

Rights Action
March 25, 2013

GOLDCORP & TAHOE RESOURCES linked to assassination of Exaltación Marcos Ucelo

On Sunday, March 17, 2013, four indigenous Xinca [Shin-ka] leaders were forcibly kidnapped by armed masked men, after participating as observers at a public community consultation process that ended up saying 'no' to Tahoe and Goldcorp's "Escobal" mine in the San Rafael Las Flores region of Guatemala. While three men escaped with their lives, their vehicle was found riddled with bullet holes and one man - Exaltación Marcos Ucelo - was found dead on Monday, March 18.



(Roberto Aguilar, one of the 3 Xinca kidnapped leaders who escaped, linked their kidnappers to the "Escobal" mine. Foto: Alex Cruz, <http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20130322/pais/226231/?tpl=73&height=500&width=600>)

Tahoe is an American / Canadian mining company with one mining interest – the widely opposed, divisive and harmful "Escobal" project in San Rafael Las Flores (department of Santa Rosa, Guatemala). Goldcorp is a Canadian company, 2nd largest gold mine company in the world, 40% owner of Tahoe's "Escobal" mine, and operates directly and jointly numerous widely opposed, divisive and harmful mines in Guatemala and Honduras. Since 2003, Rights Action – and a growing number of groups – has been documenting and denouncing widespread human rights violations and other health and environmental harms occurring at a growing number of Goldcorp mining operations in Guatemala and Honduras To no avail.

SILENCE AND COMPLICITY: The governments of Canada and the US have done nothing to even investigate the widespread harms and violations. Public pension funds – like the Canada Pension Plan -, that are deeply invested in Goldcorp (and other controversial and harmful mining operations around the world), have done nothing to even acknowledge the widespread harms and violations that these funds are profiting from, let alone calling for impartial investigations.

This assassination and these kidnappings – evidently related to opposition to Tahoe/ Goldcorp's mining interests in San Rafael Las Flores - are just the latest terrible incidents that the governments of Canada and the US, let alone our public and private investments funds, are silent about and complicit with.

BELOW:

- Communiqué from Mining Watch (Canada)
- News article: "CEO Kevin McArthur says suggestions of possible Tahoe Resources complicity in murder of Guatemalan indigenous leader "a complete fabrication""
- (español) News article: "Lléveámoslos a donde Amildo, esa es la orden dijeron los plagiarios"
- (español) News article: "La población de San Rafael las flores se opone a la minería"

WHAT TO DO - SAY NO TO "BUSINESS AS USUAL"

As distressful as these latest incidents are, they are not surprising, they are not an anomaly. The US and Canadian governments, and North American resource extraction companies maintain full and profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan elites and regime in power, always turning a blind eye to repression, violence and impunity that are the norm in Guatemala.

Please send copies of this information, and your own letters, to your own elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators) and other government officials, and to your own media (with copies to Tahoe and Goldcorp). Refer to the 3 points included in Mining Watch's communiqué, and ask them why our governments continue to do nothing about the on-going repression, violence and repression associated with so many mining operations around the world, while promoting and benefiting from economic and military relations with the Guatemalan regime and economic elites. Send copies to the Canada Pension Plan (address, below), and your own private and public pension funds, asking to know why they have no human rights or environmental criteria, at all, concerning what they invest your funds in?

TAHOE RESOURCES INC.

Main Phone: (775) 825-8574 (Reno, Nevada, USA)

<http://www.tahoeresourcesinc.com/contact-us/investors@tahoeresourcesinc.com>

Canada: Royal Centre, 1055 West Georgia St, Suite 1500, Vancouver, BC, V6E 4N7

US: 5190 Neil Rd, Suite 460, Reno, Nevada 89502

“Kevin McArthur, President, Chief Executive Officer and Director. McArthur is the founder of Tahoe Resources as well as its President and CEO. He is an experienced mining executive with more than 30 years in the industry in operational and senior management roles. Prior to forming Tahoe, Mr. McArthur was President and CEO of Goldcorp Inc. until his retirement at the end of 2008. This followed his 18 years at

Glamis Gold Ltd., where he served as President and Chief Executive Officer from 1998 until its acquisition by Goldcorp in November, 2006.”

GOLDCORP Inc.

666 Burrard Street, Suite 3400, Vancouver, BC, V6C 2X8
(604) 696-3000; 604-696-3076

3201 – 130 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, ON Canada M5H 3P5
(416) 865-0326

“Charles A. Jeannes, President & Chief Executive Officer. Jeannes was appointed President and CEO of Goldcorp in December 2008. Mr. Jeannes previously held the role of Executive Vice President, Corporate Development from November 2006 until December 31, 2008. Mr. Jeannes was former Executive Vice President, Administration, General Counsel and Secretary of Glamis Gold from 1999 until its merger with Goldcorp in November 2006.”

Chuck Jeannes, President & CEO, Chuck.Jeannes@goldcorp.com

Kim Keras, executive assistant, Kim.Keras@goldcorp.com

Tim Miller, VP Operations in Central America, Tim.Miller@montana.com.gt

Brent Bergeron, Corp Social Responsibility, brent.bergeron@goldcorp.com

Dina Aloi, VP Corporate Social Responsibility, Dina.Aloi@goldcorp.com

Ben Lee, benjamin.lee@goldcorp.com, Legal Counsel

Jeff Wilhoit, Investor Relations, Jeff.Wilhoit@goldcorp.com

Christine Marks, media@goldcorp.com

Board of Directors, Directors@Goldcorp.com

Code of Conduct, ethics.help@goldcorp.com

HUMAN RESOURCES, hr@goldcorp.com

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T: (866) 696-3055, local (604) 696-3055

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Jim Schenck, james@montana.com.gt

Lisa Wade, lisa.wade@montana.com.gt

CANADA PENSION PLAN

As of March 31, 2012, the CPP has \$297,000,000 invested in Goldcorp, \$9,000,000 in Tahoe. (http://www.cppib.ca/files/F2012_-_YE/Publicly-Traded_Equity_Holdings_-_CDN_-_March_31_2012_-_Eng.pdf)

Email: pac@cppib.ca; tel: 416-868-4075; Toll Free: 1-866-557-9510

Toronto Office: One Queen Street East, Suite 2500, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2W5, Canada

Do you know what companies your public pension fund and private funds are invested in? Ask!

WHAT TO DO

Despite the threats and trumped up criminal charges, over the past 2 years; despite this kidnapping and assassination, throughout the San Rafael Las Flores region, community after community are carrying out public consultations and, in an over-whelming majority saying no to mining. Four consultations have been completed; 22 more to come.

Follow the community consultation process in San Rafael de las Flores on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Comit%C3%A9-en-Defensa-de-la-Vida-y-la-Paz/123958411115713>

WHAT TO DO - DONATE

See below. Over the past year, Rights Action has been sending general support funds to the community development, environmental defense and consultation processes, and now has sent an initial emergency fund to the family of Exaltacion Marcos Ucelo. We will provide more information, in the coming days.

COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

Grahame Russell

info@rightsaction.org

- Get on/off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org
- Follow Rights Action on facebook: www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org
- Please re-post and re-publish this information

March 20, 2013

Mining Watch

URGENT ACTION: Call for investigation and company departure in response to recurring violence in area of Canadian-owned silver project

On Sunday, March 17, 2013, at around 8 pm, the President of the Xinca Indigenous Parliament and three other Xinca leaders were abducted by a group of heavily armed masked men while on their way home from observing a public referendum on Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine in El Volcancito, San Rafael Las Flores, in the department of Santa Rosa. This comes only two days after the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, called on the Government of Guatemala to protect human rights defenders.

The following four men were kidnapped: President of the Xinca Parliament Roberto González Ucelo, who is also President of the indigenous Community of Santa María Xalapán, as well as other members of Santa María Xalapán leadership including Administrator Rigoberto Aguilar, Secretary Exactación Marcos Ucelo, and Cabinet Member Rodolfo López Jiménez. They were forcibly taken in an area of the neighboring department of Jalapa known as Pino Dulce.

Rigoberto Aguilar and Rodolfo López escaped and sounded the alarm. On the morning of Monday, March 18, 2013, Roberto González' vehicle was found with multiple bullet

holes and Exactación Marcos Ucelo was found dead. About four hundred people peacefully gathered in the immediate area in order to protect the scene of the crime while demanding that authorities initiate a proper and full investigation. That evening, President Roberto González Ucelo was found alive.

In response, Interior Minister Mauricio López Bonilla made statements in the press, incorrectly conflating the non-violent community organizing in the municipalities of Mataquescuintla and San Rafael Las Flores with this and other recent violence. His statements are further evidence of ongoing stigmatization and criminalization of human rights defenders in Guatemala, an issue that was raised specifically with regard to the situation in San Rafael Las Flores in the UN's report on Guatemala delivered this January.

For more than two years, communities in the municipalities of San Rafael Las Flores and Mataquescuintla have been peacefully resisting the development of Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine. Recently, individual villages located in the municipality of San Rafael Las Flores began carrying out a series of 26 public referenda to determine whether community members support development of extractive industry projects.

UDEFEQUA, an NGO dedicated to the protection of human rights defenders, confirms that these consultations have been undertaken peacefully. Guatemala City-based and local environmental organizations, priests and lawyers who accompany local community activists involved in the local referenda have also faced various unjust legal processes, accusations and threats during the last year as part of attempts to undermine their work in defense of human rights and the environment.

The four Xinca leaders attended the March 17th referendum in El Volcancito in order to demonstrate their solidarity with the communities in San Rafael Las Flores.

Escobal is operated by Minera San Rafael, a subsidiary of Tahoe Resources, a closely related company to Vancouver-based Goldcorp. Goldcorp holds 40% of Tahoe Resources shares and most of Tahoe's current directors and management currently work for Goldcorp, or did previously. The project is advanced, but lacks the final permit it needs to put the mine into operation and the social license to operate.

In response to the recent events, we:

- Urge Guatemala's Attorney General to request that the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) undertake a full and impartial investigation into the violence in the area, in particular the existence of an armed group, and to ensure the protection of the human rights and environmental defenders who are demanding respect for their rights to live in a safe and healthy environment and to free, prior and informed consent over the mine project.
- Call on the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of the Environment in Guatemala to reject Tahoe Resources' request for an exploitation license for the Escobal mine.
- Call on Goldcorp and Tahoe Resources to pull out from San Rafael Las Flores given lack of social license for its Escobal project and the prevailing climate of violence that prohibits communities from peacefully conducting public referenda. Its presence in the communities is generating conflict.

Source: <http://www.miningwatch.ca/get-involved/urgent-action-call-investigation-and-company-departure-response-recurring-violence-area>

www.miningwatch.ca / <https://www.facebook.com/MiningWatch/> twitter:
@MiningWatch

CEO KEVIN MCARTHUR SAYS SUGGESTIONS OF POSSIBLE TAHOE RESOURCES COMPLICITY IN MURDER OF GUATEMALAN INDIGENOUS LEADER "A COMPLETE FABRICATION"

<http://www.lapoliticaeslapolitica.com/2013/03/ceo-kevin-mcarthur-says-suggestions-of.html>

Friday, 22 March 2013

In response to a query from La politica, Ira M. Gostin, Vice President Investor Relations for the Canadian silver mining company Tahoe Resources Inc., as well as CEO Kevin McArthur, have rejected any suggestion that the company or its subsidiary, Minera San Rafael (MSR), were involved in the murder earlier this week of the indigenous activist Exactación Marcos Ucelo.

"Tahoe Resources along with its Guatemala operating company Minera San Rafael (MSR) emphatically reject and condemn criminal activities in our surrounding communities and in Guatemala at-large," Mr. Gostin told La politica in an email. "Tahoe and MSR are responsibly developing the Escobal project, and recent false accusations that the companies may have been involved in threats or violent actions are unfortunate. A recent kidnapping event occurred in a locale 15 km by road from our project site, in Jalapa state, with one fatality reported in the press."

In his response Mr. Gostin emphasized the 15 km distance. At the time of his murder, Marcos Ucelo was returning home along with three colleagues after observing a community consultation process with regard to the development of the mine in the town of El Volcancito , near the proposed site and the larger town of San Rafael Las Flores .

According to umbrella NGO Congcoop, 99.2% of the community rejected the proposed mine during that consultation. The community consultation, regulated by the Guatemalan Municipal Code, is the third in a series of 26 planned in the area. However, the mayor of the larger community of San Rafael Las Flores has so far rejected the possibility of a referendum at the municipal level.

No one has been detained in connection with the murder and kidnapping of the three colleagues, all of whom are now free. There is also no clear motive. The four men were active in the Xinca indigenous community, but were present only as observers of the community consultation process.

According to Tahoe President and CEO Kevin McArthur, "The insinuation that our employees or contractors were somehow involved in the very unfortunate death of Marcos Ucelo is a complete fabrication. We urge the authorities to fully investigate these criminal activities as well as the past attacks that have been made against our project".

The company is still waiting on final permitting for the Escobal project, but has been investing in infrastructure and has made public statements suggesting it is confident production will begin in 2014. Guatemala has one of the highest crime rates in the world, with the United States Bureau of consular Affairs stating that “violent crime is a serious concern due to endemic poverty, an abundance of weapons, a legacy of societal violence, and weak law enforcement and judicial systems.”

Twitter: @TimothyEWilson

Email: lapoliticaeslapolitica@gmail.com

“LLEVÉMOSLOS A DONDE AMILDO, ESA ES LA ORDEN DIJERON LOS PLAGIARIOS”

Líderes xincas declararon que sus secuestradores les dijeron que recibían órdenes del diputado oficialista Amildo Morales, quien rechazó el señalamiento.

<http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20130322/pais/226231/>

elPeriódico, 22 de marzo de 2013, por Evelyn Boche eboche@elperiodico.com.gt



(Roberto Aguilar, líder xinka secuestrado el domingo, vinculó a sus plagiaros con la mina San Rafael . Foto: Alex Cruz, eP,

<http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20130322/pais/226231/?tpl=73&height=500&width=600>)

Roberto Aguilar, uno de los cuatro líderes xincas que fue secuestrado el domingo, declaró ayer en el Ministerio Público. Los fiscales no habían podido recoger su testimonio porque los vecinos les impidieron ingresar en Santa María Xalapán, Jalapa , señaló el asesor de la Fiscal General Javier Monterroso. Aguilar presentó los objetos con los que lo amarraron como prueba. Los análisis científicos determinarán si se pueden utilizar, debido a que se perdió la cadena de custodia, añadió Monterroso.

Rigoberto Aguilar tomó su morral y sacó una bolsa de plástico negra. En seguida mostró dos cinchos de plástico, como los que se usan para asegurar cables. También un lazo anaranjado. “Me amarraron con esto, pero gracias a Dios me desaté. Rodé por el barranco y caminé cinco horas, hasta las 3:00 de la madrugada”, relató.

Aguilar es integrante de la Junta Directiva Xinka de Santa María Xalapán, Jalapa . El domingo pasado fue secuestrado junto a otros tres líderes en Mataquesuintla. Tres

sobrevivieron, menos Exactación Marcos Ucelo. Su cadáver fue hallado en un barranco de Mataquescuintla el lunes por la mañana.

Aguilar narró su experiencia ayer en la Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala (ODHAG) junto al mayordomo xinca Roberto González Ucelo.

Los hombres con gorros pasamontañas que nos detuvieron “dijeron que nos llevaban por andar metidos en contra de la minera”, reveló Aguilar. Otro de los captores gritó: “llevémoslos a donde Amildo Morales, esa es la orden”, agregó González. Morales es un diputado de 74 años, electo por la Unidad del Cambio Nacional (UCN), pero este año se sumó a las filas del Partido Patriota (PP).

“No tengo nada que ver con esos señalamientos, es una factura política de los partidos políticos adversarios”, alegó el señalado en su defensa.

VINCULAN A LA MINERA

Aguilar también indicó que la forma de vestir de los secuestradores era “parecida” a la de los guardias de seguridad de la mina San Rafael, que opera en San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa. El encargado de relaciones públicas de la minera, Andrés Dávila, indicó que la compañía lamenta los hechos. “Preferimos no pronunciarnos, esperamos que las autoridades determinen qué pasó y quiénes son los responsables”, añadió.

González apareció el lunes por la noche en un hotel de Chimaltenango. “Me liberaron cuando se enteraron que el pueblo de Xalapán se había levantado”, indicó. El Mayordomo recordó que le prestó el teléfono a una recepcionista y desde ahí llamó a su esposa. “El viceministro (Edy Juárez) dice que ellos me encontraron, pero eso es falso”, precisó.

El funcionario confirmó que la llamada los llevó hasta González. El día del rescate indicó que utilizaron “métodos especiales de investigación” para encontrarlo. El procedimiento consistió en que “un investigador estuvo cerca de la familia del Mayordomo, eso nos permitió actuar rápidamente en cuanto se recibió la llamada”, explicó.

LA POBLACIÓN DE SAN RAFAEL LAS FLORES SE OPONE A LA MINERÍA

La mayoría de los vecinos de la aldea La Cuchilla rechazaron cualquier actividad relacionada con minería química durante la Consulta de buena fe convocada el sábado

<http://www.elperiodico.com.gt/es/20130325/pais/226317/>

elPeriódico, 25 de marzo de 2013, por Claudia Méndez Villaseñor,
cmendezv@elperiodico.com.gt

LA LOCALIZACIÓN DEL PROYECTO MINERO

La consulta sobre el proyecto El Escobal es la cuarta que se efectúa en el municipio, en todas ha prevalecido el “no”. El proyecto El Escobal, de la Minera San Rafael, S.A., subsidiaria de la empresa canadiense Tahoe Resources se desarrolla a 2.5 kilómetros al este de la cabecera municipal de San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa.

“¿Está usted de acuerdo con el desarrollo, la instalación, la construcción y la operación de proyectos de minería química de metales en cualquier parte del territorio de la

aldea La Cuchilla, San Rafael Las Flores?", fue la pregunta que se formuló en una papeleta y que contestaron 48 vecinos, de los 80 invitados. El "No" se repitió en 46 boletas, en las otras se emitió un voto nulo y uno en blanco.

La actividad se desarrolló el pasado 23 de marzo, entre las 13:00 y las 16:00 horas, y había sido solicitada tres años atrás. "Se presentaron recursos contra la consulta, pero al final prevaleció el derecho que tienen las personas de informarse, decidir y expresar su opinión a través de un voto secreto", afirmó Óscar Morales, presidente del Comité Defensa de la Vida.

Los pobladores de la comunidad, limítrofe con el terreno ocupado por el proyecto minero El Escobal, de la minera San Rafael, fueron convocados hace quince días, explicó el líder comunitario. "Son llamados los mayores de edad con residencia en las aldeas, que tengan cédula o Documento Único de Identidad (DUI). No se permite que lo hagan dos veces, es decir, no pueden ir a otra aldea y participar en otra consulta", añadió.

Los integrantes de los Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo (Cocodes) son los encargados de vigilar la transparencia del proceso, advirtió Morales. "Ellos saben quienes viven en cada una de las aldeas", aseguró.

LOS "NO" ANTERIORES

Yuri Melini, director del Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental y Social de Guatemala (CALAS), quien participó como observador, comentó que esta es la cuarta consulta que se efectúa en el municipio. "La primera se efectuó en San Juan Bosco (17 de febrero), Los Planes (3 de marzo) y Volcancito (17 de marzo) en las tres prevaleció el "No", mencionó. Melini agregó que en los siguientes meses se espera concluir consultas en las restantes 22 aldeas del municipio. Morales reconoció que los resultados de este tipo de convocatorias no son vinculantes. Sin embargo, pidió se respete la decisión de las comunidades.

el Periódico se comunicó en reiteradas ocasiones con Andrés Dávila, responsable de la oficina de Relaciones Públicas de Minera San Rafael, pero no fue posible contactarlo.

RIGHTS ACTION

The roots of Rights Action's work go back to 1983 in Guatemala. Since then, and particularly since 1995, Rights Action has been funding grassroots organizations working for community development and the environment, for disaster relief, for truth, memory, justice and human rights, and for democracy and peaceful resolution of conflicts in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in southern Mexico and El Salvador. The Canadian Rights Action Foundation, founded in 1999, is independent from Rights Action (USA). Grahame Russell and Annie Bird are co-directors of Rights Action (USA); Grahame is director of Rights Action (Canada).

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS (in Canada and the U.S.) to support the community development, environmental defense and human rights work of our partner groups in Guatemala and Honduras, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887 , Washington DC , 20091-0887
CANADA: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E , Toronto ON , M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS can be made (in Canada and U.S.):
<http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>

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- to donate stock, contact: info@rightsaction.org

COMMENTS / QUESTIONS:

Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org

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