

Rights Action  
May 18, 2012  
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**RADIUS GOLD Inc. IN GUATEMALA**  
**Video report: Mining repression waiting to happen**

**COINCIDENCE?:** General Manager of Radius Gold's subsidiary in Guatemala (EXMINGUA), Selwyn Morales, was director of the Ministry of Mines and Energy in 2010 when EXMINGUA received its mining concession in 2010.

**BELOW**

- LINK: Video report (in Spanish) about the mining related struggle in San Jose del Golfo, just outside of Guatemala City
- PUBLIC STATEMENT: by FRENAM (Frente Norte del Área Metropolitana Pueblos en Resistencia) about May 8, 2012, militarized convoy of mining company trucks

**MORE INFORMATION**

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**“OTRA VEZ LA MINA” (Once Again, Mining)**

7 minutes (in spanish)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gq5wA0XGrEg>

(Made by Jose Cubur, Comunicador social with CUC, [www.cuc.org.gt](http://www.cuc.org.gt), C: 5837-0114)

“Once Again, Mining” is a 7 minute film, shot during and after the May 8, 2012, attempt, by the gold and silver mining company EXMINGUA (owned by Radius Gold Inc. of Canada) to enter with a convoy of some 25-30 mining company trucks full of equipment, accompanied by some 25-30 trucks of heavily armed National Police, at 1:00am, in the morning, so as to avoid the peacefully protesting villagers of the two affected municipalities – San Jose del Golfo and San Pedro Ayumpac -, who were never consulted about this mining business and who never gave legal permission for a mine to operate in their lands.

In the film:

- one sees armed civilians patrolling on community lands. Apparently, they are former military, now hired by EXMINGUA (Radius Gold), and have no insignias identifying who they are;
- one sees the convoy of company and police trucks, winding through a village, at 1:00am in the morning;
- one hears from villagers that they were not presented with any legal order, by the National Police, explaining why they were accompanying the mining company convoy, and that they had any permission to pass through community lands at 1:00 in the morning;
- one sees the Vice-mayor of San Jose del Golfo talking with villagers, explaining that in the Mayor's office they have found no documentation of any agreement between the previous mayor and the EXMINGUA (Radius Gold) company;

### **COINCIDENCE?**

And, one learns that the General Manager of Radius Gold's subsidiary in Guatemala (EXMINGUA) is Selwyn Morales, who was director of the Ministry of Mines and Energy in 2010 when EXMINGUA received its mining concession in 2010.

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### **COMMUNIQUE**

TO: THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITIES  
 FROM: FRENAM (Frente Norte del Área Metropolitana Pueblos en Residencia), a community organization to defend lands and natural resources of San Pedro Ayampuc and San José del Golfo

CONTACT: FRENAM: [frenam@gmail.com](mailto:frenam@gmail.com)

We denounce the mistreatment of our people, who are using their right to peaceful demonstration to protest outside the "Progreso Mine" [property of the EXMINGUA mining company, a subsidiary of the Canadian Radius Gold Inc. company), located in San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc.

This mine does not respect the local community's right to be consulted. With the support of the Ministries of the Environment and of Energy and Mines, they intend to extract Gold and Silver from the mine. The mining operation will have a serious impact on the life, environment and water sources of the municipalities of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc.

DENOUNCEMENT:

In the morning of May 8, 2012, the community of San José del Golfo was stormed by National Civil Police and Riot Police agents who claimed to be protecting security personnel and property of the EXMINGUA [Radius Gold] mining company. No search warrant or specific order had been emitted for the raid.

They blocked the streets and impeded villagers from moving around. Alarmed by this display of force and concerned about what was happening, villagers came out into the streets.

Using a carefully planned provocation strategy, the police also closed off access to the Progreso mine, to stop villagers from supporting community members who were staging a peaceful protest on the public road across from the entrance to the mine.

With the help of supporters of the mine, the police identified the houses of community leaders and stopped them from leaving their homes. This frightened their families and caused anxiety for those who wanted to help them.

However, villagers insisted on their constitutional rights and tried to negotiate peacefully with police agents. They peacefully broke through police lines and in solidarity, went to help those who were protesting outside the mine.

This act of provocation and abuse of authority on the part of the Guatemalan Government's repressive forces is proof that under the protection of President Otto Pérez Molina and the Minister of Government (Mauricio López Bonilla), mining companies receive special treatment and help from police forces that, instead of protecting the life and legacy of Guatemalans, are protecting the interests and privileges of big business, ignoring the fact that they violate the constitutional and human rights of our people.

THEREFORE:

- We ask the State of Guatemala to cease repressing the people of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc. The State and the police have a mandate to defend the life and rights of Guatemalan citizens. They are not supposed to raid communities involved in peaceful protest, especially not to defend the interests and privileges of transnational companies and exploitative businessmen.
- We demand that those who ordered and carried out this operation be sanctioned according to the law.
- We demand that the Government suspend the mining exploitation license in San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc, because this mine is "harmful to the life, environment and peaceful culture of our peoples."

- We demand the right to be consulted on the implementation of projects on our lands, especially in the case of mining projects such as metal mining that have serious impacts on the environment, water supply and the health and life of our peoples.
- We request support from the international community. We ask for observation and vigilance of this repressive act that violates our human and constitutional rights.
- We denounce the threats and illegal practices of the EXMINGUA S.A. [Radius Gold Inc.], mining company. They have tried to aggravate the conflict by manipulating the National Civil Police, its private agents and collaborators into confronting and attacking community members who were defending their rights in a peaceful, legal way.
- We demand respect and protection of the physical integrity of community leaders and villagers who are protesting to defend our collective rights. They should be respected and protected under human rights conventions signed by the State of Guatemala, as Defenders of Human Rights.

We ask the Civil Society, the Human Rights Ombudsman and the UN High Commission, Amnesty International and the whole international community to maintain observation and vigilance and to demand that President Otto Pérez Molina and his Ministry of Government strictly respect the human and constitutional rights of the peoples of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc.

San José del Golfo  
Guatemala, May 8, 2012

(Translated for Rights Action by Rosalind M. Gill)

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

for community-based organizations in Honduras and Guatemala (indigenous, campesino and NGO organizations) 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

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**GUATEMALA EDUCATIONAL SOLIDARITY DELEGATION, JULY 7-15, 2012**

Community well-being, human rights & the environment \*versus\* mining companies that moil for gold (silver & nickel)

Go to: <http://rightsaction.org/content/community-well-being-human-rights-environment-versus-mining-companies-moil-gold-silver>

Write to: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

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