

Rights Action
November 22, 2011

Goldcorp Cover-up of Health Harms in Honduras, #2

**COVER-UP #2 – La Tribuna news article:
“COVER-UP OF EVIDENCE OF ACID WATERS IN THE SIRIA VALLEY”**

BELOW:

- Article: “COVER-UP OF EVIDENCE OF ACID WATERS IN THE SIRIA VALLEY”
- Report: “GOLDCORP (ENTRE MARES) & THE GOVERNMENT OF HONDURAS HIDE INFORMATION ABOUT POISONING OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS”

BACKGROUND

- 10 minute film, by Steven Schnoor, about health and environmental harms caused by Goldcorp in Honduras' Siria Valley, “All that glitters isn't gold - a story of exploitation and resistance”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tmqXc5rX8s>
- 30 minute interview - "Face to Face with Grahame Russell" - concerning health and environmental harms and other human rights violations caused by Canadian mining companies in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, and about the impunity with which companies are operating: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71mB0JuJSpE>

NEEDED

Funds for health relief for Siria Valley villagers, and funds for education and activism work to demand that Goldcorp provide reparations to the health harmed communities of the Siria Valley. (To support: see below)

MORE INFORMATION

Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org

Dr. Juan Almendarez, almendarez.bonilla@gmail.com

www.cafod.org.uk, article: “Honduras: Evidence of severe water contamination at Goldcorp mine”

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COVER-UP #2

COVER-UP OF EVIDENCE OF ACID WATERS IN THE SIRIA VALLEY

La Tribuna (Honduran newspaper), November 14, 2011

(Translated for Rights Action by Rosalind Gill)

TEGUCIGALPA.- British experts in acid mine drainage carried out a study for the Catholic Overseas Development Agency (CAFOD) headquartered in London, and uncovered official documents demonstrating water contamination caused by the Minerales Entremares company of Honduras, a subsidiary of the Canadian mining company, Goldcorp. The company must now agree to long-term monitoring of the site to prevent acid mine drainage and erosion problems in the future.

According to British experts in the field, who carried out the study alongside Honduran counterparts from Caritas Tegucigalpa, results of the water sample taken by DEFOMIN (state body regulating mining) should have led to immediate action on the part of the government and the company. To the contrary, evidence of high concentrations of acidity and heavy metals was covered-up by DEFOMIN.

The cover-up was revealed in a document posted on the CAFOD web page (www.cafod.org.uk) in an article entitled, "Honduras: Evidence of severe water contamination at Goldcorp mine".

In June 2009, CAFOD and Caritas Tegucigalpa carried out a study for the Honduran Environmental Prosecutor. The investigation uncovered official documents demonstrating contamination of water by the Minerales Entremares [Goldcorp] company. CAFOD and Caritas Tegucigalpa submitted this evidence of contamination caused by Goldcorp to the Honduran Environmental Prosecutor. They have now been waiting for seven months for authorities to decide who should take civil or criminal responsibility in this case, be it by action or omission.

The report revealed that at two sites, there is acid water at Ph levels between 2.5. and 3, which is very harmful to the biology of streams. As well, there are high levels of cadmium, copper and iron. These findings are consistent with a denouncement made by the Siria Valley Environmental Committee to the Environmental Prosecutor on September 24, 2008, concerning de-coloration of water in water sources originating within the mine perimeter.

The CAFOD report indicates that members of the community had also complained that the water was a reddish colour and smelled strongly of sulphur, which clearly shows that contaminated water from the mine area had entered the streams used by people living in the valley for domestic and agricultural purposes.

HIGH CONCENTRATIONS

The CAFOD report also states that in their June 2009 inspection of the Siria Valley mine site, Adan Jarvis and Jaime Amezaga of the Newcastle University found clear evidence that in the past, high levels of iron had flowed from the Tajo "Palo Alto" pit.

The experts observed that despite the fact that mine personnel had taken temporary measures to prevent future occurrences of contamination and were taking other measures, Goldcorp was still refusing to admit that the site had caused water contamination.

Paul Younger, an international expert on water administration, was asked by CAFOD to carry out a reconnaissance investigation of the Goldcorp mine closure plan. He had been able to document evidence on the mine drainage during a previous visit to the Siria Valley: "Despite all the evidence on acid drainage from the mine, in a live television broadcast, the company refused to take responsibility for the contamination. Besides the fact that this position is exasperating, it does no favours for the company itself."

"If [the company] had been honest about problems it has encountered in the San Martin mine, independent observers could have some degree of confidence that steps that have been taken to find solutions to this problem will be effective, but when they deny what they have done, it is impossible to resolve the situation and they simple abandon the area that has been mined", said Younger, who has 25 years experience in the field of acid mine drainage.

The report concluded that the company should agree to long-term monitoring of the site to prevent future acid mine drainage and erosion problems. Considerable investment will be required to eliminate the root of the problem. At the present time, only short-term remedies are being implemented.

TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

To provide funds to health harmed people in the Siria Valle, and to support demands and struggle for complete reparations and compensation, 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: www.rightsaction.org

In Canada: <https://www.canadahelps.org/DonationDetails.aspx?cookieCheck=true>

In USA: <https://npo.networkforgood.org/Donate/Donate.aspx?npoSubscriptionId=488>

FOR DONATION OF STOCK: Stock donations can be done anonymously. Have your stockbroker contact info@rightsaction.org)

WHAT TO DO – A "CANADIAN" PROBLEM

Please keep on sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to your local media, to Canadian politicians and government officials, and to Goldcorp that – like most North American resource extraction companies around the world – is operating with the full support of North American governments.

Please send copies to pension funds across North America – like the Canada Pension Plan – that are invested in Goldcorp and in most North American resource extraction companies around the world, with no concern for environmental, health or human rights concerns.

MORE INFORMATION

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