

Rights Action  
May 9, 2012  
\*\*\*\*\*

## **La Puya Standoff -versus- Radius Gold Over 300 Guatemalan police attack villagers**

Canadian mining company Radius Gold Inc., accompanied by over 300 Guatemala anti-riot troops, tried to illegally enter rural Guatemalan communities, threatening the local villagers. Tensions are high.

At 1:00am in the morning, May 8, 2012, between 300 & 400 heavily armed anti-riot police (traveling in some 30 police vehicles) accompanied dozens of vehicles carrying mining equipment on behalf of Radius Gold (silver and gold mining company), and tried to illegally enter the communities of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc. They were peacefully blocked by villagers.

Radius Gold (via its Guatemalan subsidiary EXMINGUA) claims the right to mine in this area. Villagers of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc were never consulted, and they have not given their legal consent for a business project of this nature to proceed.

### **URGENT ACTION**

Write to Radius Gold, and to your own elected politicians and other government officials in Canada, demanding that Radius Gold immediately suspend all of its mining related activities in San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc. The rights of the local communities to be consulted and to decide must be respected. (Contact information below)

Over the past 8 years, there have been very serious cases of violence and repression at mines operated by Goldcorp Inc. and HudBay Minerals, two other Canadian companies. More violence and repression are likely, if Radius Gold insists on proceeding, illegally, backed by the guns of the Guatemalan regime.

### **TENSION BUILDING**

In April, Rights Action re-published articles (see below) about these villagers peacefully resisting the forced entry of the gold and silver mining company Radius Gold (of Canada) into their territories, threatening their water sources, forests and economic well-being.

They are peacefully insisting on their legal right to a public, transparent consultation. On April 11, the villagers detained two armed security guards, in hire of the mining company, who apparently sneaked onto private property and fired shots into the air, threatening the villagers. The detained men were treated well.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **SAN JOSÉ DEL GOLFO VILLAGERS DETAIN MINING PERSONNEL**

Prensa Libre, 10/04/12 (Translated by Rights Action)

[http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Pobladores-San-Jose-Golfo-personal\\_0\\_679732163.html?print=1](http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Pobladores-San-Jose-Golfo-personal_0_679732163.html?print=1)



[Villagers demand a ceasing of mining activities, before releasing the detained. (Foto Prensa Libre: Carlos Sebastián)]

SAN JOSÉ DEL GOLFO – A villager, who asked not to be identified for fear of reprisals, explained that the security guards were detained because they entered private property and fired shots into the air, threatening the community. The villager explained that the physical integrity of the security guards has been respected and the Justices of the Peace of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc were participating in the discussion concerning the detained agents. Villagers demand the ceasing of mining activities, in the area, and the carrying out of a binding consultation to determine whether the project should proceed or not. Villagers argue that chemicals used in the mining process are harmful to health. For 40 days, villagers have blocked access, by mining personnel, to the installations.

\*\*\*\*\*

**GUATEMALA: 39 DAYS & COUNTING:  
Villagers block access to gold & silver mine & demand right to consultation**



(Prensa Libre newspaper, March 9, 2012)

**LOCAL POPULATION CONTINUES BLOCKING ENTRANCE TO GOLD AND SILVER MINE**

[http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Guatemala-Mineria-San\\_Jose\\_del\\_Golfo-Protesta\\_0\\_679132336.html](http://www.prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Guatemala-Mineria-San_Jose_del_Golfo-Protesta_0_679132336.html)

Prensa Libre, April 10, 2012 (Translated by Rights Action)

Starting on March 2, 2012, a group of neighbors have blocked access to the entrance of the Progreso 4 mine; mining activities remain suspended. The protesters say they will remain their indefinitely and have begun to build shelters against the rains. The local population is waiting for a consultation to be carried out, before opening the road to the mine that is in its exploration phase. They are expecting the visit, next Thursday, of officials from the Ministry of Mines, Energy and the Environment who are coming to supervise work at the mine site. Community members hope the officials will receive them.

\*\*\*\*\*

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS CALL FOR CLOSURE OF GOLD AND SILVER MINE**

[http://prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Vecinos-piden-cerrar-mina-plata\\_0\\_660533970.html?print=1](http://prensalibre.com/noticias/comunitario/Vecinos-piden-cerrar-mina-plata_0_660533970.html?print=1)

March 9, 2012 (Translated for Rights Action by Rosalind Gill)

For the past week, a group of people from San Pedro Ayampuc and San José del Golfo have been staging a protest at the entrance to the El Tambor mine, which is located within the two municipalities. They are demanding stoppage of gold and silver exploitation at the site. According to Lilian Montenegro, of El Carrizal, where the mine is located, attempts to suspend the precious metals exploration and exploitation licenses through the legal system have not proven to be viable.

"We decided to stage a protest here because we want them to remove all the trucks and hold a popular consultation to decide what should be done," he explained.

People from the community bring money and cooking materials to provide three meals a day to the group protesting at the entrance to the mine. María Véliz, a local resident, says that there are three groups providing support, and that every night there are women and children who help out.

#### STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE MINE

Esperanza Díaz, a local resident said: "I am concerned about the health harms to our children that can be caused by the mine. We live downhill from the mine and we are afraid that our homes will be buried as a result of an accident at the site." "We are going to keep up our protest as long as we can. This is a peaceful, non-violent protest," she said.

Johana Morales, a mother, said: "In the future, the mine could contaminate our water supply, which could effect the health of our children, because of the chemicals they use to extract the metals. This is why we are demanding that the project cease operations in our communities."

#### SETTING A DEADLINE

Last Friday, a group of community members blocked the road to the mine to stop trucks from entering the mine. They are continuing their blockade. The protesters, members of the Frente Norte del Área Metropolitana, state that they have sent petitions to the Ministry of Mines and the office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights but have received no response to their demands.

One of the protest leaders, who wishes to remain anonymous because he has been the target of reprisals, says that they are giving representatives of the mine, owned by Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala, S.A. (Exmingua) [owned by Radius Gold Inc.], until tomorrow to remove all their machinery. Prensa Libre tried to reach Exmingua [Radius Gold] authorities; but they left a telephone message saying that the representative is out of the country.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **TO MAKE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS**

for courageous community-based organizations, in Honduras and Guatemala (indigenous, campesino and NGO organizations), resisting harms and violations caused by mining and other large-scale business activities, working for community controlled development, defense of the environment, justice and human rights, 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 can be made (anonymously): [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)

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

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

DONATIONS OF STOCK can be made (anonymously): [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **WRITE & KEEP ON WRITING**

Please keep on keeping on sending copies of this information, and your own letters, to Canadian and American politicians and government officials, and to your local media. North American resource extraction companies operate around the world, often without consulting with or getting permission from local communities, cause health and environmental harms and other human rights violations, and always with the full support of North American governments. Send copies to pension funds across North America that are invested in most North American resource extraction companies around the world, with no concern for environmental, health or human rights concerns.

### **RADIUS GOLD**

Suite 650, 200 Burrard St

Vancouver, BC, Canada V6C-3L6

(604) 801-5432

1-888-627-9378

[info@radiusgold.com](mailto:info@radiusgold.com)

[www.radiusgold.com](http://www.radiusgold.com)

<http://www.radiusgold.com/s/Home.asp>

<http://www.radiusgold.com/s/JV-Guatemala.asp?ReportID=414154&>

### **CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT:**

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

- GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA David Johnston, [info@gg.ca](mailto:info@gg.ca) (Duncan Mousseau, Assistant, [DMousseau@GG.CA](mailto:DMousseau@GG.CA))
- PRIME MINISTER Stephen Harper, [harpes@parl.gc.ca](mailto:harpes@parl.gc.ca)
- Minister of International Cooperation Bev Oda, [Oda.B@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Oda.B@parl.gc.ca)
- Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird, [john.baird@parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.baird@parl.gc.ca)
- Minister of State of Foreign Affairs (Americas) Peter Kent, [kent.p@parl.gc.ca](mailto:kent.p@parl.gc.ca)
- Green Party leader Elizabeth May, [emaytowin@greenparty.ca](mailto:emaytowin@greenparty.ca)
- Liberal Party leader Bob Rae, [RaeB@parl.gc.ca](mailto:RaeB@parl.gc.ca)
- NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Paul Dewar, [Dewar.P@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Dewar.P@parl.gc.ca)
- NDP International Trade Critic Peter Julian, [Julian.P@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Julian.P@parl.gc.ca)
- Liberal MP John McKay, [MckayJ@parl.gc.ca](mailto:MckayJ@parl.gc.ca) (Claire Lehan, Assistant, [McKayJ8@parl.gc.ca](mailto:McKayJ8@parl.gc.ca))
- Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Kevin Sorenson, [SorenK@parl.gc.ca](mailto:SorenK@parl.gc.ca)
- Foreign Affairs Committee Chairperson Dean Allison, [allison.d@parl.gc.ca](mailto:allison.d@parl.gc.ca)
- Extractive Sector Corporate Social Responsibility Counsellor Marketa Evans, [marketa.evans@international.gc.ca](mailto:marketa.evans@international.gc.ca)
- CANADIAN Embassy in Guatemala
  - Ambassador Hugues Rousseau, [gtm1a@international.gc.ca](mailto:gtm1a@international.gc.ca)
  - Karin Reinecke, [karin.reinecke@international.gc.ca](mailto:karin.reinecke@international.gc.ca)

- Jennifer Chacon, [jennifer.chacon@international.gc.ca](mailto:jennifer.chacon@international.gc.ca)
- [evelyne.coulombe@international.gc.ca](mailto:evelyne.coulombe@international.gc.ca)
- [Nathalie.samson@international.gc.ca](mailto:Nathalie.samson@international.gc.ca)
- Colleen Pigeon, [colleen.pigeon@international.gc.ca](mailto:colleen.pigeon@international.gc.ca)
- Monica Izaguirre, [monica.izaguirre@international.gc.ca](mailto:monica.izaguirre@international.gc.ca)
- AMBASSADOR to the OAS, H.E. Allan Culham, [wshdc-prmoas@international.gc.ca](mailto:wshdc-prmoas@international.gc.ca)

\*\*\*\*\*

**MORE INFORMATION**

Grahame Russell, [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

Annie Bird, [annie@rightsaction.org](mailto:annie@rightsaction.org)

- Please re-post and re-publish this information
- Get on-off Rights Action's listserv: [www.rightsaction.org](http://www.rightsaction.org)
- Follow Rights Action on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org](http://www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org)

\*\*\*\*\*