



The Center for Iberian & Latin American Studies, UCSD

The Guatemalan Genocide Case: Erasing the Tension between International and National Justice

Monday, October 20, 2014, 12-2 PM

Deutz Room in the Copley International Conference Center,
Institute of the Americas Complex, UCSD

Under a military dictatorship from the 1950s through the 1980s, 200,000 people lost their lives in Guatemala, a majority of them indigenous Maya. After the end of the dictatorship, a United Nations Truth Commission report declared that the Guatemalan government had carried out a genocide against the indigenous Maya population. Because the report did not hold the responsible parties accountable, the survivors of this genocide organized to demand justice for the victims. They started investigations and litigation both nationally and internationally in Spain in an effort to seek justice and end impunity. Almudena Bernabeu, the lead lawyer in these cases, will discuss the nearly two decades long effort that combined international and national legal work and ultimately led to the prosecution for genocide of former dictator General Efraín Ríos Montt in a Guatemalan court in 2013.

Speaker: **Almudena Bernabeu** is an International Attorney and the Director of the Transitional Justice Program at San Francisco's Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA). She is the vice-president of the Spanish Association for Human Rights and an adviser to the Human Rights Clinic at Santa Clara University. Ms. Bernabeu has worked in international law and human rights for over 16 years, has published articles, received many awards for her human rights work and was included as one of Time Magazine's 200 most influential people in 2012. She has led the prosecutions of several of the worst perpetrators of crimes against humanity and her work on the Guatemala Genocide Case was featured in the documentary *Granito: How to Nail a Dictator*, which debuted at the Sundance Film Festival. Ms. Bernabeu led the CJA's work in Spain in the recent genocide trial against the former Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt.

Moderator: **William J. Aceves** is a Professor of Law and Vice Dean for Academic Affairs at the California Western School of Law. He works with several human rights organizations, including the Center for Justice & Accountability, on projects involving human rights and international law.

Respondent: **Marta Casaús Arzú** is a Professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid renowned for her research on race and racism in Guatemala.