



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN AND MINING NETWORK

‘Mujer y Minería’

Newsletter

Issue 7, Aug 2009

RIMM Coordination Offices

International Secretariat and Indigenous Peoples

Coordinator: K. Bhanumathi
Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children
D.No. 14-40-1, Krishna Vihar, Gokhale Road
Maharanipeta, Visakhapatnam 530 002
Andhra Pradesh, India
☎ +91-891-2737662 (Telefax)
E-mail: rimmrights@gmail.com

Asia

Contact person: Vernie Yocogan-Diano
Innabuyog
#16, Loro St., Dizon Subdivision
Baguio City, Philippines
+63-74-442-5347/3362
Fax: +63-74-444-362
E-mail: cwercc@mozcom.com
Website: www.cphils.org

Latin America

Contact person: Els Van Hoecke
Avenida Tacna 40
Oruro, Bolivia
☎ +591-25241477
E-mail: elizabetvanhoecke@yahoo.es
elsvanhoecke@yahoo.es

Africa

Coordinator: Hannah-Owusu-Koranteng
WACAM
Tarkwa Office: PO Box 558, Tarkwa, Ghana
☎ +233-362-20137
Tema Office: PO Box CO1816, Tema, Ghana
☎ +233-22-200585
E-mail: kowus75@yahoo.com
Website: www.wacam.org

Pacific

Contact person: Christina Hill
Extractive Industries Advocacy Officer
132 Leicester Street, Carlton Vic. 3053, Australia
☎ + 61-3-9289-9311
Fax: +61-3-9347-1495
E-mail: christinah@oxfam.org.au
Website: www.oxfam.org.au

North America

Contact person: Sunita Dubey
9652 Scotch Haven Dr.
Vienna, VA 22181, USA
☎ +1-703-865-4842
E-mail: dubeysunita@yahoo.com

RIMM website: www.rimmrights.org

(Should any of our members find information on campaigns that is inaccurate we apologise for the same and request you to write to us with the corrections)

CONTENTS	Pg no
Editorial.....	2
Struggle against mining exploitation across Latin America	2
RNMM network meeting update.....	3
Announcement.....	3
Latest news from Latin America.....	4
Life and death in Kolar after the closure of BGML.....	7
Consultation on women, mining and development.....	8
RIMM campaign updates	9
“Perhaps its men like Boustred who keep women at bay.”	11
CPA: Mining, environmental disaster and lack of accountability in Mankayan	11

EDITORIAL

RIMM has been facing the challenge of doing justice to our sisters in Latin America due to problems in communicating in Spanish and ensuring that representation of their concerns in the southern continent of Americas gets reflected through the RIMM platform. We are finally happy to announce our first achievement of bringing out this Newsletter 7 in English as well as in Spanish this time and we request your feedback and suggestions in our efforts. We are also happy to announce that we have launched the Spanish version of the RIMM website and we plan to continue updating you with information in both languages. Shortly we will be publishing our first report in Spanish, which is a compendium of case studies from across the world, on the perspectives that women affected by mining have shared with us. With these developments, we are eager to strengthen our bond with our Latin American sisters and urge them to share their stories, their work and campaigns with RIMM so that we can continue to spread this knowledge to other members and individuals interested in gender justice concerns in mining.

RIMM will be holding its International Strategy Meeting in the Philippines in November 2009, in order to review its structure, roles and coordination as a network. We invite members and organisations/individuals who would like to be associated with RIMM to participate in the strategy meeting or to give your suggestions and inputs for strengthening the network and its role.

In India, current mining practices, and the economic meltdown have affected women and children seriously. As part of our India programme we are in the midst of undertaking two national level studies on the impacts of mining on women and children while, on the other hand, the Government of India is engrossed in developing the sustainable development framework for mining. We hope that our reports will provide a perspective of the invisible people affected by mining and what they view as a sustainable development framework and which could be shared with other women in the world.

STRUGGLE AGAINST MINING EXPLOITATION ACROSS LATIN AMERICA

Indigenous communities, social and human rights activists and above all, women affected by the mining sector continue to lack fundamental rights and fall victim to exploitation, violence and abuse worldwide. Sadly, Latin America is no exception to this tendency. The massacre and forced disappearance of dozens of innocent indigenous people protesting against new mining and oil projects in the Peruvian Amazon last month is of particular concern for RIMM. It appears that amongst the victims there were children and women who did not even participate in the march. The brutal police intervention on one side and the government's inaction on the other, shows the extreme vulnerability of these communities and the lack of due protection from the State. RIMM believes in the importance of bringing to the public the truth about these atrocities particularly given the almost complete absence of media reporting on the issue.

Violence and abuses over the last few months have not been confined to Peru. On one side, multinationals continue with their struggle against social justice and rights, oppressing communities, women and children wherever they have economic interests. On the other side, most governments in Latin America continue to fail in providing protection to the most vulnerable sectors of the population, silently supporting mining exploitation and oppression of local communities. In El Salvador, an activist from the mining sector was brutally murdered. Women workers in Argentina have been attacked during a peaceful demonstration. However, notwithstanding these attacks, people's struggle for justice in Latin America continues.

Over the last few months thousands of people marched in Guatemala, Bolivia and Mexico demanding rights for workers and/or opposing new mining projects. Indigenous

communities in Colombia have successfully opposed mining in their sacred territories; people in Venezuela and Bolivia expelled mining projects and workers in Bolivia obtained fairer working conditions. Women continue to be at the forefront of these important struggles, courageously fighting against oppression, exploitation and abuse.

Below is a poem in Spanish on 'Women and Mining' written by Sonia Hegen. The poem is dedicated to all women fighting and dreaming for a better future worldwide.

'Muchaca minera'

Muchacha minera

De Rucu- Luán

*Lava la ropa muchacha,
mientras el viento del sur
despeina tus sueños de
libertad,
lava también tu desdicha.
Fría esta la mañana,
para caminar las piedras,
para acarrear las latas,
para fregar la ignorancia.*

*Tirita tu alma muchacha,
tu cuerpo flaco marchita
y en tu carita de pena
se resigna la esperanza.
Lava la ropa muchacha,
y con ella tu amargura,
la miseria que te asusta,
pero el valor te empuja.*

*Dejaste atrás tu casa,
con apenas quince años
le corajeaste al destino
y te fuiste de tu nido.
Levanta tu frente serena
aunque el hambre te consume
y escurre bronca y bastío,
entre tus dedos menudos.*

*Tiende al viento los harapos
de los mineros del sur,
tus manos van enjuagando
dolores que irán sanado.
Cuando pase el tiempo
ya no lavarás la mina,
ya no temblarás de hambre
y no tendrás que callarte.*

*Más allá de las montañas
Cruzando valles y rutas
tendrás una casa grande
y anidarás en la pampa.
Un jardín con muchas flores
como el que siempre anhelaste,
te rodearán tus amores
tu vida serán tres soles.*

*Rucu-Luán será un recuerdo
que contarás como un cuento
Y guardarás muy adentro
las miserias de ese tiempo.
A veces, como en un sueño,
verás tus manos curtidas
Y te llenará de orgullo
haber vencido a la mina.*

RNMM NETWORK MEETING UPDATE

Summary of the 9th Meeting of the National Network 'Women and Mining' (Red Nacional Mujeres y Minería)

20–22 March 2009, Oruro, Bolivia

The 9th Meeting of the National Network of 'Women and Mining' (RNMM) held in Bolivia in March represented a unique occasion for women from Peru and Ecuador to come together and fight for social and economic justice within the mining sector. Over the years, the network has focused on analysing the economic, social and political impacts of mining from a gender perspective as well as campaigning for women's rights within the sector.

In addition to organising training and distributing material to other organisations on the issue, the network has been active at an international level, collaborating with RIMM and participating at the AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development) conference in South Africa.

The Network has set the following objectives for the year 2009: extend the study on family needs to other mining districts, implement the study on domestic work to provide useful feedback for new labour rights legislation,

support women in the calculation of economic needs for their families.

In addition, RNMM has decided to focus on issues relating to water pollution, wastage, community relations, prevention of mining conflict and domestic violence. The network currently aims at incorporating new organisations and increasing the number of women fighting for equal rights and social and economic justice within the mining sector.



Picture courtesy: RNMM Boletín May 2009

For the full article see the 12th Newsletter of the National "Women and Mining" Network - RNMM

ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN AND MINING NETWORK 'Mujer y Minería' (RIMM)

**Proposed International Strategy Meeting of RIMM
To consolidate the network's activities
and define its future focus and structure**

November 2009

Baguio City, Philippines

For more information and participation: rimmrights@gmail.com

LATEST NEWS FROM LATIN AMERICA

Argentina

15 Apr 09: Savage attack on women from employees of mining and environment secretariat

Yesterday, representatives of the Mining and Environment Secretariat from la Roja province accompanied by Barrick Gold's employees attacked a few women protesting peacefully in the area.



Picture courtesy: asamblea de vecinos autoconvocados de esquel

[For full article see: <http://www.noalamina.org/mineria-argentina-articulo2127.html>]

Bolivia

15 Jul 09: Indigenous people demand the right to previous consultation for mineral and petrol extraction in their territory

Multinationals in Bolivia are violating the 169 ILO Convention. International companies are exploring and exploiting the land of farmers and indigenous people for minerals and petrol extraction. The Natural Resources' Secretaries of five confederations gathering the indigenous populations of Bolivia demanded the right to previous consultation in case of any mining activity undertaken in the area.

[For full article see:

http://www.noalamina.org/index.php?module=announce&ANN_user_op=view&ANN_id=2442]

26 May 09: Mining struggle starts giving results

Following the pressure from more than four thousand mineworkers, the Morales' government and the multinational Glencore started to surrender. The multinational company was in fact trying to impose less favorable working conditions, including a 10 hour working day and salary-cuts. However, following the protest by thousands of workers in the capital city, the company had to agree on a reduction of the daily hours of work and better salaries. The multinational is responsible for taking control illegally of several mining sites in the country. In addition, given the constant opposition amongst indigenous communities within the State, the government is now working on a new legislation whereby indigenous communities will have to be consulted in case of mining extraction undertaken in their ancestral territories.

13 May 09: Indigenous people expel the multinational company Vista Gold

The Quechua community from South of Bolivar has warned the Canadian company Vista Gold to leave the Amayapampa mine and stop the gold extraction in the area. The indigenous community affirmed that capitalist exploitation only leaves empty caves, environmental pollution and land and rivers poisoned by mercury.

[For full article see:

<http://www.conflictosmineros.net/al/html/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1429>]

Colombia

28 May 09: Constitutional court accepts new demand against mining code

The constitutional court admitted a new demand of unconstitutionality of Articles 203 and 213 of the Mining Code presented by several organisations, including: the Inter-American Association in Defense of the Environment (Asociación Interamericana para

la Defensa del Ambiente -AIDA); CENSAT – Agua Viva; the Watchdog on Environmental Conflicts from the Caldas University (Observatorio de Conflictos Ambientales de la Universidad de Caldas) and the Corporation for Environmental and Public Negotiations (Corporación Gestión por los Intereses Ambientales y Públicos-GESAP).

According to the petition, Articles 203 and 213 allow the use of natural resources for mining exploration without environmental license, reducing significantly the ability to prohibit mining activities.

[For full article see: <http://www.noalamina.org/mineria-argentina-articulo2270.html>]

18 Mar 09: No to mining in indigenous territories

The consultation with the Kirrandara communities from the Usa Hills ended on the 28th of February with a clear ‘No to mining’. It is the first time that such an event took place in Colombia. The indigenous, Afro and mixed race communities affected by the mining project have had an opportunity to oppose mining projects implemented in their ancestral territories. The main aim of this democratic exercise is to stop the abuse of power and limit the social and environmental damages that mining is causing in the Bajo Atrato region. The Colombian government has still to officially recognise the ruling.

[For full article see:
<http://www.censat.org/noticias/2009/3/18/Colombia-No-a-la-Mineria-en-territorio-indigena/>]

El Salvador

10 Jul 09: Mining activist murdered

“We express our indignation and condemnation in front of the national and international community for the murder of Gustavo Marcelo Rivera, social activist in the mining sector and human rights defender. He disappeared on the 18th of June and his body was found on the 8th of July with signs of torture.”

[For full article
see:<http://www.conflictosmineros.net/al/html/modules.php>

[?name=News&file=article&sid=1517\]](#)

16 Jun 09: FMLN proposes a motion to prohibit mining in the State

The parliamentary fraction of the FMLN presented today a project to prohibit mining in the Central American State. The petition invokes the principles of ecological protection and the sovereignty of national hydric resources. A few employment opportunities that will not bring major benefits to the country are not sufficient to sacrifice the entire ecosystem to mining activities. There are currently 20 petitions from international companies to start mining explorations in the state.

[For full article
see:http://www.noalamina.org/index.php?module=announee&ANN_user_op=view&ANN_id=2339]

Guatemala

15 Jul 09: Indigenous communities rebel against mining

Thousands of indigenous people and farmers from Guatemala continued to march peacefully on Tuesday in the capital of the State opposing mining exploitation and the construction of a cement plant.



Picture courtesy: *La Republica.pe*

[For full article see:
<http://www.larepublica.pe/internacionales/15/07/2009/rebelion-indigena-contra-las-mineras-0/>]

Mexico

17 Jun 09: 22nd of July-The international day against open air mining

Activists from Mexico are organising peaceful demonstrations in front of Canadian embassies worldwide, condemning open-air mining, as it is causing desolation, poverty and death. Canadian companies in fact account for 51 percent of open-air mining around the world.

[For full article see:

http://www.noalamina.org/index.php?module=announce&ANN_user_op=view&ANN_id=2420]

9 Mar 09: Indigenous women march against mining

A group of indigenous women from the Sierra Madre in Chiapas marched against the mining companies Linear Gold and Blackfire. They say that "Multinationals are stealing and misusing our resources, leaving us with health problems, without natural and water resources, damaging the environment, the mountains and the rivers." [For full article see:

<http://www.servindi.org/actualidad/8754>]

Peru

10 Jul 09: Truth commission to investigate the massacre in the Peruvian Amazon

A Truth Commission has been created in Peru following the violent repression and massacre of indigenous protesters in the Amazon by the local police.

[For full article see:

<http://www.radiomundial.com.ve/yvke/noticia.php?28340>]

8 Jun 09: Police accused of massacring indigenous protesters in Amazon jungle

Dozens of people are estimated to have been killed and hundreds disappeared in clashes between police and indigenous activists protesting oil and mining projects in the northern Peruvian Amazonian province of Bagua. Peruvian authorities have declared a military curfew, and troops are patrolling towns in the Amazon jungle. Authorities say up to 22 policemen have been killed, and two remain missing. The indigenous community

says at least 40 people, including three children, were killed by the police this weekend. The total number of people who died or disappeared is currently unknown and likely to increase over the next few days. Alberto Pizango, the leader of the national indigenous organisation, the Peruvian Jungle Inter-ethnic Development Association, or AIDSEP, accused the government of President Alan Garcia of ordering the 'genocide' of the indigenous communities. Since April, indigenous groups have been opposing new laws that would allow an unprecedented wave of logging, oil drilling, mining and agriculture in the Amazon rainforest by blocking roads, waterways and oil pipelines. President Garcia's government had passed these laws under 'fast track' authority he had received from the Peruvian congress to facilitate implementation of the US-Peru Free Trade Agreement. Friday's clashes followed a governmental decision to reject congressional attempts to overturn some of the laws.



Picture courtesy: Amazon watch

[For full article see:

http://www.democracynow.org/2009/6/8/peruvian_police_accused_of_massacring_indigenous]

Venezuela

28 May 09: Country ends mining license to 'Gold Reserve Inc.'

Chavez government decided not to renew the mining license to the North American company Gold Reserve Inc.. Chavez stated that his government is seeking wider control and more power over natural and mineral resources of the country.

[For full article see: <http://www.noalamina.org/mineria-argentina-articulo2269.html>]

LIFE AND DEATH IN KOLAR AFTER THE CLOSURE OF BGML

Bharat Gold Mining Limited (BGML) (PUC) is a government financed mining company originally founded by the British colonial power in the 1800s and based in the Kolar district in the State of Karnataka, India. In 2002, the company closed overnight claiming financial losses that could have been easily predicted, and left more than 4,300 workers unemployed. Despite the Government of India's numerous promises of support, the 3,500 workers' families who continue to live in this ghost town in the hope that the company will one day restart operations are currently struggling for survival and still awaiting a decent compensation.

The closure took place with absolutely no closure plan or consultation with the workers. The company not only retrenched all workers, but also withdrew amenities such as drinking water, electricity, hospital care and schools, which were being provided for more than 150 years. Over 140 workers have committed suicide in the last 6 years after futile attempts to fight the company and resist the meager compensation offered to them. Many workers turned to alcohol as a solace, unable to find alternative employment or to cope with the shift towards more humiliating jobs; the only ones that they managed to secure.

This is a story of gross violations by a mining company that walked away from its responsibility on the pretext of un-viability. In this case, the worst affected have been the children of workers, mainly adolescents, who had to drop out of school and take over the burden of supporting their families. Today more than 9,000 youths travel by train every day, leaving at 6 a.m. to the nearest city of Bangalore and return from work only after 8 p.m. The girls work in garment factories, retail stores as sales girls, domestic workers, while the few who can speak English have found

work in low end jobs in the back end processing offices. They experience sexual abuse traveling in over-crowded trains but say they have no choice but to face the humiliation. The boys work as carpenters, electricians, plumbers, masons or as sales boys and quite a few have been absorbed into the illegal activities of the local mafia. Some of the adolescent girls and the older women have turned to prostitution as a means of survival, although the towns-folk despise any reference to such activities. Thus a whole generation has been sacrificed as a result of the company's irresponsible and ruthless mine closure.

Due to the past mining activities, a large part of the population is also suffering from extremely serious health and social conditions. People suffer from chest and lung infections, silicosis, tuberculosis, reproductive problems, skin infections, etc. Public health officials admit to recording cases of HIV/AIDS and silicosis that are prevalent in this mining town, but refrain from giving official testimonies. Ironically, while the abandoned shafts of the gold mines are submerged in a vast expanse of water, the town suffers from severe water shortage leading to serious sanitation and health problems.

It is now suspected by the workers' unions that the company is entering into joint venture with multinationals or inviting bids attracting foreign direct investment from Australian and other gold mining companies to take-over mining operations. However, the government has made no attempt to rescue the workers and hence, the youth are angry and violent in voicing their hatred towards the company and the government for destroying the lives of two generations.

Data from the field report of a Dbaatri staff member

CONSULTATION ON WOMEN, MINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The ‘Consultation on Women, Mining and Development’ was held from 16 to 19 March, 2009 at Hyderabad, India. The consultation was organised by the national alliance mines, minerals and PEOPLE and the Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children on behalf of RIMM. The consultation cum skill share was designed as a programme for field level activists and women affected by mining, women mineworkers, to present their stories, strategies, campaigns with each other and to plan for collective actions. Forty eight participants, primarily indigenous women and women mine workers, from six countries in Asia—Burma, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand—participated in this consultation.

The regional skill share gave an important opportunity for women to meet and exchange their strategies. The women mine workers clearly spelt out their need to link up with the network for addressing some of their pressing demands and transferring this understanding to more of their co-workers—lobbying on the need for work security and safety, bringing factual information of health impacts on women and children, dialogue on strategies to win basic rights like clean drinking water, housing and education for their children.

They re-emphasised the importance of workers’ exchanges between different States/regions. In India, the groups identified the need for lobbying on legal safeguards for minimum wages for women and on the Social Security Bill that is being discussed in the Parliament. In some countries like Cambodia workers issues were not yet serious as mining was restricted to community/informal mining with little pressure from companies; but now they foresee the threats that are beginning to emerge in their country too. Such skill shares at a local level would prepare communities for anticipated problems in the future. The groups strongly felt that they had to build into their national and local actions, facilitating women workers to have meetings and

workshops to build lobbies with their governments and unions.

With respect to indigenous women, the strong similarities in the territorial issues of land rights and women’s economic empowerment brought forward the issue of free, prior and informed consent as a common tool to address in the future. It was felt that effective use of this instrument was required, as well as gathering testimonies from indigenous women affected by Greenfield projects to strengthen their campaigns in using the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People.

The participants felt women had no to access to information particularly with regard to companies that have violated rights of women in other regions or countries so as to link up with each others’ campaigns and build a collective voice against these companies. Also, the need to network amongst indigenous women across continents was expressed. Members felt that RIMM should work towards facilitating such strategising and linkages across members as this was the only platform directly addressing gender rights in the context of mining.



(For more details see <http://www.rimmrights.org/latest.htm>. The full report will also be uploaded soon.)

RIMM CAMPAIGN UPDATES

Mongolia

Campaign to protect and promote human rights

RIMM endorsed the statement of the Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD) and extended its support to the campaign to protect and promote human rights in Mongolia. CHRD and 65 other non-governmental organisations had sent a statement to the Government of Mongolia demanding that the Government hold Borro Gold of Canada accountable for the breach of contractual duty, uphold the rights of the citizens of Mongolia and develop a framework for responsible mining in Mongolia that protects the rights and interests of the country's citizens.

'Boroo Gold', a Canadian mining company, has breached its contractual duty to use a mineral deposit for 15 years. In addition, the company made its hundreds of miners jobless even though they expected to have jobs ensured for 15 years and had disregarded workers strike, including a hunger strike, to protect their violated rights. Finally, the company distributed a small amount of compensation to them and was able to stop the strike action of the miners.

Peru

Solidarity towards indigenous people campaign

RIMM expressed its solidarity towards the indigenous people of Peru as a signatory to a statement issued calling for an end to State violence and to respect rights of indigenous people in Peru.

Indigenous communities throughout the Peruvian Amazon are protesting recently passed laws which permit multinational corporations to lease and exploit 73 percent of the Amazon rainforest, without regard to

the needs and well-being of the indigenous people who have been living in the area for centuries. Over 30,000 indigenous people had taken to blockading roads, rivers, and railways to demand the repeal of these new laws that allow oil, mining and logging companies to enter indigenous territories without seeking prior consultation or consent.

On 5 June, Peruvian military police staged a violent raid on a group of indigenous protestors at a peaceful blockade on a road outside of Bagua, in a remote area of the northern Peruvian Amazon. There are conflicting views on the casualties with the authorities claiming that up to 22 policemen have been killed, and two remain missing while the indigenous community says at least 40 people, including three children, were killed by the police.

The solidarity statement called for an immediate cessation of violence against indigenous communities, to provide immediate aid and assistance to the wounded and assist their families, and demanded that the Peruvian government abide by its national and international obligations.



Picture courtesy: Amazon watch

Philippines

Voices for James Balao

Still searching, still not knowing. But the silence and the brick walls will never rob us out of our faith and hope that James is well, somewhere and will come back home to us, soon.

The family of James Balao thinks aloud, steadfast and not hopeless... until someone listens... until James is surfaced, until justice is served.

RIMM and its members had extended support to the campaign by Cordillera Peoples' Alliance (CPA), Philippines, to demand the search for their missing member James Balao. James Balao is a founding member of the CPA when it was established in June 1984. At present, he is the President of the Oclupan Clan Association and one of his tasks is to look into the registration and documentation of the clan properties.

The family of James Balao, has reported that he has been missing since 17 September 2008. This is believed to be an enforced disappearance attributed to his work with advocating indigenous peoples' rights, human rights and social justice.

His family remembers him fondly and is strong in their hope that one day he will return to them. Nonette, his sister, says:

".....[James is a] loving, selfless man who is a good friend to all, a man who's only desire is to save and protect his people from the unjust, from the abusive, from the wicked, from this corrupt government. . I pray that whoever had anything to do with his disappearance, or that whoever knows of his whereabouts would soon come out and speak the truth so that James will come home to us."

The CPA, family, Cordillera Human Rights Association (CHRA), relatives and friends continue with their efforts to search for James and bring the perpetrators of this reprehensible act to justice. During the Congressional Inquiry for Northern Luzon on Human Rights held at the University of the Philippines Baguio, Winston Balao (younger brother of James) testified on behalf of the Balao family before the House Committee on Human Rights. Mr. Arthur Balao, father of James, who also attended the hearing appealed to the Committee members. Appeals have been made to the Supreme Court as well.

The CPA and the CHRA also presented the same and other cases during a community-based dialogue for the Cordillera convened by the Alternative Law Groups in March between civil society organisations and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police. The Episcopal Church of the United States of America has also extended its support to the campaign. A number of activities are planned by CPA and others in the months to ensure that the fight for justice for James Balao continues.



Picture courtesy: CPA

“PERHAPS ITS MEN LIKE BOUSTRED WHO KEEP WOMEN AT BAY.”

When Cynthia Carroll took over as the chief executive of Anglo-American (AA) in early 2007, it seemed that she had broken many barriers in an otherwise male-dominated industry. Now, just two and a half year years later, she finds herself at the receiving end of virulently genderist remarks by a former AA deputy chairperson, Graham Boustred.

Cynthia Carroll had joined AA with no illusions about the challenges she faced. As she once said:

“To put it mildly, I’m not too terribly similar to any of my predecessors from the beginning of Anglo’s history. I’m a woman. I’m not South African. I haven’t worked at Anglo before. I don’t even have a mining background.”

Initially she was complimented for the measures she had taken and in bringing about decisiveness to Anglo. But by the beginning of March 2009 her popularity was at its lowest ebb.

Boustred in his interview with Business Day explains why Cynthia Carroll, and women in general, are useless in the boardroom:

“This woman’s hopeless. There’s no morale. Do you know why it’s difficult to find a female CEO? It’s because most women are sexually frustrated. Men are not, because they can fall back on call girls, go to erectile dysfunction clinics. If you have a CEO who’s sexually frustrated she can’t act properly.”

In the same interview, the 84 year old Boustred who comes across as a self obsessed business leader also claimed that his return to AA would be the ‘...best thing that could happen to Anglo...’.

Note: In the first issue of the RIMM newsletter (January 2007) we had provided a brief profile of Cynthia Carroll in our section ‘Women leaders in the corporate sector’

Sources:

<http://blogs.thetimes.co.za/minor/2009/07/08/women-and-work-graham-boustred-and-cynthia-carroll/>
<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=75163> (last accessed 24 July 2009).

**CPA: MINING, ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER AND
LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN MANKAYAN**

The ground under the feet of the Mankayan's communities is collapsing again and those responsible have yet to offer any support.

Ten years have passed since the massive subsidence occurred in Colalo, wreaking havoc and bringing fatalities to the local area and no justice has yet been brought to its people. History is repeating itself; on 5 June 2009, people living in Benguet-Mankayan, have once more witnessed a massive ground subsidence. The underground bulk mining activity carried out for over 70 years by the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company

(LCMC) is responsible for causing this environmental disaster. The Mines and Geo-



Sciences Bureau (MGB), a governmental body, is equally responsible for hiding the truth behind the catastrophe and supporting the implementation of further mining activity in the area.

On 25 July 1999, several people of Colalo lost their homes, schools and infrastructure and much more. A local resident Pablo Gomez lost his life. He was buried alive by the landslide and his body was never found. The National Institute of Geological Studies (NIGS) conducted an independent study on the sad events and concluded that the ground subsidence was caused by man-made and natural causes, with mining extraction being a primary cause of subsidence and erosion in the area. Notwithstanding the 1999 events and the constant subsequent warnings that mining in the area constitutes a real hazard for people living in Mankayan, LCMC, with the support and approval of MGB, is currently expanding its activity in the district.

Environmental disasters are becoming an all too common event in Mankayan. Since 1999-2000, the land has collapsed in several parts of the municipality and highly toxic chemicals from mining waste have affected the health of local communities. A land collapse on 5 June this year initially affected 10 households but the situation has worsened over the weeks and the whole village has now been declared in a state of calamity. There is a requirement to take immediate action in order to prevent a further environmental disaster that could cause the loss of hundreds of lives. The next victims could be youngsters and children as the un-backfilled slopes lie exactly below the Mankayan National High School.

Mankayan is now experiencing the militarisation of its territory; the army has been present in the villages on the feeble pretext of expanding social-economic aid through their 'Community Outreach Programme'. The 50th Infantry Battalion has entered the municipality causing fear amongst the local community. Soldiers have been

harassing and intimidating villagers, recording and taking photos of residents who they deem to be members of NGO groups—the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA) and the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA).

CPA is launching an appeal to the local governments of Mankayan and Benguet, the army and other agencies to ensure the prevention of another catastrophe. They are calling for an immediate stop to mining activities in the area, allowing the people of Mankayan to manage their ancestral land and resources. CPA is also calling for prompt humanitarian aid, for the immediate evacuation of residents of Poblacion and for the relocation of the school.

LCMC continues to deny responsibility for its actions, defining all the events listed above as 'acts of God'. However, the people of Mankayan haven't lost their faith in God and are fully aware of LCMC's responsibility. CPA is asking LCMC and MGB to be held accountable and responsible for its actions and to start an independent investigation on the Mankayan events. Mining in the Philippines, as common elsewhere in the world, has proven once more to be an industry lacking social responsibility.



For more information see the CPA's website: www.cpaphils.org

Pictures courtesy: CPA