

Diodora Hernandez & Goldcorp Inc. - A Stark Contrast

(May 16, 2016 - Alert #2)

<http://us9.campaign-archive2.com/?u=ea011209a243050dfb66dff59&id=0484467be8>

On May 14th, our Emergency Delegation hiked across open fields in the Maya Mam village of San José de la Esperanza to where Diodora was tending to her cows and sheep, as she has always done. We stood in the shade of an adobe hut with Diodora, her daughter and grand-daughter, and with Aniseto Lopez of FREDEMI (San Miguel Ixtahuacán Defense Front) who translated for us from Mam to Spanish.



(Diodora Hernandez looks for a calf while shepherding her cows. San Jose Nueva Esperanza, San Miguel Ixtahuacan, San Marcos, Guatemala. May 14, 2016. Photo: James Rodríguez / MiMundo.org)

With no right eye, no hearing in her right ear, no water running through the one tap in her home, no investigation or justice for the murder attempt on her life, Diodora Hernandez will still not sell her land to Goldcorp Inc. Her land sits in the path of where Goldcorp - and its Guatemalan subsidiary Montana Exploradora - had hoped to expand their initial open-pit mining operation; now, tunnels snake underground.

On July 7, 2010, two Goldcorp mine employees tried to assassinate Diodora, shooting her in the right eye. The bullet exited by her right ear, permanently blinding her right eye and causing loss of hearing. A couple of weeks before the assassination attempt, company employees had told local men, in a meeting at the mine, that they could not expand their open pit mine because Diodora would not sell her plot of land. Men in the meeting said 'We'll take care of that.' Some apparently tried; Diodora survived.



(Diodora Hernandez (right), and daughter Maria, hold an Amnesty International poster created by illustrator Favianna Rodriguez based on a photograph of Diodora taken by James Rodríguez. San Jose Nueva Esperanza/ San Miguel Ixtahuacan, San Marcos, Guatemala. May 14, 2016. Photo: James Rodríguez / MiMundo.org)

On July 20, 2010, David L. Deisley, Executive Vice President of Goldcorp, and General Counsel, wrote to Rights Action and ADISMI:

"I understand that the two men who allegedly committed the assault have been identified and were detained by the police, but were subsequently released. ... Both men are residents of San Miguel Ixtahuacan. One of the two was employed by Montana, but his employment was terminated more than one year ago. The other man is employed by a contractor that provides underground mine development services to Montana at the Marlin Mine."

With Condolences Like These, Who Needs Human Rights Violations

Deisley continued: *"Both Goldcorp and Montana Exploradora de Guatemala condemn this violent attack and offer our sincere condolences to Ms. Hernandez and her family."*

With Diodora's cows ambling about eating grass, Diodora spoke of the complete lack of justice in her case. Though Goldcorp knows who the men are, they apparently have done nothing to support the investigation of the Attorney General's (AG) office. After the assassination attempt, criminal investigators never again contacted Diodora and her family.

Diodora and FREDEMI's Aniseto explain to us how in early 2016 they went to the AG's office in the nearby town of San Miguel Ixtahuacán and were told to go to the AG's office in San Marcos. From there they were told to go to the AG's office in Guatemala City. Once there, they were told that nothing had been done to investigate her case, but that it was an open file.



(Rights Action director Grahame Russell takes notes as Diodora Hernandez (right) speaks to the Canadian Mining Impunity Emergency Delegation investigating the ongoing abuses of Canadian mining companies in Guatemala. Diodora's daughter Maria stands beside her. San Jose Nueva Esperanza, San Miguel Ixtahuacan, San Marcos, Guatemala. May 14, 2016. Photo: James Rodríguez / MiMundo.org)

Water and Justice for Diodora

And it seems to be an open file as to if/when local community leaders (some of whom have jobs in the mine) will turn on her water again. "Since 2011, they cut water to the one tap at my house." Diodora and Aniseto discuss the next steps they need to take, beginning with making yet another formal denunciation with the local AG's office, to try and achieve the pressure necessary to ensure that her local community leaders turn her water back on.

As Goldcorp's mine churns on and on, above ground and now through some 147 kilometres of underground tunnels, ... as North America investors (public pension funds and private funds) review profit margins on their investments in Goldcorp (and mining operations around the world), we promise to do what we can to help Diodora get her water back and perhaps, just perhaps, help kick start the investigation into the two former Goldcorp/Montana workers who tried to assassinate her and, more importantly, who put them up to it.

"Wake up. Wake up, humanity. We are out of time." – Berta Cáceres

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