

CLAUDIA ESCOBAR
BIO - 2016

Claudia Escobar, was born when the internal armed conflict started in Guatemala. The civil war lasted more than 36 years. Having grown up in a region marked by impunity, corruption and violence, Judge Escobar has dedicated her life to work for the respect of law and justice. Her mother's profession, a family judge with 20 years of experience in the judiciary made Escobar believe that a strong judicial system is the vehicle to build a true State of Law, which can bring peace, freedom, and prosperity to her country.

During year 2014 she was reelected by the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala as Magistrate for the Appeals Court in the nominee of judges in Guatemala for the 2014 - 2019 period, but she renounced to the nomination and became the whistle blower in a case of grand corruption involving the Vice-president of Guatemala and the former President of Congress. Her decision to speak out about the serious corruption issues within the Justice System in Guatemala, as well as the interference from other branches of the government, in naming judiciary officials, violating judicial independence and separation of powers, put her and her family at great risk. The Inter American Commission of Human Rights - IACHR- has granted her and her family precautionary measures.

She is a Scholar at Risk at Harvard and a Fellow at Radcliffe Institute for advanced Studies. (Robert G. James Scholar at Risk Fellow 2015 – 2016) During her fellowship period at Harvard she intends to pursue a research project on how corruption in the judiciary branch is directly linked to the lack of judicial independence, and consequently to the violation of human rights.

Judge Escobar obtained her Ph.D and Master in Pluralistic Law at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, her law degree at the Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala, and a BA in Political Sciences at Louisiana State University. She also has studied a Master's Program in Education and Learning at the Jesuit University Rafael Landívar in Guatemala.

As a dedicated professor in different universities, she coordinates the Master's Degree at the Universidad Rafael Landívar and various formation programs on Alternative Dispute Resolution in different institutions, within the Judicial System.

Her academic background and formation, as well as her professional experience, have allowed her to maintain a deep knowledge and understanding of the social, economic and judiciary problems of the Central American region and of its institutions, especially that of the Justice Systems. She has high investigative and analytical ability and a special vocation for justice.