



## **Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Briefing**

### **Defending Community and Indigenous Rights in Guatemala**

**Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015**

**11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon**

**2255 Rayburn House Office Building**

#### **Panelists**



**Daniel Pascual** is the national coordinator of the Committee of Campesino Unity (Comité de Unidad Campesino, CUC) in Guatemala. The CUC is a national grassroots organization that brings together indigenous and campesino communities to defend their rights to land and territory, and to promote family farming and food sovereignty. A Guatemalan of Maya Quiché heritage, Daniel has been organizing for 30 years to promote and defend the collective rights of indigenous peoples and communities, as well as individual human rights. He was a member of the Civil Society

Assembly that engaged in the negotiation and subsequent monitoring of the 1996 Peace Accords in Guatemala. This year he helped establish the Peoples Social Assembly (Asamblea Social Popular), bringing together nearly 200 civil society organizations in response to the crisis involving government corruption that precipitated massive civic mobilizations and led to the resignation of the country's President and Vice-president.



**Rafael Maldonado** is the Legal and Environmental Policy Director of the Guatemalan Center for Environmental and Social Legal Action (Centro de Acción Legal – Ambiental y Social de Guatemala, CALAS), a civil society organization dedicated to defending the human and environmental rights of communities affected by mining projects. Rafael is an attorney specializing in environmental law, and a doctoral candidate in constitutional law. He has worked for 14 years on legal defense to protect the environment and natural resources, as well as the legal defense of

human rights defenders who have been criminalized for defending their land and territory and the natural resources on which they depend.

## Moderator



**Stephanie Burgos** is a senior policy advisor with Oxfam America based in Washington, DC, managing the policy portfolio on issues of economic justice. She has worked at Oxfam for 12 years on a range of land, agriculture, food security and trade issues. Her prior experience includes working for the UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy on macroeconomic policy and poverty eradication issues, as well as for the Inter-American Development Bank on capacity building in the area of social policy management. She was also engaged in a research and advocacy initiative on the impact of structural adjustment policies in developing countries, and spent several years working in Central America on human rights issues. She holds a BA in International Studies and an MA in International Development from American University in Washington, DC.