

PUBLIC DECLARATION

THE MINING INDUSTRY'S TRACK RECORD ON THE ENVIRONMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: A SOMBRE ASSESMENT AND A RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE ON

This March, the City of Toronto hosts the "*International Convention, Trade Show & Investors Exchange - Mining Investment Show*", sponsored by Barrick Gold Corporation. The convention brings together mining industry representatives from around the world. This event gives us the opportunity to express our deep concerns and to denounce the critical situation regarding increasing exploitation of natural resources, particularly mineral resources.

Today's unfettered economic growth, with its emphasis on profits, power and wealth, runs roughshod over any concerns for the human, social and environmental effects of unregulated exploitation of resources. This trend is devastating for the environment and for communities. Ecosystems are disrupted. Soils contaminated. Air and water pollution increases. The food chain is disturbed. These often irreversible impacts are a direct result of the industrial extractive activities of the gas, petroleum and mining sectors. The recent GIEC report about climate change clearly outlines these impacts. There are also profound human consequences faced by communities, especially indigenous ones, which inhabit the regions where resource exploitation takes place.

The expansion of multinational extractive enterprises, including mining firms, particularly in Third world nations, appear like a new form of colonialism that succeeds by virtue of the use of economic might. These enterprises strip the earth of its natural wealth through full-blown devastation of vast portions of land. Often they set up shop through million-dollar lobby campaigns that provide them with access to the corridors of power of the local political and economic elite, combining seductive promises of profits, the purchasing of "gifts", and the use of fear-mongering, threats and aggressive business tactics, sometimes even repressive actions. These practices constitute a fundamental violation of human rights. A marked increase in violence occurs as mining companies push to expand their operations, including the use of repressive forces within communities as well as generalized militarization in and around the sites.

Testimonies of such realities are turning up from all over the world. For example, nickel extraction in Sorowako (Indonesia) by the Canadian firm Inco completely disrupted the Karonsi'e Dongi indigenous community life: the people were forcibly displaced with the complicity of local authorities and the police. Traditional indigenous lands were taken over by the company, part of which was turned into a golf course and Inco constructed buildings on an indigenous graveyard. By taking advantage of local social conflicts, this firm was also able to take control of the territory of other communities in central Sulawesi. In 1999, the United Nations Truth Commission linked Inco to both human rights violations and murders in Guatemala. In San Marcos, one of the poorest regions of this nation, Glamis Gold Ltd. (now Goldcorp Inc.) has created a hostile climate filled with threats and intimidation. It continues to operate the Marlin mining project in spite of almost unanimous opposition from the local population (popular consultation of Sipacapa).

The case of the Pascua Lama mining project by the Canadian multinational, Barrick Gold Corporation, at the Chilean-Argentine border further illustrates the potential for unforeseen negative consequences. Situated at the heart of the Andean Cordillera, the Pascua Lama project endangers the entire watershed ecosystem of the Huasco valley, directly affecting the

essential water resources within this semi-desert region: the glaciers. Not only does the project diminish the region's already retreating glacial water sources, it will affect the quality of the water available by polluting it with the use of toxic products such as cyanide (already denounced in Berlin Declaration, 2000) and some heavy metals. The amount of water available will also be affected: mining operations needs enormous quantities of water (about 360 L per second). With this project, Barrick Gold has violated the territorial and ancestral rights of the Diaguita indigenous peoples who inhabit the territory of the mine. The firm's efforts to begin mining in a territorial area that is already in dispute has disrupted life in the region, where agriculture is the main economic activity, as well as violating the right of the population to self-determination, that is, the right to choose their own form of development.

The extracting industries make enormous profits, among others, because of very low royalties and the often difficult social, economic and political conditions in the countries where they set up business. The traces and repercussions of mining enterprises are not part of community development, collective prosperity, security, well-being nor quality of life, as their official statements would have us believe. On the contrary, their activities mean social, environmental, cultural and human devastation.

In the current state of the world in which neo-liberal ideology dominates, foreign investment is naturally given priority above all other consideration. Given this reality, Canada must assume a major responsibility for its firms: a total of 60% of the international mining companies are Canadian. Voluntary measures that encourage them to respect the environment that are currently being adopted are clearly insufficient and despite this the Canadian government is considering them as potential means of regulating enterprises. Firm regulation and a rigorous system of control are vital. Media campaigns that portray mining multinationals as "responsible enterprises," and in the case of Barrick as a "community mining enterprise", are a far reach from the painful reality of their humans rights violations (environmental, social, indigenous) that occur alongside mining development projects around the world.

In order to improve this situation, we demand the following:

- . The adoption of clear, urgent and effective measures that ensure the respect of the environment and of communities;
- . The respect of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a *sine qua non* requirement that should be integrated into the extractive projects of the mining industry.

March 2, 2007, Montreal

Groupe Non à Pascua Lama-Montréal (Canada)

L'Entraide Missionnaire (Canada)

Chaire de recherche du Canada en éducation relative à l'environnement, Université du Québec à Montréal

Social Justice Committee (Canada)

Comité chilien pour les droits humains, Montreal (Canada)

Association Culturelle Araucaria (Canada)

Association québécoise d'organismes de coopération internationale – AQOCI (Canada)

Chilean Canadian Community Association of Calgary

Club du Fric Éthique (Canada)

Coalition Romero, Montreal (Canada)

Comité de apoyo al pueblo mapuche, Montreal (Canada)

Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine – CDHAL, Montreal (Canada)

Comunidad Eclesial de Base "Mártires de El Salvador" - CEBES, Montreal (Canada)

Cumulus Press (Canada)
Grupo de apoyo a FUNDELIDDI – Montreal (Canada)
MiningWatch Canada
Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala (Canada)
Proyecto Cultural Sur (Canada)
Rights Action (Canada)
Solidarité Laurentides Amérique centrale-SLAM, Saint-Jérôme (Canada)
Observatorio latinoamericano de conflictos ambientales – OLCA
Casa-Taller La Lucha de San Felix, Valle del Huasco (Chile)
Colectivo Rexistencia (Chile)
Consejo de salud de Conay (Chile)
Consejo de Defensa del Valle, Valle del Huasco (Chile)
Consumidores de agua y regantes del Huasco (Chile)
Coordinadora Ambiental de Alto del Carmen (Chile)
Coordinadora del Huasco (Chile)
Grupo operativo pro defensa del Huasco (Chile)
Junta de vecinos de La Pampa (Chile)
Movimiento ciudadano anti Pascua Lama (Chile)
Pastoral Salvaguarda de la Creación (Chile)
Santiago Luis Faura, Enrique Gaytan Arcos and Arturo Aliaga, Town councillors of Alto del Carmen (Chile)
Afirmación para una República Igualitaria "ARI", La Rioja (Argentina)
APresTur - Chilecito, La Rioja (Argentina)
Asociación de Mujeres Riojanas (Argentina)
Autoconvocados en Defensa de la VIDA (Argentina)
Coordinadora de Asambleas Ciudadanas por la Vida - Chilecito, La Rioja (Argentina)
Environment Defense Foundation – FUNAM (Argentina)
Grupo Apu Huaira - Chilecito, La Rioja (Argentina)
Inka Ñan Turismo EVT - Chilecito, La Rioja (Argentina)
Operarios ex Gatilar Chamical (Argentina)
Pastoral Social de la Diócesis de San Carlos de Bariloche , Río Negro (Argentina)
Proyecto Nexos de articulación entre Universidad y Movimientos Sociales – Universidad Nacional Quilmes (Argentina)
Raúl A. Montenegro, Profesor, Alternative Nobel Prize (Argentina)
Theomai Network & Journal, Society, Nature & Development Studies (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Capital (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Chamical (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Chañarmuyo (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Famatina (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Patquial (Argentina)
Vecinos Autoconvocados de Pituil (Argentina)
Vecinos de Malanzán (Argentina)
Vecinos de Punta de los Llanos (Argentina)
Frente amplio opositor a la instalación de la minera San Xavier (Metallica Ressources Inc.) en Cerro San Pedro, S.L.P. (Mexico)
Comité Regional Ambientalista del Valle de Siria (Honduras)
Centro de Investigación sobre Inversión y Comercio – CEICOM (El Salvador)
US-El Salvador Sister Cities
Asociación de Pueblos Indígenas de America (Guatemala)
Comisión Pastoral Paz y Ecología – COPAE, Diócesis de San Marcos (Guatemala)
Frente de Defensa del Valle de San Lorenzo y Tambogrande (Peru)
Organización territorial de base la vertiente-Cochabamba (Bolivia)