

December 16, 2009

**GUATEMALA: 40 YEAR NICKEL MINING NIGHTMARE  
CONTINUES**

- HudBay Minerals pushes ahead with environmentally harmful nickel mining
- No justice done for assassination of Adolfo Ich, a Mayan Qeqchi teacher killed by security guards in hire of HudBay Minerals

(Haroldo Culul, shot and wounded by Guatemalan security guards hired by HudBay Minerals. All photos, Daniel Sosa, unless indicated)

(Adolfo Ich (center), shot and killed by Guatemalan security guards hired by HudBay Minerals. Photo, James Rodriguez, [www.mimundo.org](http://www.mimundo.org))

## **BELOW**

- Photo-essay interview with Angelica Choc (wife-widow of Adolfo Ich) and Haroldo Culul also shot by security guards in hire of Hudbay Minerals
- Business News Americas article: "HudBay aims to finish Fénix feasibility update mid-2010 – Guatemala"

## **RIGHTS ACTION COMMENTARY:**

### **40 YEAR NICKEL MINING NIGHTMARE CONTINUES**

Unless Canada – government, companies, investors, people – reign in and severely control the actions of Canadian mining companies, there will be more forced and illegal evictions and repression against poor Mayan people in Guatemala.

Even as no justice has been done for the assassination of Adolfo Ich, and the shooting and wounding of others, HudBay Minerals blithely announces that its mining plans proceed.

Adolfo Ich is only the latest in a long line of local Mayan Qeqchi people who have suffered repression, forced evictions and killings at the behest of, or to the benefit of a list of Canadian mining companies, including INCO, Skye Resources and now HudBay.

**FOR INTERVIEWS & MORE INFORMATION:** Annie Bird, [annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org), 1-202-680-3002; Grahame Russell, [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 1-860-352-2448

- Please re-distribute & re-publish this information all around
- To get on/ off Rights Action's email list:  
<http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3/>
- What to do: see below

\* \* \*

**GUATEMALA: HUSBAND MINERALS & THE SHOOTING OF ADOLFO ICH, HAROLDO CULUL & OTHER MAYAN QEQCHI PEOPLE**

By Daniel Sosa, for Rights Action

(Angélica Choc, widow of Adolfo Ich, looks at banner denouncing assassination of her husband in El Chupon, an impoverished of Mayan Qeqchi people. "Adolfo Ich Chaman, assassinated by CGN. Mining

industry is responsible". CGN = Guatemalan Nickel Company, subsidiary of HudBay Minerals.)

On Sunday, September 27, 2009, Adolfo Ich Chamán, a Maya Qeqchi teacher from the community of La Union, El Estor, was killed by members of security guards hired by CGN (Compania Guatemalteca de Niquel), a Guatemalan subsidiary 98.2% owned by HudBay Minerals, a Canadian Nickel company.

The CPP (Canada Pension Plan) owns, as of March 2009, 882,000 shares of Hudbay, worth \$5,000,000. Many other North American investors have funds invested in HudBay.

More than two months after the attack, a number of the six campesinos wounded that day by HudBay security guards are still in critical condition. With no healthcare security, and living in endemic poverty and facing violent evictions by the mining company, their injuries due to mining company repression have left them in a state of despair.

On a recent visit to El Estor, we met with Haroldo Culul and Adolfo Ich's widow, Angélica Choc, to talk of their health situation, after the September 27 repression.

Haroldo Culul, a now unemployed 30 year-old teacher from Barrio la Union in El Estor was shot in his shoulder by Hudbay/ CGN's security guards. According to the doctor that attended him, he might lose the use of his right arm. Living in already harsh conditions, Haroldo is increasing his debts in order to pay for minimal health care.

Harold spoke with us about what happened on September 27, 2009. Haroldo was attending a community meeting in La Unión with the El Estor mayor. They were meeting to plan the reconstruction of their Community Hall that had been destroyed in previous violent forced evictions carried out on behalf of the mining company.

"We are just poor campesinos, why do they come to harm us? Why do they come to violently evict us from our homes? Would Canadians like to be evicted from their homes by Guatemalans? I don't think so. But that is what they are doing to us: Canadians evicting indigenous Guatemalans from their own lands."

"On September 27, around 3:30 in the afternoon, we heard gunshots near "La Maya". Friends that were close called upon us to come but when we got there, we were rapidly surrounded by a squad of 30 to 40 elements from the CGN private security company. They forcedly tried to get us in La Maya, but we managed to hide behind small trees. Bullets were flying and my shoulder was hit by a bullet. That's where our friend Adolfo was beaten, macheted and killed. May he rest in peace. I ran until El Chupon where I got first aid."

"This is very painful to tell this story as we are innocent people. With the death of Adolfo, the people of El Estor suffered a great loss."

Prensa Libre (October 3, 2009) newspaper: "The day Adolfo was buried, hundreds of people from El Estor walked in the streets to say their last goodbyes". "Teacher Killed in El Estor Was a Leader". On the protest sign: "CGN Shed Blood of an Innocent: Teacher Adolfo Ich".

We asked Haroldo Culul what message he has for CGN in Guatemala, Hudbay Minerals in Canada and the Canadian investors regarding the attack and repression they faced and have been facing for a long time.

"First, let the international community, Canada and the shareholders know: Sirs, while you are comfortably living in your country, at ease in your homes, you might think that Guatemala is a free country. It is not. Unfortunately, you came here to kill us, to kidnap and harm us for your benefits. Canadian shareholders, please be conscious of what is going on. Leave our country in a pacific way. It is a call of heart; as you are human, we also are human, but unfortunately you have violated our right to be free. We feel proud to be Guatemalans and indigenous, but only when we and our rights are respected. We

demand the respect of an international agreement that the Guatemalan government has signed: the ILO Convention 169.”

“I don’t know if you remember, or if you even know it, but CGN has done violent and illegal evictions, here! In our houses! We live here, we were born here... we do not come from a foreign country! On the other hand, you just come to deceive the people of El Estor. Unfortunately, you have violated our rights. Today, we hear a lot about weapons in El Estor... but who got weapons here in the first place? You brought weapons, the Canadian company did.”

\* \* \*

Listening to Haroldo speak, Angélica Choc was sadly looking at the ground. I knew it would be hard for her to remember her husband’s last words.

Angélica and Adolfo had 5 children together. They are between 6 to 23 years old. With absolutely no income, she told me that she didn’t know how she would provide her youngest child support to go to school.

When I ask her if she could speak, she took a deep breath and looked me in the eyes.

"It is very painful to remember such shocking tragedy. One never expects this to happen. I was also attending this meeting on September 27th, regarding the reconstruction of our Community Hall. When we heard the gunshots, we left the meeting together, Haroldo, Adolfo and me. As they were marching faster than me, they got to our house. When I arrived at my house, they were leaving and I asked them where they were going. His last words were: "I'll be back soon "mamita"".

"I tried to follow them, I ran but I never caught up with them. I stood there for a while, I saw the security guards shooting directly at the community, where there were children, women and real persons! I told them to stop. At this time, I couldn't see Adolfo anymore as he was further along, with Haroldo. I went back to my house thinking about my 6 year old child and the rain of bullets around us; my son could have been hurt if he would have come out. So I ran to my house where I found my mother. We sat together and time went by. The gunshots were continuing.

"Then, a group came yelling: "the prof was killed, the prof was murdered..." I didn't believe them and I went in my room, I sat down and told them that they were lying. Another group came and said: "the prof, the prof, they killed him!"

"At this moment I wanted to go out running. I ran but I fainted and fell... According to the compañeros, they got me back to my house. That's when I realized... people were getting from everywhere crying and shouting."



(In El Chupon, one of a number of subsistence Qeqchi communities that have already been evicted, over the past 4 years, and are facing potential future violent evictions in El Estor, the community mayor and leaders denounce the death of Adolfo Ich Chaman: "C.G.N. [Guatemalan Nickel Company, subsidiary of Hudbay Minerals] Author of Massacre of: Adolfo Ich Chaman, September 27th 2009, Communities 100% Against Mining").

Angélica was crying as she remembered the scene of the tragedy. Her older son went on his motorbike to carry his father back on his shoulder. Angélica didn't want to see him and two months later, she still can't believe what happened: "To date I don't believe it and I still wait for him; for me he is not dead".

(Adolfo' widow, standing by the sign: "Mining Out of El Estor: No Exploration and Exploitation")

Near the end of the interview, I asked her what message she would like to give to the President of Hudbay Minerals:

"It's a shame what they came to do, all the way from Canada; it's a shame for Canada to know that Canadian are linked to murders here in Guatemala, leaving families in mourning, children without their father... the blunt truth is that it's a shame. This should be analyzed and the Canadian Prime Minister should do something about this. I hope this message gets to him; he should demand these companies to pay for all the harms they have done. They have to pay, and then leave our country. They do not deserve to be here and we will not let them work, never! Never will we let them continue! And like Haroldo said, if they want to evict us, like they already tried to, a time will come where we will be the ones doing the evictions. Now, we ask them to leave pacifically our town because we already have had a lot of patience with them..."

\* \* \*

## **HUDBAY AIMS TO FINISH FÉNIX FEASIBILITY UPDATE MID-2010 - GUATEMALA**

Monday, December 7, 2009

By Laura Superneau / Business News Americas

[http://www.bnamericas.com/news/mining/HudBay\\_aims\\_to\\_finish\\_Fenix\\_feasibility\\_update\\_mid-2010/165368131](http://www.bnamericas.com/news/mining/HudBay_aims_to_finish_Fenix_feasibility_update_mid-2010/165368131)

Canadian miner HudBay Minerals (TSX: HBM) aims to complete an updated feasibility study in mid-2010 for its Fénix nickel project in Guatemala, a company executive said Monday. Work is focused on optimization, including better power supply opportunities, and improvement in ore grades, HudBay senior VP and CFO David Bryson said during a webcast presentation at the Desjardins Basic Materials Conference.

"It's a very advanced project technically," said Bryson. "We think that there is good potential in this project."

HudBay would like to bring on a minority JV partner at Fénix to help mitigate the company's risk profile, he added. The nickel mine was under construction at this time last year but was halted as metal prices sank and cash dried up.

The company's main focus is the optimization of its copper and zinc production and the Lalor Lake zinc project in Manitoba. "But we also want to add additional legs of production outside of northern Manitoba," said Bryson.

"Having a platform like Fénix can reduce our dependence on our northern Manitoba operations," and HudBay is also looking at acquisition opportunities, he said.

Fénix's existing feasibility study shows 41.4Mt of proven and probable reserves grading 1.63% nickel and a startup capex of US\$640mn. Production would be 1.3Bib (590,000t) of nickel over a 30-year mine life using conventional smelting technology. Phase 2 of the project assumes that a new solid-fuel power plant will be in service by the end of the fifth year of production, with an additional estimated capital cost of US\$344mn.

The project has been the subject of local opposition, particularly by families who refuse to relocate.

\* \* \*

## WHAT TO DO

### WRITE TO HUSBAY MINERALS, CPP (Canada Pension Plan) – WITH COPIES TO YOUR OWN POLITICIANS – ASKING THEM:

- To suspend all work at HudBay’s “Fenix Project” in Guatemala;
- To make public which of their private security forces were involved in the attack and assassination, and make public who gave the orders, on September 27, for the company security guards to use violence against the local communities;
- To establish a fully independent, international commission to carry out a complete investigation into this and previous repression and killings caused by the global nickel mining industry in Guatemala.

#### HUSBAY MINERALS

C/O Manager Investor Relations  
Dundee Place, Suite 2501  
1 Adelaide Street East  
Toronto, Ontario, M5C 2V9, Canada  
Peter R. Jones, Chief Executive Officer and Director  
Michael D. Winship, President and Chief Operating Officer  
MEDIA INQUIRIES:

John Vincic, Investor Relations and Corporate Communications,  
416.362.0615, [john.vincic@hubbayminerals.com](mailto:john.vincic@hubbayminerals.com)

#### CANADA PENSION PLAN

(As of March 2009, CPP owned 882,000 shares, worth \$5,000,000)  
Write to the CPP – with copies to your own politicians – asking them:  
What is their policy in terms of investing in companies operating in violent and repression situations (as nickel mining in Guatemala has been for years)?

To withdraw their investments from the CPP;  
CANADA PENSION PLAN Investment Board  
[csr@cppib.ca](mailto:csr@cppib.ca), 416-868-4075, Toll Free: 1-866-557-9510  
CPP Investment Board  
1 Queen Street East, Suite 2600  
Toronto, ON M5C 2W5  
Toll free: 1 (866) 557-9510, (416) 868-6612

Write to your own pension fund, and ask whether they are invested in HudBay Minerals.

\* \* \*

## **TO DONATE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE FUNDS to**

indigenous and campesino groups promoting their own community development projects and resisting the harms and violations of mining & hydro-electric dams, make tax deductible donations to "rights action" and mail to:

UNITED STATES: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887

CANADA: 552-351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

CREDIT-CARD DONATIONS: <http://rightsaction.org/contributions.htm>

Upon request, Rights Action can provide a proposal of which community organizations resisting the harms and violations caused by mining in Guatemala and Honduras we are working with and channeling your funds to.

\* \* \*

## **HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION TO HONDURAS January 24-31, 2010**

Since the June 28th oligarchic-military coup against the government of President Zelaya, Rights Action – along with other North American activist and solidarity groups – has been working hard to support the extraordinary anti-coup, pro-democracy movement.

Now that the November 29th "elections" are over, this delegation will overlap with the January 27th "formal transfer of power" from President Zelaya to the incoming President-elect Pepe Lobo. Anyone following the situation in Honduras knows 'free and fair' elections were not held on November 29th, President Zelaya is still effectively jailed inside the Brazilian embassy in Tegucigalpa (capital city), and the "transfer of power" looms as another key date in this long-term struggle against the oligarchic-military regime.

More than an educational delegation (anyone who comes will learn a huge amount about the background context that led to the military coup, about the courage and spirit of Honduras' peaceful pro-democracy movement and about the nature and repression of the oligarchic-military regime), this will be a human rights accompaniment and observation delegation.

We will have serious discussions with interested persons about the nature and goals of this delegation, before people decide to join or not. If you are considering joining this delegation, we urge you to read through our series of Honduras Coup Alerts, found at [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org). To join: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

\* \* \*

**FOR INTERVIEW & MORE INFORMATION**

Annie Bird, [annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org), 1-202-680-3002; Grahame Russell, [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org), 1-860-352-2448