

Rights Action
April 24, 2014
info@rightsaction.org

Daughter Killed, Father Wounded in Attack Likley Linked to Tahoe Resources (Goldcorp Inc.) in Guatemala

- Sign-On Letter: Please consider having your organization sign on this letter. Deadline: April 30. Contact: Ellen Moore (eln.moore@gmail.com)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Ellen Moore <eln.moore@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Apr 20, 2014
Subject: Call for sign ons - Attack in Mataquesuintla

Hello everybody, Below is an letter to Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz asking for investigation of the attack last Sunday night against Alex Reynoso and his daughter, Topacio Reynoso, in which Topacio was killed. Alex is still in intensive care. Both Alex and Topacio were active in the Mataquesuintla, Jalapa resistance to the Tahoe mine.

Please send your organization's sign on. Please share widely!

Thanks, Ellen
[More info: Jen Moore, jen@miningwatch.ca]

LETTER

Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey
Attorney General of Guatemala
E-mail: fiscalgeneral@pm.lex.gob.gt
15 Avenida 15-16 zona 1, Barrio Gerona, 8o nivel, Ciudad de Guatemala

April XX, 2014

Re: Armed attack against activists opposing Tahoe Resources' Escobal Mine

Dear Dr. Claudia Paz y Paz Bailey,

The below signed organizations write to you deeply troubled following news of the April 13 armed attack against Edwin Alexander Reynoso and his 16 year old daughter, Merilyn Topacio Reynoso Pacheco. Merilyn Topacio was killed and Alex remains in intensive care having suffered four bullet wounds to the chest and stomach.

Both father and daughter are activists in the Peaceful Resistance in Defense of Natural Resources of Mataquesuintla, Jalapa, organized in resistance to Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine in neighboring San Rafael las Flores. Goldcorp holds 40% of Tahoe Resources' shares and the Escobal project is operated locally by Tahoe's subsidiary, Minera San Rafael.

We condemn this violent attack, calling for a rigorous and speedy investigation in order that those responsible are held to account.

The Reynoso family has been at the forefront of the region-wide struggle in defense of the right to prior consultation, self-determination and human rights since the arrival of Tahoe Resources to the southeastern departments of Jalapa and Santa Rosa in 2010.

In November 2012, the municipality of Mataquescuintla carried out the first municipal referenda in the department of Jalapa, joining three other municipalities in Santa Rosa in saying 'no' to mining in their territory. In December 2013, the Constitutional Court found in favour of the vote in Mataquescuintla, acknowledging the responsibility that municipal authorities have to convene such votes and to make decisions according to their results, affirming their value as the "adequate means by which peoples may exercise their right to give their opinion and be consulted on topics of interest." To date, there have been 14 community referenda in municipalities, towns and villages surrounding the project.

The widespread opposition to mining in Mataquescuintla extends from the mayor - an outspoken defender of the municipal referenda - to the organized youth led, in large part by Topacio Reynoso. Topacio was a leader of the Mataquescuintla youth movement against mining and an active and well-known human rights defender. Her father, Alex, is a recognized community leader and representative of the Peaceful Resistance in Defense of Natural Resources of Mataquescuintla.

A mere six kilometers from the Escobal mine, the unwavering resistance movement in Mataquescuintla continues to threaten the full development of Tahoe's project. Community leaders from nearby communities opposing the project continue to be at risk of threats, criminalization, intimidation and violence.

The communities and municipalities surrounding the project have repeatedly expressed their opposition to the project and, instead of respect for their right to self-determination, have been met with multiple acts of violence and repression:

- Since 2011, more than 100 individuals involved in mine resistance have had unfounded legal charges filed against them;
- Between March and May 2013, the peaceful, legitimate and legally located encampment outside the mine was violently evicted by the police on two occasions;
- In April 2013, Tahoe security guards attacked six peaceful protesters outside the mine; one was critically injured. Former Tahoe security head, Alberto Rotondo, is under arrest awaiting trial for allegedly ordering the attack, facing charges for bodily harm and obstruction of Justice;
- In May 2013, President Otto Pérez Molina declared a state of siege in four municipalities surrounding Tahoe's project, including Mataquescuintla.

We are very concerned about the ongoing violence and persecution against human rights defenders and community leaders opposing Tahoe's mine project. It is vitally important that the attack against Alex Reynoso and the assassination of Topacio Reynoso not remain in impunity. We call for a full and impartial investigation in order to ensure justice for their family and to dissuade violence in the region. We call on the government of Guatemala to

ensure the safety of Alex Reynoso and his family, particularly as he recovers from this terrible attack.

Finally, increased police and military presence in the area impacted by this mining conflict has not contributed to greater security for or less violence against human rights defenders. Therefore we ask that the presence of the police and armed forces would return to levels from prior to the state of siege and that the government engages in good-faith dialogue with communities who are demanding respect for the results of their community consultations.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this appeal and look forward to your response.

Signed:

cc:

Erick Archila Dehesa
Minister of Energy and Mines

Ing. Fernando Castellanos
General Director of Mining

Marcia Roxana Sóbenes Garcia
Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources

US Embassy

Canadian Embassy

Write your elected official ~ Ask them to sign the letter!

Please send this, and your own letter, to your own elected politicians (MPs, Congresspersons, Senators), and ask them to sign the letter.

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

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To support civil society groups in Guatemala - including community groups involved in this Tahoe / Goldcorp related struggle - working courageously for human rights, justice, the environment and community controlled development, 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 (Canada & U.S.): <http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>

"Gold Fever" (2013) examines the economic and political systems that reinforce the continued exploitation of the world's poor for the benefit of the super-rich. The film tells the story of the decade-long conflict set off by the construction of Goldcorp Inc's massive "Marlin Mine" in the rural community of San Miguel Ixtahuacan, Guatemala. Trailer/ More info: www.goldfevermovie.com

"Defensora" (2013) ~ This film documents the lives and vision of the Mayan Q'eqchi' people and their struggle for justice in Canadian courts against Hudbay minerals and CGN. Trailer /screenings /information: www.defensorathefilm.com

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