

De: The National Security Archive nsarchiv@gwu.edu
Objet: Imminent Threat to Guatemala's Historical Archive of the National Police (AHPN)
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À: benvillain@gmail.com benvillain@GMAIL.COM



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Imminent Threat to Guatemala's Historical Archive of the National Police (AHPN)

Morales Government Tightens Grip on Massive Human Rights Records Trove

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Washington, D.C., May 30, 2019 – The National Security Archive joins our international and Guatemalan colleagues in calling for the protection of the Historical Archive of the National Police (AHPN) of Guatemala, which faces new threats to its independence and to public access to its holdings.

[In a press conference on Monday, May 27](#), Interior Minister Enrique Degenhart signaled his intent to assert his agency's control of the AHPN including the prospect of new restrictions on access to the archived police records and possible legal action against



“foreign institutions” holding digitized copies of the documents. Degenhart made his statements [as a crucial deadline approached](#) to renew an agreement that for a decade has kept the archive under the authority of Ministry of Culture and Sports. The agreement now appears to be in jeopardy.

The hollowing out of the AHPN is taking place at a time when justice and human rights initiatives are broad under siege in Guatemala and follows months of uncertainty for the celebrated human rights archive, which has been institutionally adrift since [its long-time director, Gustavo Meoño Brenner, was abruptly dismissed in 2018](#).

Since its discovery in 2005, the AHPN has played a central role in Guatemala's attempts to reckon with its past. Its records of more than a century of the history of the former National Police have been relied upon by families of the disappeared, scholars, and prosecutors. The institution has become a model across Latin America and around the world for the rescue and preservation of vital historical records.

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National Security Archive, Suite 701
Gelman Library
The George Washington University
2130 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C., 20037
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