

Guatemalan gov't, prosecutor sign security accord

MEXICO CITY, April 16 (Xinhua) -- Guatemala's government and Attorney General's Office have signed an agreement designed to fight violence in the country, according to reports reaching here from Guatemala city on Thursday.

Guatemala's President Alvaro Colon said that the National Agreement for Progress on Security and Justice, drawn up in collaboration with a leading university as well as religious and human rights institutions, was important because it committed the state to making Guatemala safer.

The agreement commits signatories to presenting concrete proposals on 101 points in 10 thematic topics within 45 days. A state-backed commission will be formed to implement the plans.

The agreement "shows unprecedented levels of cooperation between the legislative and executive branches of government, alongside provincial authorities, the military, representatives of the international community and civil society," said Kate Joynes-Burgess, an independent political analyst based in Mexico City.

"This administration is showing a commitment to righting past wrongs, giving teeth to human rights ombudsman Sergio Morales," she added.

On March 24, Morales' wife Gladys Monterroso was kidnapped and beaten, which authorities link to his involvement in the recent opening of police files dating back to Guatemala's 1960-1996 civil war.

Morales, the Guatemalan government's human rights ombudsman, had opened the first report on the contents of millions of documents that could implicate hundreds of former officers accused of killing students and leftists during the 36-year conflict.

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