

Dear Friends,

The recent fire at Hogar Seguro in San José Pinula in Guatemala, which has so far claimed the lives of 37 teenage girls, is a very sad event and has caught the attention of the world.

We want you to know that our 27 children are safe with us at the House of Culture and Mercy in zone 1, at the San Miguel Residence at Lake Amatitlán (Monastery), or abroad in Russia at University.

This loss of young life has shone a bright light on the darkness that exists regarding the situation faced by orphans and underprivileged youth in Guatemala where the laws are completely against them and anyone who desires to help them. This is the result of the change to the civil law in Guatemala done 10 years ago at the insistence of UNICEF with the closing of adoptions. With this context in mind, this is the appeal that I have written to the government at the insistence of the people:

I think that if we really want to do something for our abandoned and at-risk children (and avoid more "maras" gangs), the following must be done:

1. Repeal Decree 77-2007 that gave birth to the CNA (Centro Nacional de Adopciones), which PROHIBITED whatever is not CNA and removed the authority of the Judges of minors.
2. Return to the Civil Code of (of Guatemala) which is more than enough.
3. Develop regulations for the Civil Code to make agile the legal process of care for abandoned and at-risk children. We have enough Juvenile Judges who know their work and have the experience. They can make an excellent legal regulation attached to the Civil Code.
4. This will allow private institutions, households (Homes/orphanages) to exist, and have them be under the supervision of the Juvenile Court only.
5. Restore the right of children to have an adoptive family anywhere in the world.

6. The Government has to have only institutions for juvenile transgressors, and subcontract its administration to professional people (with UNICEF funds) Plus establish a mechanism of supervision of these Homes that must correspond to the College of Psychologists and the Lawyers' Association.

UNICEF funding? (Q175 million only for the Hogar Seguro that burned their children....) must go to Juvenile Courts so they can do a better job and the homes of transgressors so that these future members of maras are given the proper attention to get them out of their hell.

Pray for our country. Pray for us.
With love in Christ,
Madre Inés