

October 2, 2008

GOLDCORP HARMING ENVIRONMENT in GUATEMALA

Last week, we reported how the Latin American Water Tribunal found Goldcorp Inc. "guilty of causing harm to the environment and to the people of San Miguel Ixtahuacán and Sipacapa, San Marcos".

Today, we report that Guatemalan Bishop Ramazzini confirms that Goldcorp is polluting the environment.

The Tribunal and work of Bishop's Ramazzini's Diocese re-confirm previous studies and support testimonies received over the past years from Mayan-Mam campesinos living in communities suffering multiple harms caused by Goldcorp's cyanide-leaching, open pit mine.

BELOW: an article from the Guatemalan Prensa Libre newspaper. (Thanks to Rosalind Gill (RGill@glendon.yorku.ca) for translation of this article)

FOR MORE INFO: Grahame Russell (and Annie Bird), co-directors of Rights Action: info@rightsaction.org / www.rightsaction.org distribute this info all around.. Please To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:

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ÁLVARO RAMAZZINI CONFIRMS THAT THE MARLIN MINE IS POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Prensa Libre, October 2, 2008,

<http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2008/octubre/02/267178.html>

by Alberto Ramírez

A study carried out by the Catholic Church revealed the presence of the following chemicals:

- Arsenic, maximum permissible level, according to the World Bank, 0.1 milligrams per litre of water. 0.18 mg/L found.
- Magnesium, maximum permissible level 0.05 mg/L. 0.54 mg/L found.
- Iron, maximum permissible level 3.5 mg/L. 4.58 mg/L found.
- Aluminum, maximum permissible level 0.1 mg/L. 0.23 mg/L found.
- Nitrate, maximum permissible level 0.0 mg/L. 132.9 mg/L found.

Yesterday, Bishop Álvaro Ramazzini announced that heavy metal contamination has been found in the water of various locations in the area of the Marlin Mine, San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos.

Ramazzini was presenting the report of a study carried out by the Dioceses of San Marcos and the Comisión Pastoral Paz y Ecología. The study focused on five strategic points near the Marlin mine, which is owned by Montana Exploradora [owned by Goldcorp Inc.].

The Bishop stated that the study was carried out by a group from the Dioceses but that they were not certified by a scientific laboratory. The aim of the study was to alert the State to the need to conduct further analyses.

HEAVY METALS

"The results of the study demonstrate the presence of heavy metals such as iron, aluminum, magnesium nitrates and arsenic," he said. "We are of the opinion that the water is not fit for human consumption. We are concerned that these conditions exist in the Tzalá and Quivichil Rivers, which may become rivers of acid drainage, said the Bishop.

Ramazzini also stated that high levels of arsenic were found in samples taken from two areas. He underlined that this demonstrates that there it is possible that contaminated water is being discharged into water sources. Ramazzini also denounced the fact that one of the water sources in the area has dried up.

Douglas González, Head of the Trade Union for Mines, also participated in the study. He recognized the efforts made by the Dioceses; however, he pointed out that the study is incomplete, it is lacking in objectivity and does not take a scientific approach, as it was not conducted under the auspices of a certified laboratory.

"The presence or non-presence of contamination is evaluated by the judicial organisms of the country and they have already determined that the Marlin mine is not causing contamination," he added.

STUDIES WILL BE COMPARED

Luis Ferraté, Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources, attended the presentation of the report. He said that its findings will be compared to other studies of this issue. Ferraté proposed that the Dioceses, the mining company and the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources carry out analyses every three months to monitor the situation and determine if there is contamination. González y Ramazzini agreed with the proposal.

Original - en español

ÁLVARO RAMAZZINI AFIRMA QUE MINA MARLIN CONTAMINA

Prensa Libre, October 2, 2008,

<http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/2008/octubre/02/267178.html>, Por Alberto Ramírez

El estudio de la Iglesia Católica reveló presencia de elementos químicos.

- Arsénico, el máximo permitido, según el Banco Mundial, es 0.1 miligramos por litro de agua. Se encontró 0.18 mg/L.
- Manganeso: el máximo permitido es 0.05 mg/L. Se halló 0.54 mg/L.
- Hierro, máximo permitido es 3.5 mg/L. Se encontró 4.58 mg/L.
- Aluminio, máximo permitido es 0.1 mg/L. Se halló 0.23 mg/L.
- Nitrato, máximo permitido, 10.0 mg/L. Se encontró 132.9 mg/L.

El obispo Álvaro Ramazzini informó ayer que encontraron contaminación por metales pesados en el agua de varios lugares alrededor de la mina Marlin, San Miguel Ixtahuacán, San Marcos.

Ramazzini presentó el informe anual del monitoreo que efectúan la Diócesis de San Marcos y la Comisión Pastoral Paz y Ecología en cinco puntos estratégicos alrededor de la mina Marlin, propiedad de Montana Exploradora.

El obispo aclaró que los análisis se hicieron con equipo de la Diócesis que no estaba certificado por un laboratorio especializado, pero era una voz de alerta para que el Estado efectúe análisis más profundos.

METALES PESADOS

"Los resultados del estudio demuestran que hay presencia de metales pesados, como hierro, aluminio, manganeso, nitrato y arsénico", afirmó. "Consideramos que el agua no es apta para consumo humano y nos preocupa que esas condiciones se presenten en el río Tzalá y el riachuelo Quivichil, para que se desencadene un drenaje ácido", declaró el obispo.

Ramazzini declaró que se encontró alto contenido de arsénico en dos puntos de muestreo y eso revela, enfatizó, que puede haber una descarga de agua contaminada en las fuentes hídricas.

Ramazzini también denunció que un nacimiento de agua muestreado se secó. A la actividad asistió Douglas González, gerente de la Gremial de Minas, quien reconoció el esfuerzo de la Diócesis; sin embargo, enfatizó en que el estudio no es minucioso y

además carece de objetividad y carácter científico, debido a que no está avalado por un laboratorio certificado.

“La supuesta contaminación es cosa juzgada por los organismos judiciales del país, los cuales ya dictaminaron que no existe esa contaminación de la mina Marlin”, agregó.

COMPARARÁN ESTUDIOS

Luis Ferraté, ministro de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, asistió a la presentación del informe y aseguró que los comparará con los estudios efectuados por esa cartera. Ferraté propuso que esa diócesis, la empresa y el Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARN) efectúen cada tres meses un monitoreo conjunto, para determinar si hay contaminación. González y Ramazzini estuvieron de acuerdo con esa propuesta.

CONNECTING THE DOTS BETWEEN THE GLOBAL MINING & INVESTMENT INDUSTRY

. . . and . . .

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC HARMS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

North American mining and investors industries are sometimes contributing to and benefiting from environmental destruction, undermining local economies and violating human rights.

GOLDCORP - SOME BENEFICIARIES

GOLDCORP Chairman Ian Telfer's 2006 payday worth \$23-million. (Globe and Mail, April 4, 2007)

University of B.C. received a \$5 million donation, for a new earth-sciences building, from Goldcorp chairman Ian Telfer (Vancouver Sun, April 26, 2007).

Goldcorp Inc. Chairman Ian Telfer donated \$25 million to the University of Ottawa's management school; it will be renamed the Telfer School of Management (Ottawa Citizen, May 9, 2007).

WHAT TO DO

Write to your own politician and media, and to any/ all of the company, government and investor officials listed below, to ask for a suspension of Goldcorp's mining operation in Guatemala, and the establishment of a truly independent commission to investigate the environmental and health harms and other human rights violations caused by Goldcorp in Guatemala, and determine what compensation and reparations Goldcorp should pay to the harmed and affected communities in San Marcos.

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CANADIAN Minister of Foreign Affairs, 509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa,
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CANADIAN Embassy in Guatemala, Attention Mr. Ambassador, 13 Calle 8-44 Zone 10,
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For more information, to donate tax-deductible funds to mining affected communities
and to come on educational trips to mining affected communities, contact: Grahame
Russell, info@rightsaction.org, www.rightsaction.org

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