

GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA ORDERED TO SUSPEND GOLDCORP's "Marlin" GOLD MINE OPERATION

ACTION NEEDED:

- Consider signing the "sign-on" letter, below, to the President of Guatemala
- Contact the Canadian embassy in Guatemala, your local media, your own politician and various politicians and government officials (see list below) to insist that Canada and the United States support the mining Suspension Order issued by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission

FOR MORE INFORMATION - about efforts to remedy and stop the environmental and health harms and other human rights violations caused by Goldcorp's cyanide leaching gold mines in Guatemala and Honduras: Grahame Russell (info@rightsaction.org, 860-352-2448) and Annie Bird (annie@rightsaction.org, 202-680-3002)

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WHEN IS ENOUGH ENOUGH? -- GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA ORDERED TO SUSPEND GOLDCORP's "Marlin" GOLD MINE OPERATION

For years, gold-mining harmed communities in Guatemala as well as Guatemalan, Canadian and American human rights groups have denounced the environmental and health harms and human rights violations caused by Goldcorp's cyanide-leaching mines in Guatemala .

All of this has been duly ignored or denied by Goldcorp Inc and its shareholders and investors, by the World Bank (an early investor in this mine), and by the governments of Guatemala and Canada.

- Then, the Latin American Water Tribunal documented and denounced water contamination and depletion
- Then, the ILO (International Labor Organization) called for the suspension of mining, due to the harms and violations
- Then, Physicians for Human Rights and the University of Michigan documented contaminated blood and urine samples in local communities

And all of this has ignored or denied by Goldcorp Inc and its shareholders and investors, by the World Bank (an early investor in this mine), and by the governments of Guatemala and Canada.

SUSPENSION ORDER

On May 21, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR, www.cidh.oas.org, of the Organization of American States) ordered the Guatemalan government to suspend Goldcorp Inc's Marlin mine within 20 days and to take measures to protect the local environment. If it doesn't, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (www.corteidh.or.cr) will proceed to act on the complaint that led to the Suspension Order.

From the OAS webpage: [HTTP://WWW.CIDH.ORG/MEDIDAS/2010.ENG.HTM](http://www.cidh.org/MEDIDAS/2010.ENG.HTM)

"The mechanism for precautionary measures is established in Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure of the IACHR. This provision states that in serious and urgent cases, and wherever necessary according to the information available, the Commission may, on its own initiative or at the request of a party, request that the State concerned adopt precautionary measures to prevent irreparable harm to persons.

"PM 260-07 – COMMUNITIES OF THE MAYA PEOPLE (SIPAKEPENSE AND MAM) OF THE SIPACAPA AND SAN MIGUEL IXTAHUACÁN MUNICIPALITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SAN MARCOS, GUATEMALA

"On May 20, 2010, the IACHR granted precautionary measures for the members of 18 communities of the Maya indigenous people: Tres Cruces, Escupijá, Pueblo Viejo, La Estancia, Poj, Sipacapa, Pie de la Cuesta, Cancil, Chual, Quecá, Quequesiguán, San Isidro, Canoj, Ágel, San José Ixcaniché, San José Nueva Esperanza, San Antonio de los Altos, and Siete Platos, in Guatemala.

"The request for precautionary measures alleges that in November 2003, the Ministry of Energy and Mines granted the Montana company [Goldcorp's subsidiary] a license to mine for gold and silver for 25 years, within an area of 20 square kilometers in the municipalities of Sipacapa and San Miguel Ixtahuacán. The concession's environmental and hydrological impact area would encompass the territories of at least 18 communities of the Maya people in both municipalities.

"The petitioners allege that the mining concession was issued and mining began without the prior, complete, free, and informed consultation of the affected communities of the Maya people. [...] The petitioners maintain that the mining has produced grave consequences for the life, personal integrity, environment, and property of the affected indigenous people, since the Tzalá River and its tributaries are the only sources of water for consumption and subsistence activities. According to the request, a number of water wells and springs have dried up, and the metals present in the water as a result of the mining activity have had harmful effects on the health of members of the community.

"The Inter-American Commission asked the State of Guatemala to suspend mining of the Marlin I project, and other activities related to the concession granted to the company Goldcorp/Montana Exploradora de Guatemala S.A., and to implement effective measures to prevent environmental contamination, until such time as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights adopts a decision on the merits of the petition associated with this request for precautionary measures.

"The IACHR likewise asked the State to adopt the necessary measures to decontaminate, as much as possible, the water sources of the 18 beneficiary communities and to ensure their members access to water fit for human consumption; to address the health problems that are the subject of these precautionary measures, in particular to begin a health assistance and health care program for the beneficiaries aimed at identifying those who may have been affected by the consequences of the contamination, so as to provide them with appropriate medical attention; to adopt any other necessary measures to guarantee the life and physical integrity of the members of the 18 aforementioned Maya communities; and to plan and implement the protection measures with the participation of the beneficiaries and/or their representatives."

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SIGN-ON LETTER – SUSPEND GOLDCORP’S GOLD MINE

[To sign on, write to: jmcvicar@gmail.com. Deadline: Friday, June 4, 8:00am]

ENGLISH: On May 20, 2010, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted precautionary measures for the members of 18 communities of the Maya indigenous people of San Marcos, Guatemala. President Alvaro Colom will be making a decision this week as to whether or not to comply with the measures. Below, is a letter to the President of the Republic, asking him to comply with the precautionary measures. The Inter-American Commission asked the State of Guatemala to suspend mining of the Marlin I project and other activities related to the concession granted to the company Goldcorp/Montana Exploradora de Guatemala S.A., and to implement effective measures to prevent environmental contamination, until such time as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights adopts a decision on the merits of the petition associated with this request for precautionary measures.

ESPAÑOL: El 20 de mayo de 2010, la CIDH otorgó medidas cautelares a favor de los miembros de 18 comunidades del pueblo indígena maya Sipakapense y maya Mam de San Marcos, Guatemala. Presidente Álvaro Colom va a pronunciarse sobre las medidas cautelares esta semana, y por esto, estamos pidiendo su apoyo urgentemente. Añadido es una carta al Presidente de la República, solicitando el cumplimiento de las medidas cautelares. La Comisión Interamericana solicitó al Estado de Guatemala que suspenda la explotación minera del proyecto Marlin I y demás actividades relacionadas con la concesión otorgada a la empresa Goldcorp/Montana Exploradora de Guatemala S.A., e implementar medidas efectivas para prevenir la contaminación ambiental, hasta tanto la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos adopte una decisión sobre el fondo de la petición asociada a esta solicitud de medidas cautelares.

LETTER TO / CARTA AL PRESIDENTE COLOM

Guatemala, 4 de junio de 2010

Senor Presidente de la República de Guatemala Álvaro Colom:

Los firmantes representamos organizaciones y redes de Europa y Norteamérica que promueven los derechos humanos, el desarrollo justo, la democracia, la justicia global y la solidaridad Norte-Sur en sus países de origen y en el marco de la Unión Europea y las Naciones Unidas.

Lo saludamos con sumo respeto y solidaridad, en estos momentos difíciles que atraviesan los guatemaltecos, devastados por el impacto de dos fenómenos naturales en su territorio que, nuevamente, cobran vidas humanas entre aquéllos con menos recursos económicos y mayor vulnerabilidad social y ambiental; sector de la población de su país al que también corresponden las comunidades a las que hace referencia la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos en la Medida Cautelar MC-260-07 del 20 de mayo de 2010.

Dicha medida, orientada a garantizar la vida e integridad personal de comunidades del pueblo maya Mam y Sipakapense, constituye una oportunidad histórica única, al constituir un respaldo del sistema interamericano para que el Estado guatemalteco pueda investigar a profundidad, independiente y científicamente, los riesgos de contaminación ambiental y posibles impactos sobre la vida de las citadas

comunidades, ocasionados por la extracción de oro a cielo abierto en los municipios de Sipacapa y San Miguel Ixtahuacán.

Entendemos que la suspensión de la actividad minera en esa región, hasta tanto la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos adopte una decisión, como se solicita en la medida cautelar, es una acción necesaria para preservar el bien más preciado de los guatemaltecos y de su Presidente: la vida de cada persona que habita el país; por lo que le manifestamos nuestro respaldo en el acatamiento integral de dicha medida y le animamos a promover un análisis profundo de la situación ambiental, social y de derechos humanos en las comunidades mencionadas, con participación de las mismas, su gobierno, así como de expertos nacionales e internacionales y un grupo garante que cuente con el respeto y confianza de su sociedad.

Al despedirnos, le reiteramos nuestro compromiso de continuar acompañando los esfuerzos de los líderes, políticos y organizaciones de su país que promueven el sueño universalmente compartido de construir una sociedad de bienestar y justicia para todas las personas.

Atentamente,

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A CANADIAN PROBLEM

Mining companies and their investors get away with their environmental and health harms and other human rights violations in countries like Guatemala, firstly, because the Canadian media provides rare coverage, at best, of mining related harms and violations. (CTV-W5's "Lost Paradise" is a notable exception.)

Secondly, they get away with committing harms and violations because they act with effective immunity from criminal or civil prosecution or accountability. At the same time that Canadian law enables and promotes the expansion of the Canadian mining industry across the globe, Canadian law bars victims of environmental and healthy harms and human rights violations caused by Canadian mining companies (like, for example, the Mam people of San Miguel Ixtahuacán) from any legal recourse in our courts.

At the same time that Canadian law enables and promotes investment in the global mining industry, Canadian law bars any environmental, health or human rights standards from attaching to investments. The only responsibility investment fund managers have is the "fiduciary duty to maximize gains".

Until Canadians across the country demand from our "lawmakers" and politicians a suspension of Goldcorp's mine and serious legal reform and full accountability for and punishment of environmental and health harms and human rights violations, these abuses and violations will continue; for dozens of Mayan Mam villages in western Guatemala, there will be no end in sight to the harms and violations caused by mining.

WRITE NOW

Besides signing on to the 'sign-on' letter, above, please write your own letter of complaint and denunciation to your own politician and to the offices below, demanding: -1- the suspension of Goldcorp's mining licenses; -2- a public international inquiry into the harms and violations; -3- the passing of comprehensive criminal and civil law reform in Canada, so as to be able to hold Canadian companies and investors accountable for environmental and health harms and human rights violations; -4- compensation and reparations for Mayan Mam communities that have suffered the harms and violations.

Thank-you.

Grahame Russell, Annie Bird & Karen Spring

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NAMES & ADDRESSES

Álvaro Colom Caballeros, Presidente de Guatemala

info@scep.gob.gt

José Roberto Alejos, Presidente Congreso de la República

jalejos@congreso.gob.gt

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Governor General of Canada Michaëlle Jean

Rideau Hall, 1 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1A-0A1

info@gg.ca, (613) 993-8200, 800 465-6890

Duncan Mousseau, Director, Policy, Planning and Correspondence

Office of the Secretary to the Governor General

DMousseau@GG.CA

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

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Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda

509-S Centre Block, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A6

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Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon

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Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) Peter Kent

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Gilles Duceppe, leader, Bloc Québécois

1200 Papineau Av, #350, Montreal, QC, H2K 4R5

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Jack Layton, leader, New Democratic Party

221 Broadview Ave, Suite 100, Toronto, ON, M2G 2G3

laytoj@parl.gc.ca

Elizabeth May, leader, Green Party

Saanich Gulf Islands EDA, PO Box 20076, Sidney, BC, V8L 5C9

emaytowin@greenparty.ca

Michael Ignatieff, leader, Liberal Party
656 The Queensway, Etobicoke, ON, M8Y 1K7
ignatm@parl.gc.ca

Bob Rae, liberal, Foreign Affairs Critic, (613) 992-5234, RaeB@parl.gc.ca

Francine Lalonde, Bloc Quebecois, Foreign Affairs Critic, (613) 995-6327,
LalonF@parl.gc.ca

Paul Dewar, NDP, Foreign Affairs Critic, (613) 996-5322, DewarP@parl.gc.ca

Larry Bagnell, liberal, bagnell.l@parl.gc.ca

Stockwell Day, conservative, days@parl.gc.ca, 613-995-1702

Mr. Peter Julian & Mr. Henri Sader, NDP International Trade Critic, Rm 178, Confederation Bldg., Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6, julian.p@parl.gc.ca

John McKay, liberal, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, (613) 992-1447, MckayJ@parl.gc.ca, 613-947-4609

Kevin Sorenson, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Room 518, Justice Building, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6, (613) 947-4608, SorenK@parl.gc.ca, 613-992-2971

Mr. Dean Allison, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairperson, 4994 King Street, Beamsville, Ontario, L0R 1B0, allison.d@parl.gc.ca, 905-995-2772

Mr. Paul Dewar, NDP, Foreign Affairs Critic, 1306 Wellington St. W, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 3B2, dewarp@parl.gc.ca, 613-946-8682

Alexandre Leveque, DFAIT, Caribbean, Central America & Regional Policy, 125 Sussex Dr, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0G2, 613-992-2971, alexandre.leveque@dfait-maeci.gc.ca

Marketa Evans, Global corporate responsibility commissioner,
Marketa.Evans@international.gc.ca

Barbara Curran, CIDA Director, 200 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, K1A 0G4, 819-994-4092, barbara.curran@acdi-cida.gc.ca; Kate Stefanuk (kate.stefanuk@acdi-cida.gc.ca) will serve as Acting Director (& responsible for Honduras); Johanne Dupont (johanne.dupont@acdi-cida.gc.ca), Country Program Manager for Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Cuba

CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT:

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>

CANADIAN Embassy in Guatemala

Ambassador Leeann McKechnie

leeann.mckechnie@international.gc.ca

Karin Reinecke, Assistant to the Ambassador

karin.reinecke@international.gc.ca

13 Calle 8-44 Zone 10, Edificio Edyma Plaza, Ciudad de Guatemala
(502) 2363-4348, 2365-1201, gtmla@international.gc.ca

CANADIAN Embassy in Costa Rica
(responsible for Honduras, as well)
Ambassador Neil Reeder
Costa Rica:
(506) 2242-4400
(506) 2242-4411 - Political
sjcra@international.gc.ca
Honduras Office of the Canadian Embassy
Centro Financiero Banexpo - Tercer Piso
Boulevard San Juan Bosco, Colonia Payaquí
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
(504) 232-4551; tglpa@international.gc.ca

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TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

for indigenous and campesino communities resisting the harms and violations of mining projects and carrying out their own environmental justice, community development and human rights projects in Guatemala and Honduras, make check payable 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>

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EDUCATIONAL DELEGATIONS TO CENTRAL AMERICA: Form your own group or join one of our delegations to Guatemala or Honduras to learn first hand about community development, human rights and environmental struggles (info@rightsaction.org)

EDUCATION IN YOUR HOME COMMUNITY: Contact us to plan educational presentations in your own community, school, place of worship, home (info@rightsaction.org)

JOIN our listserv. Click: <http://www.rightsaction.org/lists/?p=subscribe&id=3>

JOIN our newsletter mail list. Send name and address to: info@rightsaction.org

CREATE YOUR OWN email and mail lists and re-distribute our information

RECOMMENDED DAILY NEWS: www.democracynow.org / www.upsidedownworld.org / www.dominionpaper.ca

RECOMMENDED BOOKS: Eduardo Galeano's "Open Veins of Latin America"; Howard Zinn's "A People's History of the United States"; Naomi Klein's "The Shock Doctrine"; Paolo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed"; Dr Seuss's "Horton Hears A Who"