

Honduras, September 17, 2007

ALERT: GOLDCORP SEEKING TO RELEASE POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED WATER INTO LOCAL ECOSYSTEM IN HONDURAS

Communities affected by Canadian-US transnational mining corporation Goldcorp (formerly Glamis Gold)'s San Martin open pit gold mine in the Siria Valley are denouncing the company's plans to release water used in the mining process into the local ecosystem.

The news of Goldcorp's request to the Honduran government for authorization was made public last week, when the Secretariat of Natural Resources and the Environment (SERNA) confirmed that the government was studying the company's request, announcing that a technical mission would be sent to evaluate the pH level of the water and determine whether or not authorization will be granted.

While water is supposedly treated to break down the cyanide used in the heap leach mining process, it is enough to examine the company's track record of contamination in the region to comprehend the Siria Valley Environmental Committee's demand that authorization be refused.

GOLDCORP FINED FOR WATER CONTAMINATION

This past June, the Secretariat of Natural Resources and the Environment (SERNA) notified Goldcorp subsidiary Entre Mares that the latter was being fined one million lempiras (approx. US\$53,000) for the commission of "serious administrative offences." The decision responds to reports of water contamination denounced by the Siria Valley Environmental Committee back in April 2006.

The resolution (#374) establishes that the company failed to abide by contractual obligations, including the unauthorized release of residual waters, and finds the company responsible for the contamination of surface and underground water. On three occasions between September 2005 and April 2006, monitoring carried out by governmental authorities found that cyanide levels in the local water system were above the national technical norm for the discharge of residual waters. The resolution also cites the high levels of arsenic found in various water sources.

Given ten days to pay the sum, the company instead announced a legal challenge to the resolution and fine.

The SERNA resolution confirms the contamination that the affected communities have denounced for years. Independent and governmental studies have found high levels of arsenic, lead, mercury, aluminium, cadmium and other heavy metals in local water sources, including community wells.

Studies have also encountered dangerous levels of arsenic and lead in the blood of local residents. Health workers have drawn attention to the dramatic rise in health problems since the mine began operating seven years ago, including dermatological and respiratory illnesses, miscarriages and stillbirths.

Goldcorp's request to discharge potentially contaminated waters into the local ecosystem coincides with the arrival in Honduras of the results of toxicological studies carried out in laboratories in Colombia on blood, urine and hair samples of local residents suffering from health problems in the Siria Valley. Working with various other governmental entities participating in an Inter-institutional Commission to analyze the health crisis denounced by the communities, the forensic medical team of the judicial system is compiling the lab results with the conclusions of dermatological, psychological and other medical studies carried out over this past year. The government has announced that the report will be released in November and that should the results confirm health problems resulting from mining activities, Goldcorp's license will be cancelled and criminal charges will be pursued against the company.

YAMANA GOLD COMPANY CYANIDE SPILL

Furthermore, the news of Goldcorp's request comes only two weeks after Canadian/Brazilian mining company Yamana Gold was ordered to halt its release of water from the open pit San Andres silver mine in the department of Copán, in western Honduras. Technical personnel confirmed that the water being discharged had a pH of 9.68, above the permissible limit of 8.

Nevertheless, at least 1,500 gallons of water reportedly contaminated with cyanide were released into a tributary of the Lara river, provoking actions and pronouncements downriver in the major city of Santa Rosa de Copan.

GOLDCORP'S GOLD MINE IN GUATEMALA

The same issue is faced by communities affected by Goldcorp's Marlin mine in the municipalities of Sipacapa and San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos, Guatemala, where in early August various organizations called on the company to halt plans to release water from the tailings pond into the local river system, due to concerns of contamination in the indigenous highlands.

***** TAKE ACTION *****

Urgent letters, emails, phone calls and faxes to Goldcorp President and CEO Kevin McArthur, Canadian government officials and the Canada Pension Plan (a major investor in Goldcorp) to let them know that you are concerned about water contamination and health problems related to mining activities in the Siria Valley in Honduras, demanding that the company **REFRAIN FROM RELEASING ANY WATER** from the mine installations into the local ecosystem while the company continues to deny responsibility for past contamination and while studies are ongoing.

Reiterate the Siria Valley Environmental Committee's demands concerning mine closure, particularly full and fair compensation and reparations for the local residents whose health has been negatively affected and the complete clean-up of water contamination.

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Your MP and local media.

The Canadian Pension Plan (most employed Canadians are, by law, contributors to and beneficiaries of the CPP, a major investor in Goldcorp): Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, csr@cppib.ca, 416-868-4075, Toll Free: 1-866-557-9510

Please forward responses to Rights Action: info@rightsaction.org

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WHAT TO DO:

Rights Action is leading an educational-activist delegation to the Siria Valley, Honduras, October 25-October 31, to investigate health, environment and human rights violations caused by the Goldcorp (formerly Glamis Gold) company. For more information, contact Sandra Cuffe: caminando27@yahoo.es.

RIGHTS ACTION: is a tax-deductible organization (Canada and the USA) that funds and supports community-based development, environment and human rights organizations in southern Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, and educates about and is involved in activism related to global development, environmental and human rights issues. [www.rightsaction.org]

Get on our e-mail and snail-mail lists: info@rightsaction.org;

DONATE FUNDS TO INDIGENOUS, COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS designing and implementing their own development, human rights and environment project: Make tax-deductible donation to "Rights Action" and mail to: UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887; CANADA: 422 Parliament St, Box 82552, Toronto ON, M5A 4N8. CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: www.rightsaction.org.