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Title/Style of Cause: Amilcar Mendez v. Guatemala
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49. On October 3, 2003, the Commission granted precautionary measures on behalf of Amílcar Méndez, a prominent human rights defender, founder and legal representative of the Consejo de Comunidades Étnicas “Runujel Junam” (CERJ). The information available indicates that on September 27, 2003, Mr. Eusebio Macario Chicoj was assassinated; he was a member of CERJ who had worked on issues related to compensation for the victims of the internal armed conflict in the community of Chulumal in Chichicastenango. On September 30, 2003, Amílcar Méndez received a telephone threat indicating “... we brought Eusebio to justice [ajusticiamos, i.e. “we killed him”], we’re going to bring you to justice ... complain to your father the Ombudsman, to the gringo shits (los gringos cerotes)...” In view of the risk to which he is exposed, and the context of danger facing human rights defenders in Guatemala, the IACHR asked the Guatemalan State to adopt the measures needed to protect the life and personal integrity of Amílcar Méndez. In response, the State indicated that the Minister of Interior, the Director General of the National Civilian Police, and the Chief of the Human Rights Unit had been informed, and told to provide perimeter security to the offices of the CERJ and the beneficiary’s residence.