

RRN news update

GUATEMALA

Founder and Chairman of Canadian Silver Mining Company Summoned to Court over Human Rights Abuses

May 2, 2015

RRN LETTER - to the president and attorney general of Guatemala

[excerpted]

*We are horrified and saddened at the assassination of environmental rights defender **Telésforo Odilio Pivaral González**, age 33, in the village of Las Nuces, San Rafael Las Flores municipality, in the Department of Santa Rosa...Telésforo Odilio Pivaral González, a farmer, husband and the father of six children, ages 1 to 11, was an active member of the Committee in Defense of Life and Peace in San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa (CDVPSRLF-SR)...he helped coordinate local resistance to the “El Escobal” [silver] mining project within the San Rafael Las Flores region... owned and operated by the Canadian mining company, Tahoe Resource Inc., and their Guatemalan partner, Minera San Rafael.*

CASE UPDATE

[With the support of international solidarity organizations] on June 18, 2014, seven Guatemalan men filed a lawsuit in Canada against Tahoe Resources seeking damages for injuries suffered during a shooting outside the company's Escobal silver mine in 2013. Tahoe's security personnel opened fire on residents of San Rafael Las Flores during a peaceful protest over concerns about the mine's potential impact on their water supply and the lack of meaningful and prior consultation with the community. They claim the shooting was “intentional” and a premeditated attempt by mine security personnel to “suppress” local opposition. The plaintiffs allege that Tahoe Resources implicitly or explicitly authorized the conduct of its security personnel.

May 8, 2015

Guatemalan Judge Orders Police to Bring Tahoe Resources Chairman Kevin McArthur to Court

By Sandra Cuffe [excerpted]

The Guatemalan national police director has been instructed by a judge to bring Tahoe Resources founder and executive chairman **Kevin McArthur*** to court on May 13 to testify about the criminalization of community leaders opposing the company's Escobal silver mine. The court order instructs the police to bring **McArthur** and [Tahoe VP of Operations] **Donald Paul Gray** to...testify in the trial of a prominent anti-mining community leader.

Over the past few years, dozens of community leaders and members opposing the Escobal project have been targeted with spurious criminal charges. **Oscar Morales García**, the outspoken coordinator of the Committee in Defense of Life and Peace of San Rafael Las Flores...is currently faced with a charge of uttering threats against Camilo Medina Mazariegos, Manager of External Relations for Minera San Rafael, a Guatemalan subsidiary of Tahoe Resources.

Morales García made a request to the Office of the Public Prosecutor in October 2014 for McArthur to “testify to the policy of criminalization that Minera San Rafael has been carrying out against community leaders in resistance to the imposition of the Escobal mining project in San Rafael Las Flores, Santa Rosa.”

*McArthur was previously CEO of both Goldcorp and Glamis, which have also been involved in mining abuses in Latin America.

Rapid Response Network
InterReligious Task Force on Central America
3606 Bridge Ave
Cleveland, OH 44113
www.IRTFCleveland.org
216 961 0003

RRN members have sent several letters to Tahoe Resource Inc and to officials in Guatemala, including:

Dec 14, 2011 - mining license granted illegally without prior consultation of community residents

Feb 14, 2013 - violent retaliation against protesters results in three deaths

Apr 3, 2013 - four indigenous leaders kidnapped, one killed, after community consultation on San Rafael mine

May 24, 2014 - a 16-year-old environmental rights defender shot and killed, her father wounded

May 2, 2015 - mining resistance leader assassinated