

Thousands March Against Corruption in Guatemala

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Demonstrators gathered on Saturday afternoon in front of the National Palace of Culture in response to a call on social networks by different organizations.

Marchers, including parents accompanied by their children, sang the national anthem at the palace's entrance and then joined in chants calling on the president to step down.

Perez Molina's administration has been mired in a corruption scandal over the past six weeks as the UN-sponsored International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala, or CICIG, and the prosecutor's office dismantled two criminal organizations dedicated to fraud.

From April 16 to May 20, several leading members of the Perez Molina administration were forced out of office, including Vice President Roxana Baldetti, who resigned on May 8.

Baldetti stepped down amid mass protests sparked by revelations that her former private secretary, Juan Carlos Monzon, was involved in a corruption ring within the SAT tax agency.

The heads of the central bank and the IGSS health-insurance agency were arrested May 20 on suspicion of corruption.

Banco de Guatemala chief Julio Roberto Suarez and IGSS chief Juan de Dios Rodriguez were arrested in connection with a case centered on the IGSS's awarding of a contract worth 116 million quetzales (\$15.18 million) for dialysis services, CICIG spokesman Diego Alvarez told EFE.

Different organizations have called for the resignation of Perez Molina, whose term ends on Jan.14, 2016.
