

Guatemala bars UN anti-corruption investigator from re-entering country

Guatemalan authorities informed United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Tuesday that they have barred Commissioner Ivan Velasquez, of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), from re-entering the country.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, the UN chief said that CICIG and its Commissioner play “a [pivotal role](#) in the fight against impunity in Guatemala.”

“The UN Secretariat has serious concerns about this decision, which it is currently reviewing and which does not appear to be consistent with the Agreement on the establishment of CICIG,” Mr. Dujarric spelled out.

According to his spokesperson, the Secretary-General has asked Mr. Velasquez to continue at the helm of CICIG from outside Guatemala until there is more clarity on the situation.

“The Secretary-General encourages the Government of Guatemala to continue to search for a solution through dialogue in the framework of article 12 of the Agreement establishing CICIG,” the statement concluded.

According to news reports, the agency’s mandate – due to expire next year – was revoked days after a long-running dispute between Mr. Velasquez and Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales escalated, which included corruption probes against the President and his family.

Mr. Morales reportedly had asked the UN chief to name a replacement for Mr. Velasquez, who is a Colombian citizen.