GUATEMALAN BAR ASSOCIATION (CANG) MUST BE GUARANTEED

The Americas, March 20, 2025.

We, the undersigned international organizations, express our concern about the threats of obstruction of the swearing-in of the new members of the Board of Directors, Court of Honor and Investment Advisory Committee of the Guatemalan Bar Association (CANG) elected on February 14, 2025, and the undue extension of the mandate of the current authorities, which, according to the legal framework, expires today, March 20, 2025.

Access to power, its exercise and the guarantees of electing and being elected in accordance with the rule of law is an essential element of democracy. That is why the results of the election of new CANG authorities by the vote of its members must be implemented through swearing in, and not be obstructed by unfounded appeals, in order to guarantee the legitimacy and institutional stability of the CANG, as well as to strengthen the justice system and the rule of law in Guatemala.

It is worrying that an appeal is being processed that aims to annul the result of the election, despite the fact that it was submitted out of time and on aspects that are not essential to the election.

We recognize that everyone has the right to lodge challenges, but these must be lodged within the legally established time frame, and therefore we reject the decision of the outgoing Board of Directors (2023-2025) to try to prolong their term in office and to grant suspensive effects to the appeal lodged, when there is no legal provision establishing any such effect.

We call on the Assembly of Presidents of Professional Associations to resolve the appeal without delay and to guarantee the effective swearing in of the new authorities, in compliance with current regulations. The will expressed at the elections by the members of the CANG must be respected, guaranteeing the alternation of office and avoiding actions that undermine confidence in the electoral mechanisms and in the independence of the collegiate bodies.

We urge all professionals from the different careers to support this process and to make their voices heard before their respective union authorities so that the will of the CANG members can be respected.

