

## **Aura Minerals Inc. (Canadian Mining Company) Using Threats And Illegal Detentions To Crush Protests And Expand Gold Mine Into 200-year Old Cemetery In Honduras**

*"They [Aura Minerals] want to exploit the land of the cemetery but the community is not in agreement. We have our public deed that gives us the power to prevent it. We consulted the people house-by-house and the majority do not agree that the remains in the cemetery are removed, but [Aura Minerals] has used force. ... They put soldiers in the cemetery, there are only guards now but yes, ... here were a lot of military cars patrolling the area. They were going to put up a big gate so that people could not enter [the cemetery]."*

(Orlando Rodriguez, Vice President of the patronato (community leadership):

<http://desdeaquibajoabajo.blogspot.com/2014/11/community-evicted-for-protecting-their.html>)

Rights Action adds our voice to the Honduras Solidarity Network (HSN), for people to call, write, email Aura Minerals, asking them why they are using threats and pressing charges against community leaders, instead of respecting the community's decision to protect their cemetery?

- **Aura Minerals Inc:** 155 University Avenue, Suite 1240, Toronto, ON, M5H 3B7, T: (416) 649-1033, F: (416) 649-1044, [info@auraminerals.com](mailto:info@auraminerals.com), <http://www.auraminerals.com/>

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### **Update, November 23, 2015**

From Karen Spring (HSN), [spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com)

I am standing outside the police station in Santa Rosa de Copan (western honduras) where three leaders of the community of Azacualpa are being illegally detained. The leaders are part of a peaceful community initiative to block the expansion of Toronto-based Aura Minerals' (Honduran subsidiary: MINOSA) San Andrés gold mine into the community cemetery that the community has insisted that they will defend if the company tries to enter.

The 3 community leaders - Orlando Rodriguez, Gerano Rodriguez and Miguel Lopez - along with 7 other members (mostly members of the Azacualpa

Environmental Committee) were followed after leaving a meeting with local and international human rights defenders in Santa Rosa de Copan and detained at a police check point suspected to have been placed specifically to harass and detain them.

The 3 leaders remained detained under what is thought/rumoured to be charges of usurpation, extortion, invasion of private property, and one other charge that is unknown (because they won't let me go in and ask). Miguel Lopez and 18 other leaders from the community have been criminalized previously and are required to sign before a judge as a result of a 6- day road blockade and violent eviction by Honduran police in April 2014.

As of 2 pm this afternoon (Nov.23), when the Committee's lawyer spoke with the public prosecutor, there were no charges pressed against those detained. This is a clear act of criminalization exercised by the Honduran police and judicial authorities acting on behalf of Aura Minerals.

Please call Aura Minerals and ask why they are pressing charges against community leaders instead of respecting the community's decision to protect their cemetery?

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### **Background Articles:**

- Article by Karen Spring: "Canada-based Aura Minerals Ready To Expand Open-pit Gold Mine, Including Into Community Cemetery", November 2014, <http://desdeaquibajoabajo.blogspot.com/2014/11/community-evicted-for-protecting-their.html>
- Article by Sandra Cuffe: "Blood For Gold: The Human Cost Of Canada's 'Free Trade' With Honduras", November 2014, <https://ricochet.media/en/177/blood-for-gold-the-human-cost-of-canadas-free-trade-with-honduras>

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### **What To Do?**

#### **The 2009 Military Coup In Honduras That Keeps On Giving Repression, Corruption and Impunity, And Global Business Opportunities**

This is not only a Honduran problem; this is also a U.S. and Canadian problem. Since the June 2009 military coup, that ousted the last democratically elected

government, Honduras has become the Murder, Repression, Impunity and Corruption Capital of the Americas.

Since 2009, the U.S. and Canadian governments have legitimized a succession of illegitimate, repressive regimes. North American companies and investors, and "development" banks (World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank) have increased business activities in African palm production, maquiladora sweatshops, privatized "model cities", tourism and mining.

The Honduran regime remains in power due, in large part, to its political, economic and military relations with the U.S. and Canada and the "development" banks.

Call and/or Write to:

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T: (416) 649-1033, F: (416) 649-1044, [info@auraminerals.com](mailto:info@auraminerals.com),  
<http://www.auraminerals.com/>

Send copies to:

Your Member Of Parliament:

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

Canadian embassy in Honduras: Centro Financiero CITI, 3d Floor, San Juan Bosco, Colonia Payaqui, Box 3552, Tegucigalpa, T: (+504) 2232 4551, E: [tgipa@international.gc.ca](mailto:tgipa@international.gc.ca)

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### **Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & United States)**

To support community-based groups working for community-controlled development, the environment, human rights 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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