



## Seattle Human Rights Commission

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October 22, 2015

The Seattle Human Rights Commission condemns the theft of documents from the University of Washington Center for Human Rights (UWCHR) which were stolen from the UWCHR director's office between Oct 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2015. This theft occurred shortly after the UWCHR filed a lawsuit against the CIA regarding the release of information about massacres committed in El Salvador during the Salvadoran civil war. The theft of the UWCHR's documents appears to be politically motivated.

We stand in solidarity with the UW Center for Human Rights and their partners. We recognize their courageous work for human rights globally, and applaud them as recipients of the 2014 Seattle Human Rights Organization award.

The UN Declaration of Human Rights says that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers".

The UWCHR has been working to assure that this human right to information is fully exercised. Their work is vital in securing the rights of survivors of massacres to know the truth, and the theft demonstrates that we are far from reaching justice.

We call for prompt and thorough investigation into the theft of these documents, and for immediate steps to be taken to assure the protection of the brave survivors of Salvadoran massacres whose information was included in the files that were stolen.

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Sarah Bishop, Co-Chair

Handwritten signature of Alex Becker in black ink.

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Alex Becker, Co-Chair

Handwritten signature of Sarah Lippek in black ink.

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Sarah Lippek, Co-Chair