

Pro-Goldcorp Mob Attacks More People In Guatemala

By Grahame Russell, March 24, 2015

On March 17, 2015, at 5pm, a group of 30-40 men arrived together in trucks and attacked Rosalina Perez, her husband Alfredo Jacinto Perez, his brother Felipe, and their children. Some were Goldcorp employees, some were off-duty police, and others were local community members and unknown men.

The pro-Goldcorp mob beat them on the road in front of their home in the village of Setiba, Sipakapa, San Marcos, a few kilometers from the cyanide-leaching, mountain-top removal and underground tunneling gold mine. They threatened to kill Alfredo and Rosalina's five children, aged 7-15.



(On January 30, 2015, Alfredo (left) presents a Goldcorp map of close to 150 kilometers of tunnels that snake, illegally (with no community consent) under the Mayan territories of Sipakapa and San Miguel Ixtahuacan. Photo: Rights Action)

When the victims retreated into their home, the mob fired guns in the air and threw rocks at the house. It was not until 11pm that the National Police arrived, to put an end to the aggression and escort the adults and children away from their home. Four of them went to the Sipakapa medical clinic, and then were sent to a hospital in San Marcos.

Business As Usual

Goldcorp employees and other men attacked them for the same reason that other Mayan campesinos have been attacked, beaten and shot, near Goldcorp's cash-cow "Marlin" mine. Beginning in 2005, and again since 2012, Alfredo and his family have been involved in protesting the illegal expansion of Goldcorp tunnels and open pits into the Sipakapa region. They continue to denounce 10 years of environmental and health harms, repression and other human rights violations caused by this mine in Sipakapa and neighboring San Miguel Ixtahuacan.

Change the dates, and we have reported on this type of repression many times in the vicinity of the "Marlin" mine. Change the dates and locations, and we have reported on similar (and worse) repression at four different Canadian/ U.S. mine sites around Guatemala. Change the dates and places, and many solidarity groups and NGOs have reported on similar and worse repression at hundreds if not thousands of mining operations around the world.

Not Breaking News

The only aspect of this story that would be 'breaking news' is if it were reported in the North American media. Contrasted with regular coverage in the business and financial sections about mining company stock prices, there is almost no coverage of mining company repression, harms and violations around the world.

Similarly, mining repression is never discussed at annual meetings of the CPP (Canada Pension Plan), U.S. Social Security and other pension funds and private investment funds across North America. Goldcorp repression, harms and violations is never discussed at the universities of Ottawa, Simon Fraser and British Columbia, when administrators do discuss how best to use their multi-million dollar "philanthropy" donations from Goldcorp.

- **Gold Fever:** This award-winning film documents the 10 year struggle of Mayan communities in Guatemala to denounce repression, illegal evictions, and health, community and environmental harms caused by Goldcorp's mine, and to struggle for a community-controlled, environmentally respectful model of development. (Trailer: www.goldfevermovie.com)

There is nothing new about this most recent attack. Repression and other harms and violations are a widely accepted part of doing business.

Community and Emergency Response Funding

Rights Action has sent emergency funds to Alfredo and Rosalina to help pay for some of the medical support they need; to enable them to leave Sipakapa for

a while (given the on-going risks of violence from Goldcorp linked people); and to work with organizations and lawyers to denounce these crimes.

Rights Action regularly sends funds to victims of mining-related repression and evictions, and environmental and health harms caused by Hudbay Minerals, Tahoe Resources, Radius Gold and KCA (Kappes, Cassidy & Associates) in Guatemala, and Goldcorp in both Honduras and Guatemala.

It is always important to get fund into the hands of families and communities suffering the harms and violations, and yet who continue to work and struggle to put an end to this violent, exploitative and environmentally harmful model of "development".

Accountability and Change in the Global North

Don't stop denouncing these on-going cases of resource extraction repression, harms and violations. Send your own letter, with this information, to your elected politicians, media, pension and private funds (if they are invested in Goldcorp).

Link this story of resource-extraction repression with other work and struggles you are involved with in your home communities to keep on working for 'another world is necessary and possible'.

Until the people, politicians, media and legal systems of the wealthy, powerful home countries of the global corporations hold them legally and politically accountable for the repression, human rights violations, environmental and health harms they are causing in 'far-off' places like Guatemala, business as usual will continue.

Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & United States)

To support the family of Alfredo and Rosalina and community organizations working for locally-controlled development, the environment, human rights, real democracy and the rule of law in Honduras and Guatemala, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:

- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8
- USA: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091
- Credit-Card Donations: <http://www.rightsaction.org/tax-deductible-donations>
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Get Informed / Get Involved

- Speakers: Invite us to give presentations about these issues
- Educational Delegation: Form your own group or join one of our educational-solidarity delegation seminars to Guatemala and Honduras to learn more about these issues and struggles
- Daily News: www.democracynow.org / www.upsidedownworld.org / www.dominionpaper.ca / www.rabble.ca /
- Recommended Reading: "This Changes Everything: Capitalism versus The Climate", by Naomi Klein

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