

AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Organized 1884

Incorporated by the Congress 1889

January 27, 2014

David Ernesto Morales Cruz
Procurador para la Defense de los Derechos Humanos
Gobernación El Salvador

Dear Mr. Morales Cruz:

The American Historical Association expresses its dismay over the destruction of archives and theft of the computers of the Asociación Pro-Búsqueda on November 14, 2013. Pro-Búsqueda was founded in 1994 as a nongovernmental organization devoted to locating children who disappeared during the civil war (1980–1992), amassing records of 1,200 cases.

We applaud your statement of November 17, 2013 with regard to the attack, and we support your demand that the Fiscalía General give priority to investigating and holding accountable those who perpetrated it.

We urge the government of El Salvador to take all necessary measures to protect all archives that include information on human rights violations, wherever these archives may be located in El Salvador.

Historians value free, open, equal, and nondiscriminatory access to archival records. The destruction of historical records poses serious challenges to historical inquiry. The American Historical Association makes a public appeal to President Mauricio Funes and the authorities of El Salvador to conduct a full investigation of this incident and to establish effective measures to preserve the integrity of such archives.

Respectfully,



Jan Goldstein
President



James Grossman
Executive Director