

MEDIA RELEASE, May 20, 2008

Community Leaders from Honduras and Guatemala attend Goldcorp's shareholder meeting, denounce the environmental, health and human rights harms caused by mine

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Leaders from communities directly impacted by Goldcorp's open pit cyanide leaching operations in Central America will attend the annual general meeting of Goldcorp on May 20. Carlos Amador from Honduras and Fausto Valiente from Guatemala traveled to Toronto this week denouncing Goldcorp for the environmental, social, health and human rights harms in both regions where the company is operating.

"A real benefit of speaking tours like this one is that they raise awareness about both the harms of mining and the way in which all of us as Canadians are implicated in this exploitative industry", said Grahame Russell, co-director of Rights Action, a US and Canadian NGO based in Guatemala City, who has been working directly with grassroots organizations in the affected communities, and in building solidarity and activism in the 'global north.' "This is our problem - Who benefits? Who pays the price? These are the questions that all of us need to ask."

The Canada Pension Plan, many unions pension plans and even mutual funds marketed as "ethical" are major investors in Goldcorp. Recently, Jantzi Research decided to remove Goldcorp from their "Jantzi Social Index," which rates corporations within each industry sector, a development viewed as a positive result of campaigns directed at educating Canadians about the real impact of mining. "The problem is that mining is only being reported on the business pages" Russell continued, "the environmental devastation, health problems, social harms and human rights violations are serious issues that Canadians need to know about."

"Goldcorp mines have caused numerous health and environmental harms to the residents of the Siria Valley," says Carlos Amador from the Siria Valley Environmental Defense Committee. "Now, we are traveling to other communities to warn them about how these companies lie to communities and what the true effects of open-pit mining are regarding health and the environment." The communities of the Siria Valley, while maintaining their longstanding opposition to Goldcorp's San Martin mine, are now also demanding justice and reparations in order to deal with this health crisis, provide long-term care for the victims of heavy metal poisoning, and recuperate the environment.

"Goldcorp is continuing to mine and to seek mining licenses in areas where local indigenous communities have clearly voiced their overwhelming opposition to the mining projects in community consultations." says Fausto Valiente. In accordance with ILO convention 169 on indigenous rights, the Constitution of Guatemala and the municipal code, on June 18, 2005, all thirteen communities in the municipality Sipakapa carried out consultations to determine whether or not the population wanted mining activity in their territory: 11 villages voted against all mining, one voted in favour, and one abstained. Eighteen municipalities in Guatemala's indigenous highlands - many of which are covered by Goldcorp mining licenses - have followed suit with their own community consultations, in which a consistent 98% of the population rejects all mining.

The Honduran and Guatemalan delegates will publicly denounce Goldcorp's operations on their lands and ask shareholders to demand that the company immediately suspend all mining operations in their countries.

WHO:

**CARLOS AMADOR.** From the mining affected region of the department of Francisco Morazan, Honduras, Carlos Amador is a member of the Siria Valley Environmental Defense Committee.

**FAUSTO VALIENTE.** From the mining affected region of the department of San Marcos, Guatemala, Fausto Valiente is a member of COPAE, the Pastoral Commission on Peace and Ecology, which is linked to the Catholic Diocese in San Marcos.

GRAHAME RUSSELL. From Rights Action, a Canadian/US tax-charitable NGO with 15 years of work experience in Central America, Grahame Russell is just back from leading educational delegations to the mining affected regions of Guatemala and Honduras.

WHAT: STREET EDUCATION & PROTEST ACTIVITIES, Delegates will be available for interview before and following the shareholders meeting.

WHERE: King Edward Hotel, 37 King St. E., Toronto

WHEN: TUESDAY, MAY 20, 1:00pm – 2:30pm

WHY: There is a reason why Jantzi Research ([www.jantziresearch.com](http://www.jantziresearch.com)) recommends that Goldcorp be considered ineligible for Socially Responsible Investment portfolios.

Please see: "INVESTING IN CONFLICT: Public Money, Private Gain – Goldcorp Inc in the Americas"

[http://www.rightsaction.org/Reports/Mining\\_Goldcorp\\_BW\\_042608.pdf](http://www.rightsaction.org/Reports/Mining_Goldcorp_BW_042608.pdf)

Written by Dawn Paley ([dawnpaley@gmail.com](mailto:dawnpaley@gmail.com)), with Mining Watch ([www.miningwatch.ca](http://www.miningwatch.ca)) and Rights Action, "Investing in Conflict" is about the "nexus of mining companies, the mainstream media, the Canadian government, International Finance Institutions and bought off NGOs" that are working "hard to keep the reality of large-scale, open pit mines out of picture, keep[ing] community resistance marginalized, and no matter what, to keep talking about "development"." Focusing on Goldcorp Inc., Investing in Conflict brings "hard facts and community perspectives together to help North Americans become more informed about the nature of the mining industry."