

October 30, 2008

Rights Action Open Letter #3

**GOLDCORP Inc's PRE-DETERMINED 'HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT' TO PROCEED, IN GUATEMALA**

(By Grahame Russell, Rights Action co-director, [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org) / 860-352-2448 / [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org))

In Guatemala, mining giant Goldcorp Inc. and a group of concerned investors are proceeding with a "human rights impact assessment" (HRIA), despite receiving detailed criticisms about the form and content of the HRIA.

In the US presidential elections, a phrase has come up time and again - Even if you put a bow-tie or lipstick on it, a pig is still a pig. Might we say – Even if you put a bow-tie or lipstick on it, a pre-determined human rights assessment is still a pre-determined human rights assessment.

A group of international consultants, from On Common Ground ([www.oncommonground.ca](http://www.oncommonground.ca)) and International Alert ([www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org)), have accepted a contract to carry out the HRIA. (Below, read news report)

Their work will serve to legitimize Goldcorp's "Marlin" mine, while doing little or nothing to help transform a mining political climate in Guatemala characterized by impunity for the pro-mining sectors and community tensions/ divisions and human rights violations for people critical of mining.

#### FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

As set out in our previous 'Open Letters' concerning this issue (1st one: [http://www.rightsaction.org/articles/Goldcorp\\_Open%20Letter\\_050108.html](http://www.rightsaction.org/articles/Goldcorp_Open%20Letter_050108.html); 2nd one available on request), we repeat here some of the fundamental problems with the HRIA:

Firstly, there was no consultation with the communities negatively affected by Goldcorp's big-and-getting-bigger open-pit, cyanide leaching mine in Guatemala. The misnamed HRIA is the brain-child of a group of concerned investors who got the backing of the company.

The Mayan-Mam people suffering the harms were never intended to have any say in this HRIA.

Exclusion of the affected Mayan-Mam communities is reflected in the Steering Committee comprised of: one Goldcorp company representative, one Investor group representative, and one Guatemalan man who has nothing to do with the affected communities.

Secondly, the “main objective” of the HRIA (“to optimize opportunities for the Company to continue operating profitably in Guatemala”) undermines what any credible human rights investigation should be.

Goldcorp Inc. is earning over 6 times greater profits than ever predicted from their Guatemalan gold mine (let alone numerous other mines in the Americas). Goldcorp will make huge profits during the work of the misnamed HRIA, because Goldcorp and the investor group will not suspend mining while the HRIA was being carried out.

As stated in our previous ‘Open Letters’:

“The basic, obvious question is: How is it possible to conduct a complete and proper investigation of environmental and health harms and human rights violations caused by a mining operation when it has already been declared that the main objective of the investigation is to continue mining operations?”

“The main objective of any balanced and proper human rights investigation should be to determine:

What are the violations?

Who are the victims of the violations (including environmental harms)?, and

What caused the harms and violations?

“Then, a proper human rights investigation should make binding recommendations as to:

How to compensate for all damages and loss, and

What steps need to put an end to the causes of the violations,

even if this means, in this case, suspending or terminating the mining operation.”

“This HRIA’s “main objective” predetermines a significant part of the outcome of the Assessment and is in direct contradiction to the possibility of a full and proper investigation.”

The list of problems with the HRIA continues. The harms, violations and human rights violations continue. Goldcorp continues mining and profiting at some 6 times higher than its initial estimates.

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#### LEARN MORE

On request and at [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org), you can find extensive background about harms and violations caused by Goldcorp’s “Marlin” mine in Guatemala.

#### WHAT DO TO

Write your politicians and media, and 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.

HRIA STEERING COMMITTEE: [steering.committee@hria-guatemala.com](mailto:steering.committee@hria-guatemala.com)  
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UNITED NATIONS: Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Guatemala Attention to Anders Kompass 5a Av. 5-55, Zona 14 Edificio EUROPLAZA, Torre III, Nivel 14 Ciudad de Guatemala, Tel.: (502) 23823400, [informacion@ohchr.org.gt](mailto:informacion@ohchr.org.gt)  
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To get on/ off Rights Action's email list: <http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3>

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## HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT CONTRACTORS SELECTED AND WEBSITE ESTABLISHED

<http://www.csrwire.com/News/13376.html>

Corporate Social Responsibility/ 10.07.2008 - 09:01am ET

CSR News from: The Steering Committee for the HRIA of Goldcorp's Guatemalan Operations

(CSRwire) VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA. - October 7, 2008 - The Steering Committee for the human rights impact assessment (HRIA) of Goldcorp Inc.'s operations in Guatemala announced today the selection of On Common Ground Consultants to conduct the Assessment and International Alert to serve as the peer reviewer.

The Steering Committee also announced that it has established a website on which documents relevant to the Assessment are posted ([www.hria-guatemala.com](http://www.hria-guatemala.com)). It will be regularly updated throughout the Assessment process. The Steering Committee directing the assessment process is made up of a company representative, a representative of investor groups and a Guatemalan representative.

Information regarding On Common Ground is available at [www.oncommonground.ca](http://www.oncommonground.ca). The On Common Ground team will be comprised of Giselle Huamani-Ober, Susan Joyce, Eduardo Bryce, and Myriam Cabrera. The team will be lead by Giselle Huamani-Ober and she will guide the conflict analysis approach and identify conflict sensitive perspectives throughout the Assessment process. [...]

Information on International Alert is available at [www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org). The International Alert team will be comprised of Salil Tripathi, William Godnick, Cristina Sganga, and Diana Klein all of whom participate in International Alert's Peacebuilding Issues Programme. [...]

The Steering Committee wishes to express its appreciation for the more than thirty submissions from individuals and organizations to the request for proposals (RFP) issued last month. The large number of responses is indicative of the interest in this project.

Inquiries regarding the Assessment may be directed to the Steering Committee by e-mail at: [steering.committee@hria-guatemala.com](mailto:steering.committee@hria-guatemala.com).

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