

Rights Action
June 13, 2013
info@rightsaction.org

GOLDCORP IS DEPLETING & CONTAMINATING WATER IN GUATEMALA ... & INTO EL SALVADOR

This is the global economic order, at work. Pension funds and private funds are heavily invested in and profiting from this. Governments of Canada and the USA and institutions like the World Bank are openly promoting this "development" model, turning a blind eye to the exploitation, injustice, harms and violations.

BELOW:

- Article: Criminal accusation filed against Montana Exploradora (owned by Goldcorp) for water contamination and environmental harms
- Report: Scientific studies reveal contamination caused by Goldcorp's "Marlin Mine"
- Article: Salvadoran environmentalists demand that Guatemala stop Goldcorp's mining expansion long Guatemala-Salvador border

CANADIAN PREMIERE - "GOLD FEVER"

Vancouver International Film Festival, Saturday July 6, 7:15pm
<http://www.viff.org/theatre/films/fc7880-gold-fever>

"Gold Fever" is an 80 minute film that connects a local, human story in the Mayan Mam highlands of Guatemala, to the mountain-top removal, cyanide-leaching gold mining operation of Goldcorp, to the genocides in Guatemala in the 1980s and the US-backed coup in 1954, and to historic and on-going US and Canadian military and economic policies and actions.

As Noam Chomsky declares in the film, the mining company [Goldcorp] is "not responsible for the Rios Montt slaughter, but they're benefiting from the structures that were left in place after those many years of savagery, violence and oppression."

These structures are now kept in place by a government headed by another of the 'genocidal generals' – former General and now President Otto Perez Molina, who was a Major in the Guatemalan Army, working under de facto President Rios Montt in the Mayan Ixil region of Guatemala when the Ixil Genocide was carried out in 1981-1983.

MORE INFO:

<http://www.goldfevermovie.com/>
productions@northlandfilms.com
press@northlandfilms.com,

News article

CRIMINAL ACCUSATION SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC MINISTRY

http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/justicia/Denuncian-MP-empresa-minera_0_823117702.html

Yesterday, leaders and representatives of some 100 San Marcos communities filed a criminal concerning contamination produced by the Marlin Mine in San Miguel Ixtahuacán, which is operated by Montana Exploradora de Guatemala company.

Carlos Loarca Solórzano, legal advisor for Plurijur, with the report containing evidence of contamination, presented to the Public Ministry. Community leaders maintain that mining exploration has caused environmental harm to the region.

Carlos Loarca Solórzano, legal advisor for the Asociación Pluriculturalidad Jurídica de Guatemala (Plurijur) and legal representative for the Miguelense Denfense Front (Fredemi), stated that they hope that the harms documented in the report will be investigated.

The document contains evidence of the following harms: appropriation of water, appropriation of property, industrial contamination of water sources in San Miguel Ixtahuacán, propagation of disease to plants and animals and material and ideological falsehood.

The representatives explained that in the last seven years, their communities have experienced environmental, cultural and ecological contamination. Mining exploration and exploitation have also affected the health of some 50,000 people in neighbouring communities.

The report demands that the Public Ministry begin criminal proceedings against directors, executives, administrators, officials and employees of Montana.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Loarca Solórzano explained that community representatives have reports from Fredemi stating that the mining project has almost completely contaminated the Cuilco River, a water source for families and cattle. Water from the river is also used for irrigation. The river runs through Siete Palos, which is one of the more affected communities.

"Studies carried out by the Ministries of Environment and of Energy and Mines demonstrate environmental contamination of the river. Independent international studies, some from prestigious universities, state that in medical results of blood and urine tests of people living in these communities demonstrate high levels of lead, evidence of arsenic in their skin, rashes and spots, discoloration and hair loss," said Loarca Solórzano.

THE REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC MINISTRY

The criminal accusation submitted to the Public Ministry contains over 100 testimonies from people affected by contamination. The document includes photographs of affected adults and children as well as photos of cattle that died from drinking water from the Cuilco River.

Representatives from affected communities explained that more recent cases include approximately 100 children from one school whose director provided photos of each case. "This album contains photos of students with skin rashes. Adults are suffering from hair loss and discoloration of the skin. These results are symptoms of contamination. Even Government representatives, in conversations we have had with them, have recognized the presence of arsenic contamination and authorities have decided to build a decontamination plant. We are watching the situation closely."

The affected communities include more than 50,000 people. Some one hundred cases have been documented and we have asked Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz to review them in the light of criminal law and ensure that they be taken up by the Prosecutor for Crimes Against the Environment.

"The judges and public prosecutors of San Marcos have been bought by Montana. We ask the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala to intervene and investigate links between government officials and the company."

TESTIMONIES

Aniceto López, one of the representatives from San Miguel, insisted that authorities pay attention to the reports and testimonies submitted to them by the affected communities. To date, they have only taken into account what has been presented to them by the company. "Apart from reports, the authorities should look into the fact that the company does not follow up properly on land purchases. They obtain properties located near our homes then they go ahead and dug tunnels underneath our properties".

According to testimonies, one of the mine workers fell ill and went to several hospitals in Quetzaltenango and San Marcos, but he died. The company only paid for the funeral and rather than pay compensation to the widow, they offered her a job.

Another problem experienced by communities that are opposed to the mine is threats to prevent them from speaking out "They come to our houses and put pressure on us not to file complaints."

In May, 2010, the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights applied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for precautionary measures for the Mayan communities, in order to protect the life and safety of the members of the 18 communities.

In December, 2011 the measures were modified to ensure access to water fit for human and domestic consumption and for irrigation but the communities maintain that to date the measures have not been implemented.

The communities demand that authorities gather information to broaden the investigation of the case and define precise criminal charges for these grave violations of basic individual and collective rights in San Miguel Ixtahuacán y Sipacapa.

Yuri Melini, Director General of the Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental y Social de Guatemala (Calas), explained that the communities and their agricultural resources could be at risk if the company further develops its mining activities.

"In the past, risks that caused deaths of animals were documented but no investigation was ever carried out by the Inacif —Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Forenses— or the Public Ministry. This is why we are submitting this report, so that they go ahead and investigate the situation."

Melini added that in fact, they are now recording deaths of animals. "there are also harms to human health with residual metals being found in the food. We believe that the time has come for the Public Ministry to carry out an objective investigation to identify the real causes of the contamination. If it the company is found responsible, they should be criminally punished."

BACKGROUND

In 1998, during an exploration study it was projected that 1.4 million onzas of gold could be mined in what is now the Marlin mine. The Ministry of Energy and Mines granted the exploitation license on November 27, 2003. Construction on the Project began in 2004 and was completed in mid 2005. By the end of that year, silver and gold extraction had been implemented.

GUATEMALA: SCIENTIFIC REPORT REVEALS CONTAMINATION CAUSED BY MINING IN RIVER CLOSE TO [GOLDCORP's] MARLIN MINE

Today, in the Guty Alvarado Hall of the University of San Carlos CUSAM, the report on water quality in the areas near the Marlin Mine was presented before mayors and representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, students, the media and mostly community leaders affected by mining.

The report presents the consolidated results of five years of environmental monitoring by the Peace and Ecology Commission (COPAE). The Peace and Ecology Commission monitored the quality of the superficial water of the Tzalá, Quivichil and pozos rivers (at the source of these rivers) in the municipalities of Sipacapa and San Miguel Ixtahuacán, department of San Marcos, Guatemala.

The results of the samples obtained downstream of the central mining operations demonstrate that negative impact on the water quality in comparison with samples obtained from areas upstream of the mining operations. There is concern in the population that uses the water: both downstream and in the wells. Water is used for drinking, bathing, washing clothing and kitchen utensils, and for fishing and farming. This has caused negative impact on the population that lives in the area affected by the Marlin Mine.

After five years of monitoring and eight years of operation of the Marlin Mine in the area, the results show the need to take URGENT ACTION to prevent the continued water contamination. Water is a natural asset and human consumption of water is a right; if nothing is done there will be irreparable long-term consequences.

Below is the link to the digital copy of the complete report, with some photographs of today's presentation. We hope this information will be distributed massively in the alternative media. It is a real demonstration of some of the environmental impacts generated by open pit mining which will always cause greatest impact on the communities closest to the mine.

FULL REPORT:

<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B2wfu0ue6dC9VEp6NHJhN3l2ZjA/edit?usp=sharing>

FURTHER INFORMATION:

COPAE (Comision Paz y Ecologia)

comunicacion.copae@gmail.com

<http://www.copaeguatemala.org>

New article

SALVADORAN ENVIRONMENTALISTS DEMAND THAT GUATEMALA STOP [GOLDCORP INC.] MINING COMPANY

http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Ambientalistas-salvadorenos-Guatemala-proyecto-minero_0_872912888.html?print=1

Prensa Libre, 02/26/13

This Tuesday, Salvadoran environmental organizations protested in front of the Guatemalan Embassy in San Salvador to demand that this country terminate a mining Project that threatens to cause environmental damage in the border areas shared by both countries. The mine

[owned by Goldcorp Inc. and] located in Guatemala, is very close to the border with El Salvador, and is said to contaminate the Güija lake.

SAN SALVADOR - "No metal mining", "metal mining contaminates my country", were some of the slogans written on small signs that close to a hundred members of organizations were wearing in the protest that took place on a Street that runs in front of the diplomatic headquarters.

"We are demanding that the Guatemalan government immediately put an end to the functioning of the Cerro Blanco mine, because it is a serious threat to the environment due to the chemical contamination it will cause to water resources in El Salvador" stated Edgardo Mira.

Mira, a member of the governing body of the Center for Investigations on Investment and Trade, explained that they handed a letter to a representative of the Guatemalan Embassy that had been signed by ten Salvadoran environmental organizations, in which they request that President Otto Pérez "backtrack" the mining project.

VIDEO (5 minutes, espanol): "Polémica entre Guatemala y El Salvador por mina Cerro Blanco": http://www.prensalibre.com/multimedia/Mina-Cerro-Blanco-Guatemala-Salvador_3_862143779.html

The Cerro Blanco mine, from which gold and silver is programmed to be extracted, is a project of the Entre Mares company, a subsidiary company of the Canadian owned Goldcorp company, and it is located very close to the border with El Salvador.

According to a report by the Salvadoran Prosecutor's Office for the Defense of Human Rights (PDDH in Spanish), there is a threat of contamination of the residual waters from this mine, which would pollute the Güija lake with chemicals. This lake is found 110 kilometers west of San Salvador, however this lake would also affect the Lempa River, El Salvador's most important water resource.

The Lempa River is widely used in El Salvador to give drinking water to a large portion of the country. Additionally, alongside the lengthy river, farmers use these waters for agriculture and livestock grazing.

WRITE TO YOUR OWN ELECTED OFFICIAL

This relentless and violent push for mining expansion – and the repression associated with it - is coming from Canada and the U.S., not from Guatemala. All the fundamental decisions are being taken by North American companies, investors and governments. The vast majority of any profits flow to the companies, shareholders and investors, while all the environmental and health harms, repression and other human rights violations occur against the local populations in Guatemala.

This will only be slowed down, or curtailed when Canadians and Americans successfully hold their governments, companies and investors to account.

Write your own letters, and send copies of this information, to your own elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators) - and to other government officials, your local media, etc. – to remind them that this state of repression, threat and impunity are substantially our problems, and that it simply will not end until Canadian and American politicians and officials take concrete diplomatic, political and legal steps to put an end to the repression linked to the unwanted and

often-times violent expansion of Canadian and American mining company operations in Guatemala. ... And then keep on writing your elected politicians, again and again. They work for us. They have to respond to us.

CONTACT:

- MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>
- CONGRESS: <http://www.house.gov/> to get info for your member of Congress, and call: 202-224-3121
- SENATE: <http://www.senate.gov/> to get contact for your Senator, and call: 202-224-3121

SEND COPIES TO:

CANADA PENSION PLAN

As of March 31, 2012, the CPP has \$297,000,000 invested in Goldcorp.

http://www.cppib.ca/files/F2012_-_YE/Publicly-Traded_Equity_Holdings_-_CDN_-_March_31_2012_-_Eng.pdf

E: pac@cppib.ca; t: 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!

GOLDCORP

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 Aloj, 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

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS (in Canada and the U.S.) to support grassroots organizations and their community-development and environmental

defense projects 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>

be a monthly credit card donor (Canada and U.S.)

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COMMENTS / QUESTIONS: info@rightsaction.org

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