

GUATEMALA: GOLDCORP MINING PROFITS & HARMS GO UP & UP

February 16, 2010

As Goldcorp plans to hold its annual Shareholders meeting in Toronto, May 19, 2010, it continues to make record profits for its directors, shareholders and investors across North America.

Health and environmental harms and rights violations continue with no end in sight.

With no legal oversight or sanction for harms and violations, neither in Guatemala, nor in Honduras or Canada, Goldcorp continues to operate with impunity. There is no political pressure for accountability from the governments of Canada, Honduras and Guatemala, nor from shareholders and investors across North America.

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EDUCATIONAL-ACTIVIST DELEGATION, APRIL 17-25, to visit mine affected communities in Guatemala. Information: info@rightsaction.org, 860-352-2448

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BELOW: Recent articles and reports addressing a range of harms and violations caused by Goldcorp's mines in Honduras and Guatemala

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GUATEMALAN COMMUNITY LEADERS ASK CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO INVESTIGATE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS COMMITTED BY GOLDCORP

December 9, 2009

Ottawa - A coalition of community groups from San Miguel Ixtahuacán, Guatemala filed an OECD complaint with the Canadian government, requesting an investigation into human rights violations committed by Goldcorp Inc. at the company's Marlin gold mine. "The Marlin mine has divided our town, harassed protesters, and /made us afraid/ for the health of our families," said Sister Maudilia López Cardona with the San Miguel Ixtahuacán Catholic parish and the FREDEMI coalition coordinator (the Front in Defence of San Miguel Ixtahuacán). "Is this economic development? Could Goldcorp do this in Canada?"

The complaint was filed under the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The National Contact Point (NCP), an interdepartmental committee chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, accepts complaints from communities harmed by Canadian industries operating abroad. The NCP's limited mandate permits it to issue non-binding recommendations to the company on implementation of the Guidelines and/or offer to facilitate an agreement between the parties.

In its thirteen-page complaint, the coalition details concerns over: toxic contamination; depletion of fresh drinking water; health impacts on local citizens which include skin rashes and ailments similar to those found at Goldcorp's San Martin mine in Honduras; structural damage to houses near the mine from blasting and the use of heavy transport trucks.

A recent investigation conducted by mining specialists and geologists found that shock waves are the most likely cause of the structural damage to many houses in San Miguel Ixtahuacán.

"Sadly, this is not a unique story. Communities from Guatemala to Papua New Guinea are having their rights violated by Canadian mining companies," said Jamie Kneen of MiningWatch Canada. "These communities desperately need Parliament to act to ensure that our companies respect their human rights."

A broad-based movement of human rights organizations in Canada has been advocating for the passage of Bill C-300 as a long-overdue step towards corporate accountability for Canadian companies operating abroad, especially in the extractive industries. Canadian law currently has no binding mechanism under which to bring such complaints. Parliament is expected to vote on Bill C-300 in February 2010.

The FREDEMI coalition includes the Catholic parish, community-based development organizations, and a teachers' association. The coalition decries the company's failure to ensure that the community had given its free, prior, and informed consent to the mine, a right protected under national and international law.

Vancouver-based Goldcorp has operated the controversial Marlin gold mine in Guatemala since 2006, when it acquired Glamis Gold. Glamis received a loan from the World Bank (International Finance Corporation) to develop the mine.

For a copy of the complaint, visit www.ciel.org. Jamie Kneen, MiningWatch Canada, 613-761-2273. Kris Genovese, CIEL, 917-687-3422.

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CAFOD & DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE CANADA DISCOVER EVIDENCE OF SEVERE WATER CONTAMINATION AT GOLDCORP MINE IN HONDURAS

<http://www.cafod.org.uk/news/goldcorp-2009-12-02>

An investigation by aid agency CAFOD and Canada's Development and Peace has uncovered documents showing

water contamination at a Honduras mine owned by multi-million dollar mining company Goldcorp.

The tests carried out by the Honduran authorities on water in the mine site which flows out into a local stream should have been acted on by the government and the company but instead the evidence of high acidity and metal concentrations were left undisclosed.

CAFOD and Development and Peace have handed the evidence of pollution by Goldcorp over to the Environmental Prosecutor in Honduras.

CAFOD's Extractives Policy Analyst Sonya Maldar said: "Despite Goldcorp's continual denial, this new information provides irrefutable evidence that the San Martin mine has caused pollution in Honduras. This is the latest in a long list of problems at the mine. Goldcorp must clean up its act so that the people of Siria Valley are not left with a toxic legacy when the company leaves Honduras at the end of the year."

Mining specialists from Newcastle University carried out an investigation into the design and implementation of Goldcorp's mine closure plan. The report produced by the Newcastle University team includes data – previously undisclosed by the Honduran regulatory authorities - showing a severe incident of pollution in September 2008.

The report released today reveals acidity of the water at two sites reached levels of a pH between 2.5 and 3, which is typically very damaging to stream biology. (Distilled water has a pH of 7, vinegar 3 and lemon juice 2). As well as high levels of cadmium, copper and iron.

This is consistent with a complaint presented by a local community group, the Siria Valley Environmental Committee, to Honduras' Environmental Prosecutor about discolouration of the water flowing from streams originating from within the mine's perimeter on 24 September 2008. Community members reported that the water that was a "reddish colour

(...) and emanated a strong smell of sulphur.” This indicates that contaminated water from the mine’s perimeter had entered streams used by people in the Siria Valley for domestic and agricultural purposes.

The high levels of iron in the tested water sites as well as the low pH are symptoms of Acidic Mine Drainage (AMD), which is caused by the weathering of pyrite (a mineral composed of iron and sulphur). Deposits of pyrite are usually present as sulphide deposits in layers of rock beneath the earth’s surface. When areas are mined these deposits are exposed to the air and they break down, releasing acidity into natural waters. Toxic metals associated with other minerals, such as copper and cadmium, dissolve readily in acidic waters, and if the resultant solution is released into waterways the effects on communities and wildlife can be devastating.

However, AMD is managed effectively on many mine sites worldwide, including others operated by Goldcorp in other countries. There is no reason their Honduran operation should be managed to a lesser standard.

The Newcastle University report highlights that Goldcorp’s mine closure plan lacks sufficient detail to allow an independent evaluation on the basis of the report alone. Some of the things Goldcorp have done on the site are actually better than their report would suggest, but other things are worse.

For instance, the report did not properly take into consideration the high intensity of many rainstorms in Honduras, which can lead to flood and erosional risk on mine waste heaps and in ponds in which contaminated water is held. This means there can be a risk of contaminated water flowing into rivers and streams around the mine site, some of which feed drinking water sources for local communities. Although the company are now addressing earlier erosional problems, in the long term only sustained monitoring and maintenance can prevent such problems developing long after mine closure.

According to the communities living near the mine, these measures continue to be insufficient. Drainage channels constructed by Goldcorp to collect water from the mine's heap leach pads have overflowed on two occasions since their construction in May 2009, discharging water out towards the community road.

On inspection of the Siria Valley mine site in June this year, Dr Adam Jarvis and Dr Jaime Amezaga of Newcastle University saw unequivocal evidence that elevated concentrations of iron had flowed down the ravine from the Tajo Palo Alto open pit in the past. They saw that temporary measures were being taken by the mine staff to try to prevent future occurrences and that further measures were being proposed; despite this, Goldcorp's management still refused to admit that the site had ever caused water contamination. Without open disclosure of how serious the water contamination was, it is difficult for independent specialists to be sure that the remedial measures now proposed by the mine will be sufficient to protect the communities from long term environmental hazards.

International expert of mine water management, Professor Paul Younger, who carried out an initial review of Goldcorp's Mine Closure Plan and documented evidence of Acidic Mine Drainage during an earlier visit to the Siria Valley for CAFOD, said: "In spite of all the evidence of acidic mine drainage coming from the mine, the company denied live on national TV that they have caused pollution. This is not only exasperating; it does the company itself no favours. If Goldcorp were to be up-front about the problems they've encountered at the San Martin mine, it would be possible for independent observers to gain confidence that the steps they are taking to address them will really work. When all's said and done, there is no such thing as a 'walk away' solution for mine sites, so the company must commit to long term monitoring of the site in order to prevent a reoccurrence of acidic mine drainage and erosion problems in the future."

CAFOD, Development and Peace, Professor Paul Younger, Pedro Landa of Caritas Tegucigalpa and a member of the Siria Valley community will meet with Goldcorp at their offices in Toronto on 10 December 2009. We hope that during this meeting the company will address our concerns about its operations in the Siria Valley.

Media: For interviews with Professor Paul Younger and Sonya Maldar, and further information contact Pascale Palmer, ppalmer@cafod.org.uk, 07785 950 585

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SALVADORAN CATHOLIC CHURCH CALLS FOR CLOSURE OF A GOLDCORP Inc. MINE IN GUATEMALA, AFP, 31/01/2010

San Salvador — Today, the Catholic Church of El Salvador asked President Mauricio Funes to “intercede” with the Government of Guatemala, to request that they close down operations at a gold mine in Guatemala that is threatening to contaminate a Salvadorian lake and two Salvadorian rivers.

“We are extremely concerned about the exploitation of the Cerro Blanco gold and silver mine (a new mine site operated by Goldcorp Inc.). This mine has now been granted an exploitation license by the government of Guatemala and has entered the first phase of the exploitation process. The Cerro Blanco mining operation poses a real threat of contamination to Lake Güija (in El Salvador)”, said the Archbishop of San Salvador, José Escobar, at a press conference.

Escobar explained that the Cerro Blanco mine is located in Guatemala, in an area very close to the border with El Salvador, hence the danger that Lake Güija (located some 110 kilometres west of San Salvador) will be contaminated by residual waters “laden with chemicals” from the mining process, and that these waters will, in turn, contaminate two rivers, one of which is the Lempa, the largest river in El Salvador.

The Lempa River winds its way through parts of the eastern, northern and western areas of El Salvador. Some of the water from this river is treated by the national water utility and then distributed as drinking water throughout the country.

“Contamination of Lake Güija and of the Guajoyo and Lempa rivers is inevitable. This is why we are asking our government exercise its full authority to intercede with the our sister republic of Guatemala to insure that they stop the exploitation process at the Cerro Blanco mine”, said Escobar.

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GUATEMALAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS DECLARE THEIR VILLAGES MINING FREE

Diario de Centro América, January 29, 2010. by Maby López

Campesinos from a number of villages located in the north of Huehuetenango and members of the Asamblea Departamental por la Defensa de los Recursos Naturales (Natural Resources Defense Council) have carried out a community consultation on the mining operations in their communities. Community members rejected unanimously the presence of the mines.

Ramiro López, representative of the community mayors, stated that the referendum drew votes from 23,000 residents from the communities of San Juan Ixcoy, San Pedro Soloma, Santa Eulalia, San Mateo Ixtatán, Santa Elena Barillas, San Sebastián Coatán, San Rafael La Independencia and San Miguel Acatán.

According to community leader Francisco Rocael, to date, there have been 28 consultations on mining and mega-projects in Huehuetenango, in which 500,000 community members have expressed their rejection of the mines. As well, a number of communities have declared themselves to be mining free.

According to Rocael, the mining operations are seen as a new form of colonization, in that they have taken land away from the indigenous people in the area. As well, contamination caused by the mine has harmful effects on the health and life of the communities. In the long run, the presence of the mine could

lead to the disappearance of the indigenous people. "We are not opposed to development, but it should be for the people, not for the corporations", he said.

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**PRESSURE AGAINST ADILIA ALICIA MACARIO MEJIA,
LOCAL MAYAN MAM TEACHER, VILLAGER**

URGENT ACTION – From San Miguel Ixtahuacan
San Miguel Ixtahuacan, Jan 10th, 2010

The Communities In Resistance/ ADISMI Association, the parish of San Miguel, FEBIMI and ADIM, all united in FREDEMI (front for the defense of the San Miguel People), send this URGENT ACTION:

Montana Exploradora of Guatemala, wholly owned by the Canadian transnational Goldcorp Inc, has committed numerous violations of fundamental human rights through their "Marlin Mine" project. This includes violations of the rights of indigenous peoples.

In the face of these acts, the organizations and communities in resistance and the defense of the property of the Miguelense people denounce the following:

First: The teacher Adilia Alicia Macario Mejia, owner of a plot of land 800 meters square, has had her property expropriated by the company Montana. By enclosing all her land and extracting precious minerals without her consent they have not permitted her access to her land.

Second: After taking her case to the government, Adilia was removed from the Primary education school where she worked. The reason given was her public statements around the truth of what is occurring around the mining site. For example, from the 24th to the 29th of December she stated that water contaminated with cyanide has leaked large amounts of drainage into the River Cuilco and has never been publicized in

the press or on television, nor by the Miguelense Community. Community leaders who speak out regarding the truth about mine have been asked to leave.

Third: We also denounce the threatening presence of and humiliation by the leaders and workers of Montana who live in communities close to the Marlin mine. We mention here only some of these violations, such as direct insults and termination of employment.

The husband of Adilia Alicia Macario Mejia was obligated by the leaders of the community of San Jose Ixcanichel, who work in the mine, to draft a community statement against his own wife - on a day he was not working and without her presence. This was done because she denounced the acts committed by the company Montana. These acts of violation are numerous and are as follows: Damage to health, damage to property, the destruction of houses, water contamination, and fundamentally, social disintegration. Most markedly: the social breakdown of family cohesion, the creation of feuds and death threats.

All of these acts have been presented before the National Commission on Transparency in the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala and in other instances the government of Guatemala that knows about the Marlin case in San Miguel Ixtahuacan.

We demand:

Protection of the physical integrity of the teacher Adilia Alicia Macario Mejia and her family.

To the public minister, that he urgently address the complaint lodged in the month of October.

That human rights be observed and that laws be fully complied with regarding human rights of the community and the Mam people of San Miguel Ixtahuacan.

To the international community, that their attention but also their solidarity with the dignity of our legitimate struggles in the defense of our rights so that this will not go unpunished.

To the United Nations, their observations and intervention taking into account that there are existing policies that relate to indigenous peoples and other issues.

To the investors, to take seriously the damages that have been caused by your investments that continue to generate violation of human rights of the Mam communities in San Miguel Ixtahuacan.

To civil society and indigenous peoples of the world, we invite your timely observation and solidarity with the men and women threatened by the company Montana/Goldcorp.

To Goldcorp, to stop its operations which have in this community only created violations to the right to life and peace and has destroyed community cohesion.

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COMPLAINT REGARDING INDUSTRIAL WASTE SPILL AT GOLDCORP'S "MARLIN MINE" IN GUATEMALA

Prensa Libre, January 22, 2010

The Ministry of the Environment has made public a complaint against Montana Exploradora, S.A. with regard to the fact that on December 24, a pipe burst at the mine, causing a discharge of 3 cubic metres of industrial waste that could contaminate local water sources.

Luis Ferraté, the Minister of Environment, announced yesterday that the broken pipe is the pipe that carries waste material to the tailings pond at the Marlin Mine in San Marcos.

Despite the fact that workers at the mine brought the situation rapidly under control, 83 cubic metres of mud was spilled, some of which got into the Quivichil River. This waste material contains heavy metals resulting from the cyanide process. Environmentalists state that these metals are toxic.

"Montana took a sample, and their report concluded that the spill has had no environmental impact. But we do not accept these results and we have presented a complaint to the Public Ministry. A full investigation must be carried out," said Ferraté.

He added that they have also asked the Ministry to have an independent company carry out an investigation to ascertain if there was indeed any contamination as a result of this spill. "We also want to find out if the toxic waste affected the flora and fauna in the area." said Ferraté. He said a specialist should be hired to carry out this investigation.

MONTANA'S VERSION

Jorge Mario Sandoval, legal advisor to Montana, stated that there had been no spillage and that the tailings pond is not full. He underlined that there was no environmental impact. He also confirmed that the accident happened because of work that is being carried out in the mine's industrial water treatment plant and that that mud is treated to remove residual cyanide. Sandoval stated that a temporary pipe allowed 83 metres of waste to escape - the waste was contained in a sedimentation tank that had been constructed earlier. He stated that they had recuperated all the fluid after five days of clean-up work and that they were convinced that there had been no contamination. He added that a sample had been taken to ascertain if there had been any impact on the bodies of water in the area and that there would be no more accidents at the mine.

OTHER EFFECTS

The portal site for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the Government of the United States states that the problem is not the use of cyanide but the fact that the mining process leaches not only particles of gold and silver but heavy metals as well, and that these metals are harmful.

Magalí Rey Rosa, Director of the Escuela Ecologista Savia, said that neither Montana nor the authorities have provided information regarding which metals are found in the rocks in the mine. "Therefore, the mud that the mine discharges is a toxic soup", said the ecologist. Rey Rosa pointed out that this spill demonstrates that accidents are the norm in mining and that they will happen again.

Yuri Melini, Director of the Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental (Centre for Environmental Legal Action) considers that this spill demonstrates that the industrial security of the mine is not effective and that more government intervention is required. He added that the problem with the legislation is that it requires the State to demonstrate that Marlin caused contamination but it does not require the company to demonstrate that it did not cause any contamination.

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REQUESTS FOR INVESTIGATION OF DAMAGE TO HOUSES NEAR THE MARLIN MINE, Prensalibre.com, 08/02/2010

The Ministries of Communication, the Environment and Energy and Mines will have to determine the causes for damage to some 120 houses in the area around the Marlin mine, which extracts gold and silver from the Santa María Ixtahuacán mountains in San Marcos. The request was presented by the deputy opposition leader, Rosa María de Frade, President of the Transparency Commission, to officials from the three ministries, during a hearing. According to De Frade, community members have lodged complaints that 120 houses have been damaged. Inspectors have confirmed damage to two houses, where they found cracks. She added that the results of the investigation will help ascertain if the damage was caused by the controlled explosions at the mine, in which case, the houses will be immediately repaired. If the explosions are not the cause, the ministry of Communication will investigate further.

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Since the early 2000s, Rights Action – along with community based organizations in Goldcorp affected communities in Honduras and Guatemala – has helped document number environmental and health harms and human rights violations.

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