

Rights Action
info@rightsaction.org
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Guatemalans Block Highways to Protest Goldcorp's Expansion and Drying Up of Water Sources



Campesinos and indigenous block Panamerican Highway, protesting Goldcorp's forced expansion into Sipakapa, San Marcos. (Photo @ Prensa Libre, December 9, 2013, Guatemala)

In recent weeks, Rights Action has denounced:

- A campaign to get Tahoe Resources (40% owned by Goldcorp) to leave Guatemala: <http://www.rightsaction.org/action-content/help-get-tahoe-resources-goldcorp-out-guatemala>
- On-going health harms near Goldcorp's mine, most probably caused by mine contaminations: <http://rightsaction.org/action-content/goldcorp-and-going-environmental-and-health-suffering-guatemala>
- Goldcorp (via Tahoe Resources) involved in murders in Guatemala and white-collar crime in Canada: <http://rightsaction.org/action-content/goldcorp-inc-work-white-collar-crime-violent-repression>
- Photo-essay ~ Goldcorp's Endless 'Gold Fever' in Guatemala: <http://rightsaction.org/action-content/photo-essay-goldcorps-endless-mine-guatemala-creating-endless-division-and-harm>

Due to impunity and corruption in Guatemala, and impunity and a fundamental lack of political will in Canada, Goldcorp is held accountable nowhere for any harms and violations, and pushes relentlessly to expand its most profitable mine. Guatemalans are left with no choice, but to peacefully put their lives on the line, and physically block roads.

Community Blocks Inter-American Highway To Oppose Mining

http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/bloqueo-accidente-carreteras-transito-congestionamiento_0_1044495703.html

Prensa Libre, December 9, 2013

A demonstration is blocking Kilometer 170 of the Inter-American Highway, in Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán, Sololá, to protest against [Goldcorp Inc's] mining activities in Sipicapa, San Marcos. For this same reason, a demonstration is also blocking Kilometer 242 of the highway to Pajapita, San Marcos.



Protest blocks kilometer 170 of the Inter American Highway. (Photo Prensa Libre: Departamento de Tránsito)

GUATEMALA CITY – Although the police is in the area trying to negotiate with protesters, demonstrators have indicated their decision to remain in the area throughout the day. The granting of new licenses for [Goldcorp's] exploration in San Carlos Sija has caused discontent in the population, which supports the protest, fearing that a civil war will resurge if the opinion of the communities is not taken into account.

Until this moment, some 200 vehicles are trapped in both directions of the highway. Those traveling on buses opted to transfer buses, and had to walk at least three kilometers to get to the other side of the blocked area.

A week ago, community members from several hamlets retained 35 workers from the mine to demand that company authorities buy them a water source so they can have access to that vital liquid, arguing that contamination is affecting their capacity to consume that resource.

Royalties: The extraction of gold from the Marlin mine in San Marcos reported income of US\$229 million (Q,1, 813,054,730) [...].

Members Of San Marcos Protest Against [Goldcorp's] Marlin Mine For The Lack Of Water

http://www.prensalibre.com/san_marcos/Pobladores-San-Marcos-protestan-Marlin_0_946705534.html

By Aroldo Marroquín And Mike Castillo, San Marcos

SAN MARCOS - Esperanza López, departmental delegate of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights, COPREDEH, informed that protesters had retained a group of mining workers, who they seek to exchange for a water project, because they affirm that ever since the mining company came, their sources of water dried up.

According to members of the community, representatives of [Goldcorp's] Marlin mine promised to bring them water by other means, and they did not fulfill their commitment. Basilio Bámaca, who lives in the area, said that the sources of water dried up, and what used to be large streams don't exist anymore. "The mining company wanted to put a band-aid on a gaping wound and they connected us to a water service that didn't function. It only lasted fifteen days and now we have none of that vital liquid (water). We want government authorities to help us to resolve this problem because this issue is very serious," he added.

Community Is Not Retaining Anyone

"We are not retaining anyone, we are just warning the miners that from now on we are going to take action, since the Mine is to blame for the fact that we have no water now. The natural springs have dried up and that is not viable" affirmed Bámaca.

Josué Navarro, from the Peace and Ecology Commission, said that because the neighbors denounced this case, the report on water contamination was presented, which is being meticulously evaluated due to the high amounts of water that [Goldcorp's] Marlin mine extracts through mechanized wells, which made the natural springs dry up.

Representatives of the Marlin mine told the community that they will aid them providing them with drinking water. "We have scheduled a project to provide drinking water and very shortly we will fulfill our promise" they affirmed.

[...]

"Gold Fever": Arrange a screening of award winning documentary film. Trailer / More Info: <http://www.goldfevermovie.com/>

Write to Goldcorp & Say No To "Business As Usual"

The U.S. and Canadian governments, and North American resource extraction companies and investors (including public pension funds like the Canada Pension Plan) maintain profitable economic and military relations with the Guatemalan elites, turning a blind eye to health and environmental harms, repression and other violations linked to mining operations.

Send copies of this information to Goldcorp and to your elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators), to your media, and to your own pension and investment funds.

Invite them to a screening of Gold Fever. Ask why our governments, companies and investment firms do nothing about repression and violence, and environmental and health harms

associated with mining and other resource extraction businesses, while promoting and benefiting from these very economic relations with the Guatemalan political, military and economic elites.

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

GOLDCORP Inc.

666 Burrard Street, Suite 3400, Vancouver, BC, V6C 2X8
(604) 696-3000; 604-696-3076
3201 – 130 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, ON, M5H 3P5
(416) 865-0326

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.Aloj@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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To support the community development, human rights and environmental defense work of mining harmed communities in Guatemala, 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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