

## **GOLDCORP IN GUATEMALA**

### **More illegal land occupations, more soldiers and police, more threats of violence**

**BELOW:** information about a confrontation and burned company equipment, in the community of Sacmuj, June 10-12

**WHAT TO DO:** see below

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Guatemala, June 12, 2009

### **AFTER GOLDCORP ILLEGALLY TRIED TO TAKE CONTROL OF MORE LANDS, MAYA MAM PEOPLE OF SAN MIGUEL IXTAHUACAN ARE THREATENED WITH MORE 'CRIMINALIZATION' AND REPRESSION**

The local Maya Mam population of Sacmuj, in the village of Agel, municipality of San Miguel Ixtahuacan (SMI), are in danger of illegal entry by the Canadian mining company Goldcorp Inc, of criminalization of some community members, and of repression.

[This most recent illegal land occupation, by Goldcorp, and threat of violence, are part of a long list of health and environmental harms and violations of human and indigenous rights against the Maya Mam communities since 2005. More information: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)]

Over the past few weeks, Goldcorp has been pressuring hard to buy 200 cords (cuerdas) of land belonging to 20 families in Sacmuj, part of the Agel village. (1 cuerda = 20 square meters, just less than 1 acre).

Confronted with community members who did not want to sell their property, Goldcorp again chose force, illegally bringing vehicles and exploration equipment onto community and private property of Sacmuj community members.

The illegal entry and exploration activities are extremely worrying to the Sacmuj people, not only because the company is illegally on their lands (a crime that Goldcorp has committed consistently, with impunity, since it arrived in San Marcos) but also because community members fear their natural water spring will be contaminated or dry up.

The Sacmuj people have asked, on numerous occasions, that Goldcorp take its vehicles and equipment away; the community has also presented a complaint to the Human Rights Ombudsman of Guatemala.

Wednesday, June 10: Goldcorp company workers told the Sacmuj people they would take their vehicles and equipment away on June 11. Thursday, June 11: With vehicles and equipment still there, the company signed an agreement to pull away on June 12. Friday, June 12: As the company did not comply, unknown individuals burned some exploration equipment, a "Haylux" vehicle, and blocked some electric wires.

## **SOLDIERS AND POLICE**

Given the community resistance, Goldcorp asked for police and army presence. On June 10, 2 units of the national police, 1 unit of Goldcorp's private security, and 4 vehicles of soldiers arrived, allegedly to protect the security of company workers.

On June 11, 6 units of the national police and 2 units of special, anti-riot troops arrived, allegedly to protect the security of Goldcorp management.

## **THREATS**

Once again, SMI community leaders are getting threats. On June 12, Javier de Leon (a leader of ADISMI, Association of Integral Development of San Miguel Ixtahuacan), received two threatening text messages by cel phone. From number +502 5724-6953, at 11:02am, the message read: "Javier you are a piece of shit it is true that you are taking advantage of the people so wait and we will denounce you." ("Javier eres tan pura lata berdaque te estas probechando d lajente esperate tebamosa denunsiar.")

From number +502 4598-5000, at 10:33am, the message read: "Look you goddamn you don't know that you are a beggar you think you are so great you don't even come here to the protest but wait we are going to fuck you up you goddamn bastard." ("Mira pinche no savez eres un limosnero te crees tanto porque no te pones la cara aqui en la manifestacion tu talbes pero esperate te vamos a partir la madre viejo tarugo maldito perro.")

## **CRIMINALIZATION OF STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE**

Similar to manipulated criminal charges brought against 7 Maya Mam men in 2007, against 8 Maya Mam women in 2008, it is rumoured that new charges have been laid against Sacmuj community members.

## **WE ARE WORRIED**

- That the Canadian Goldcorp company illegally occupies people's land, as a common practice, with complete impunity.
- That the Guatemalan government has never responded to multiple complaints made about Goldcorp's illegally occupations of land, showing again the high level of discrimination in the application of justice.
- That the Guatemalan government uses security forces (army, police) in favor of the company without the previous and objective investigation necessary to guarantee the rights of the population.

## **WE DEMAND**

- Of the government of Canada, intervene and verify the violations of the communities and families affected and consider suspending Goldcorp's mining licence.
- Of the Canada Pension Plan – and all pensions and investment funds profiting from investments in Goldcorp -, verify the violations of the communities and families affected and consider withdrawing investments from Goldcorp.
- Of the United Nations High Commission of Human Rights and Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, that they verify the violations of the harmed communities and families.

- Of the President of Guatemala, the Ministries of Mines and Energies and the Environment, and the Procurator of Indigenous Affairs, that they verify the violations of the communities and families affected by Goldcorp's mine, and that they suspend Goldcorp's mining licence for harms and violations the mine has caused, including the health and environmental harms, and the social divisions in the communities due in part of the cooptation of some community members.

San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos, Guatemala, 12 de junio 2009

COMUNIDADES AFECTADAS POR LA MINA MARLIN  
PARROQUIA SAN MIGUEL  
ASOCIACION ADISMI  
PASTORAL JUVENIL DE SAN MIGUEL IXTAHUACAN  
DERECHOS EN ACCION

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## WHAT TO DO

### EDUCATIONAL DELEGATION TO GUATEMALA - JULY 6-14

Please join this trip that will investigate "Dam 'Development' Projects under-mining human rights & the environment". Over 9 days, delegates will meet with development, enviro and human rights activists; visit Chixoy hydro-electric dam affected Mayan-Achi communities; visit Mayan Q'eqchi communities that may well be harmed by the pending Xalala hydro-electric dam; visit Mayan-Mam communities being harmed by Goldcorp Inc's huge gold mine. Information: Karen Spring: [spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com)

### TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

for indigenous and community organizations in San Miguel Ixtahuacan that are resisting the harms of large-scale mining and implementing their own development projects (schools and scholarships, health clinics, solidarity economy, etc), human rights and environment projects, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

\* UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

\* CANADA: 552 - 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>

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CREATE YOUR OWN email list and re-distribute this and other information

DAILY NEWS: Watch, listen to and read: [www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org/) /

[www.upsidedownworld.org](http://www.upsidedownworld.org) / [www.dominionpaper.ca](http://www.dominionpaper.ca)

READ: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine"; Paolo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"

**WWW.RIGHTSACTION.ORG:** Based in Guatemala, Rights Action (with tax-deductible status in Canada and USA) funds and works with indigenous, development, environment and human rights organizations in Guatemala and Honduras, and also in El Salvador,

Haiti, Oaxaca and Chiapas; and educates about and is involved in activism related to global development, environmental and indigenous and human rights struggles.