

March 30, 2005

GUATEMALA - Urgent Action

KILLING of ALVARO BENIGNO SANCHEZ by SECURITY GUARDS WORKING for GLAMIS GOLD SUBSIDIARY in GUATEMALA

Rights Action prepared this urgent action based on information from the MTC (Movimiento de Trabajadores del Campo), a community-based organization in the San Marcos region where the Canadian-US company Glamis Gold is operating. This is the second person violently killed directly or indirectly related to Glamis Gold's mining operation in Guatemala, which is widely opposed by the general public in Guatemala, including local Mayan populations. However, Glamis Gold is receiving strong support from the Canadian, US and Guatemalan governments, and the World Bank.

For background information on this, contact: info@rightsaction.org / 416-654-2074. At www.rightsaction.org, you will find a major report on mining recently published by Rights Action.

What to do? - See below.

Please re-distribute this information. If you want on-off this elist: info@rightsaction.org

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KILLING of ALVARO BENIGNO SANCHEZ by SECURITY GUARDS WORKING for GLAMIS GOLD SUBSIDIARY in GUATEMALA

During the evening of Sunday, March 13, 2005, there was a choral concert in the parish church of the municipality of San Miguel Ixtahuacán, department of San Marcos. The concert was attended by Alvaro Benigno, a man from the village of Pie de la Cuesta, municipality of Sipacapa.

According to eye-witnesses, at approximately midnight, Alvaro Benigno left the church with other people and started walking home. As they were passing a bar in San Miguel, Ixtahuacán, Ludwin Waldemar Calderon and Guillermo Lanuza came out into the street. Both these men work for the Grupo Golan company providing "security" for the Marlin Project, which is being implemented by the Montana Mining Company, a subsidiary of the Canadian / US company Glamis Gold Ltd.

Guillermo Lanuza went straight over to Álvaro Benigno and hit him. In the middle of the scuffle that ensued, Ludwin Waldemar Calderon pulled a hand-gun and shot five or six bullets which hit Álvaro Benigno in several places. He was taken to the National Hospital in Huehuetenango, where he died.

Since this crime, the manager of the Grupo Golan company telephoned the family of the victim a number of times to offer them money in an attempt to ensure that the general public does not find out what happened or that the family does not begin a legal process against the company.

The victim, Alvaro Benigno, was 23 years old, and leaves behind him his pregnant wife and a 3 year-old infant. This killing takes place in a very tense climate, when the local population are organizing against the gold mining operation; and this killing comes in the aftermath of serious protests against the Glamis Gold company earlier this year. During one protest against Glamis Gold in January, a protestor was killed by Guatemala government forces.

To date, no one has been detained by the authorities for this most recent killing.

TO DO:

1- Please write short letters of protest and email them to the authorities listed below. Demand -a- a proper investigation and trial for this murder, and -b- the suspension of the Glamis Gold mining operation.

GLAMIS GOLD: 310-5190 NEIL ROAD, RENO, NV, USA, 89502, T:(775)827-4600,
F:(775)827-5044, info@glamis.com, www.glamis.com

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT:

- James Lambert, Canadian ambassador in Guatemala, gtmla@international.gc.ca
- Ginette Martin, Advisor, Canadian embassy in Guatemala, ginette.Martin@international.gc.ca
- Monica Izaguirre, Monica.Izaguirre@international.gc.ca

WORLD BANK:

- James Wolfensohn, President, Attention to: Minneh M. Kane [Asst. to the President], F: 202-522-1677, E: mkane@worldbank.org
- Vice President David de Ferranti, E: Ddeferranti@worldbank.org
- Michael Swetye, Principal Investment Officer, Oil, Gas, Mining and Chemicals Department F8K-254, WB (International Finance Corporation), E: Jswetye@ifc.org, F: 202-974-4323
- Carmen Gadala, World Bank External Affairs Officer, E: cgadala@worldbank.org
- Jane Armitage, Country Director, Central America, E: Jarmitage@worldbank.org, F: (202)676-1464
- Neeta Sirur, Country Manager for Guatemala, E: Nsirur@worldbank.org
- Irma Yolanda Avila, civil society and indigenous peoples specialist Guatemala Country Office City, E: iavilaargueta@worldbank.org

2- Please send tax-deductible donations for the community development and education work, as well as for the emergency needs of the surviving family members of the murdered young man. Make check payable to "Rights Action" (writing MTC-relief on memo-line) and mail to:

UNITED STATES: 1830 Connecticut Av, NW, Washington DC, 20009.

CANADA: 509 St. Clair Ave W, box73527, Toronto ON, M6C-1C0.

Donate on-line in the USA and Canada: www.rightsaction.org

CONTACT US: for more information about this situation or to find out about our July 2005 Delegation-Seminar to Guatemala & Honduras.

info@rightsaction.org/ 416-654-2074/ www.rightsaction.org

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