

Rights Action – May 18, 2011

NOT BUSINESS AS USUAL: Confronting Goldcorp's Impunity, in Vancouver!

BELOW

- article by Dawn Paley about protests today at Goldcorp's annual general meeting in Vancouver BC
- link to 10-minute Youtube film about Goldcorp's mine in Honduras & environmental and health harms
- delegation to Guatemala (JULY 3-10, 2011): "ELECTIONS; NO DEMOCRACY"

Please re-distribute and re-post this information all around

To get on/off Rights Action's listserv: www.rightsaction.org

Rights Action's Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rights-Action/176850879028427?ref=ts>

What to do: see below

QUESTIONS, MORE INFORMATION: Grahame Russell (info@rightsaction.org)

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VANCOUVER DEMO KICKS BACK AGAINST GOLDCORP MINING IS RISKY BUSINESS, CORPORATE GREED WILL NOT GO UNCHALLENGED

by Dawn Paley (dawnpaley@gmail.com), May 18, 2011

(See original, with photos: <http://vancouver.mediacoop.ca/story/vancouver-demo-kicks-back-against-goldcorp/7299>)

An ebullient band of demonstrators broke the corporate routine of Vancouver's business district this morning, bursting into the streets with signs, whistles, props, baby carriages, bicycles, a thirty-foot banner and a marching band in tow.

The occasion was Goldcorp's annual general meeting (AGM), held at the Pan Pacific Hotel. Curious onlookers shot video, cops on bikes attended to disgruntled commuters, and the business set looked downright uncomfortable.

"We are here for a very important reason: everywhere lands are being stolen," said Kat Norris, a Coast Salish and Nez Perce woman. "This has been going on for hundreds of years, and I say shame!"

At least 200 people joined this morning's demonstration. "It makes me feel that we're not alone," said Oliver Hernan, who is part of the National Resistance Front of Honduras and has been actively organizing against Goldcorp's presence in his home country.

"There's people [in Honduras] who have lost their land and their animals, and there's nobody who listens to them. There's no justice," said Hernan. "But the yells we hear here today are also coming from the people down there," he said.

Protesters staged a marriage between Premier Christy Clark and "Mr. MetalCorp," who declared that he had enjoyed a longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship with the Canadian state. After about an hour under the cool morning sun, the group made a break towards the hotel.

Chants along with the drums and brass of the marching band echoed up through the lobby and could be heard right into the meeting room.

"It was so amazing. It was just as David Deisley got into his report on Corporate Social Responsibility — this huge cheer went up, and it was sustained all the way through his speech," said Jennifer Moore, who is Latin America Program Coordinator with MiningWatch Canada and was inside the AGM.

For Carlos Amador, who lives in the Siria Valley in Honduras, it was a difficult morning. But his spirits were raised by the demonstration. "To be in a shareholders meeting, it's really a big let down," he said. "The thinking of these people, the shareholders, [is that] they don't really care about the fact that their operations are causing great damage in our community," he said. "We told the shareholders that their investment is causing harm to us, and that we're all humans." At least, he said, some of the executives seemed frightened by the protests outside.

The Goldcorp AGM has been picketed or protested every year since the company acquired Glamis Gold in 2006. Glamis operated the Marlin Mine in Guatemala and the San Martin mine in Honduras, which is now on care and maintenance.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) recommended that the Marlin Mine be closed last year because of its impacts on Mayan people, on whose territory the mine was built. The company has yet to comply with the IACHR decision.

This year's protest was clearly the largest yet, with much of the momentum coming from student organizing and disgust in the wake of Goldcorp's \$10 million donation to Simon Fraser University's School of Contemporary Arts.

From the hotel, marchers continued on to the offices of the Canada Pension Plan, aiming to draw attention to its investment in Goldcorp and other mining companies.

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YOUTUBE FILM

"ALL THAT GLITTERS ISN'T GOLD - A STORY OF EXPLOITATION AND RESISTANCE"

- 10 min. trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tmqXc5rX8s>
- Complete, hour-long documentary: <http://www.rightsaction.org/video/gold>

All That Glitters Isn't Gold tells the stories of community members residing near Goldcorp's San Martin open-pit gold mine in Honduras' Siria Valley. The first mine to be developed under Honduras' controversial new mining law that was passed in the wake of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the San Martin mine opened in 2000 and is the largest open-pit heap-leach mine in Honduras. Community members discuss the grave complications they have experienced since the mine began operating -- from rampant health problems to a lack of water -- contesting the company's claims that the mine has been a model of healthy development for the community and has caused no adverse effects.

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DELEGATION to Guatemala (JULY 3-10, 2011) "ELECTIONS; NO DEMOCRACY"

Join a Rights Action delegation to Guatemala from July 3 to 10, 2011. This pre-elections delegation will speak with human rights and social movement organizations struggling to create conditions for truly democratic processes, and limit the control organized crime and big business hold over the state through illegal networks of influence. INFORMATION: Annie Bird; (202) 680-3002, annie@rightsaction.org

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WHAT TO DO - DONATE FUNDS

Since 1995, Rights Action has been funding the community development, environmental justice and human rights defense work of community organizations in Guatemala and Honduras resisting harms and violations caused by Goldcorp's mines in both countries, working for community controlled development, environmental justice and human rights.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS: Make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

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

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