

Allan Culham, Canada's diplomatic hitman for Goldcorp Inc. in Guatemala, revealed

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/canadas-diplomatic-hitman-for-goldcorp-inc-in-guatemala-revealed>

<p>3 FEB 2022</p>	<h3>The Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy: Undermining International Institutions to Support Canadian Mining (2022)</h3>
<p>ADD A COMMENT</p>	<p>The Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy: Undermining International Institutions to Support Canadian Mining By Charis Kamphuis and Charlotte Connolly</p> <p>This report documents the Canadian government's political support for Goldcorp's Marlin Mine in relation to proceedings initiated by Indigenous Peoples in Guatemala before an international human rights body. It documents and analyzes the actions of officials from the then named Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) and the Canadian Embassy to Guatemala in response to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)'s precautionary measures requesting that the Government of Guatemala suspend the Marlin Mine. Federal ATI records reveal that Canada undertook a multifaceted strategy to influence the IACHR proceedings in favour of Goldcorp and to counteract the suspension measure recommended to protect Indigenous communities from the harms alleged.</p>
<p>PUBLICATIONS</p> <p> Published by Charis Kamphuis View all posts by Charis Kamphuis</p>	

Below: Yves Engler writes about a new report - "Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy", by the Justice & Corporate Accountability Project (JCAP) – that details Canadian government efforts to overturn a legally binding order issued by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission for Goldcorp to suspend its destructive, harmful mining operation in Mayan territories of western Guatemala, and to cover up human rights violations and environmental harms that Goldcorp Inc. was causing.

The cyanide-leaching, open-pit gold mining operation of Goldcorp Inc. (recently bought out by Newmont Gold) is one of four mining operations documented in "TESTIMONIO: Canadian Mining in the Aftermath of Genocides in Guatemala", recently published by Between The Lines (<https://btlbooks.com/book/testimonio>, \$29.95 / 9781771135627)

Allan Culham, Canada's diplomatic 'hitman' for Goldcorp Inc., revealed

by Yves Engler, February 17, 2022

<https://yvesengler.com/2022/02/17/canadian-hitman-reveals-reality-of-foreign-policy/>

The tale of Allan Culham illustrates the essence of Justin Trudeau's Liberal foreign policy towards Latin America. In [fall](#) 2017 the Trudeau government hired a retired diplomat to coordinate its campaign to overthrow the Venezuelan government. Over the next four years Culham was paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to act as Canada's Special Advisor on Venezuela.

In "[Ottawa hires hitman to overthrow Venezuelan government](#)" I detailed Canada's former ambassador to Venezuela, El Salvador and Guatemala hostility towards the left and Latin American integration.

Ottawa hires hitman to overthrow Venezuelan government

<https://yvesengler.com/2019/06/17/ottawa-hires-hitman-to-overthrow-venezuelan-government/>

A new report [by the Justice & Corporate Accountability Project – JCAP], based on Access to Information requests, provides further evidence of Culham's history and the reality of Canadian diplomacy.

**Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy
Undermining International Institutions to Support Canadian Mining
A Case Study of Goldcorp's Marlin Mine in Guatemala**

Justice & Corporate Accountability Project (JCAP)

<https://justice-project.org/2022/02/03/the-two-faces-of-canadian-diplomacy-undermining-international-institutions-to-support-canadian-mining/>

"Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy" details Culham's and other diplomats' support for Vancouver-based Goldcorp in their battle with Mayan communities in the highlands of northwestern Guatemala. From 2005 to 2011 four people were killed and two dozen injured in clashes between community members, police, military and Marlin Mine security.

In response to the repression, lack of community consent and ecological damage caused by the mine, 13 communities brought Goldcorp to the

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Their petition prompted the OAS-associated body to request the Guatemalan government suspend mine operations until the health and safety of residents could be ensured.

In response to the May 2010 decision “[Canadian Ministers](#), DFATD [Foreign Affairs] Directors, Ambassadors, and Embassy officials heavily lobbied Guatemalan officials and sought information from IACHR representatives on behalf of Goldcorp, while dismissing or ignoring the concerns of communities, international human rights bodies, civil society groups, and international experts/researchers about the mine’s negative social, environmental, and health impacts.”

As Canada’s permanent representative to the OAS, Culham assisted Goldcorp, then one of the biggest gold mining firms in the world. While initially recognizing that it would be inappropriate to intervene in the IACHR process, Culham “repeatedly tried to contact and eventually did communicate with the IACHR Executive Secretary.”

He and his staff coordinated with Goldcorp representatives, “sharing strategies and suggestions for Goldcorp’s participation, and debriefing and strategically analyzing the hearings, including the private hearing that Goldcorp secured with the IACHR.”

Goldcorp succeeded in having the IACHR withdraw the request to suspend their mine, which could have been partly due to Canada’s significant leverage within the OAS. After the US, which covers [half](#) its budget, Canada is the [second largest](#) contributor to the 33-nation group, providing as much as 12% of OAS funding.

It’s outrageous that Canada’s top diplomat at the OAS — and diplomatic apparatus more broadly — threw its weight behind a mining firm running roughshod over indigenous communities in Guatemala.

Culham’s support for Goldcorp is noteworthy for another reason. Culham boasts about his ties to one of Canada’s most important NGOs and that organization celebrates him.

Between 1974 and 1981 Culham worked with Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO) in Botswana. In 2019 Culham [organized](#) an anniversary

event for the NGO's alumni who worked in Botswana and [appeared in](#) CUSO's 60-year anniversary video released in June.

Why would an organization that says its "[working](#) globally to end poverty and inequality" promote a pro-corporate, pro-Washington diplomat overseeing Canada's bid to overthrow the Venezuelan government? The answer is: Unfortunately, all too often, government-funded NGOs that talk of "[empowerment](#)" instead enable imperialism.

Culham is the embodiment of Canada's Liberal Party fine sounding foreign policy statements and actual reality. They'll assist a mining firm destroy indigenous communities, work to extend North American domination of Latin America and claim to be inspired by NGOs "working globally to end poverty and inequality".

Fortunately, Canada's bid to overthrow the Venezuelan government has failed and a new wave of progressive Latin American governments have rekindled efforts to replace the OAS with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which excludes Canada and the US.

"Two Faces of Canadian Diplomacy"

by Charlotte Connolly and Charis Kamphuis

Contact: Charis Kamphuis, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Thompson Rivers University, ckamphuis@justice-project.org / <https://justice-project.org>

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