



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN AND MINING NETWORK

‘Mujer y Minería’

Newsletter

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(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)

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### Editorial

*As we post this newsletter, the majority of the world’s nations have gone home from Copenhagen leaving humanity in despair as a result of their predictably ineffective and cloudy negotiations which have failed to deliver the promised legally binding commitments to reduce climate change. Oblivious to these global unsigned pacts, were the women we met in remote Orissa, a coastal state in the northeast of India, who showed us how their traditional kitchen gardens and primary source of food, went dry after the coal mines depleted all their ground water and instead, replaced it with coal dust. The cause and effect of climate change was glaringly evident before us; a mineral grab resulting in sustainable food production literally turning to dust. In response, the government gave the affected women a loan to make detergent powder and earn money by selling it in their villages. A harsh reality destroys the intent; obviously, the high levels of air pollution prohibit the women’s ability to properly wash clothes. Not suffering from the same ability to get a clean result, the government has washed its hands off the matter. Lost lands, destroyed livelihoods, denied food security and vanished social security are deemed to be fairly remedied by a paltry cash compensation. An ineffective short term political band-aid to a long term terminal disease.*

*As in the global climate change debate, a short term handout is no match for long term sustainability. Will the US\$ 100 billion largesse announced by the US President support similar schemes such as those of the women in Orissa, and in doing so, be hailed as a ‘success’? Would such a handout be deemed to successfully address the imbalanced gender concerns resulting from climate change? The answer is a resounding and despairing ‘no’. Faced with an unrelenting daily battle to survive, the luxury of despairing about the future does not exist for millions of women forced to live with the harsh conditions of working in mine pits or reconstructing their lives and homes after being displaced by mining companies. Irrespective of the COP 15, their struggle goes on and, as human rights groups supporting the campaigns of such women, we cannot choose to give ourselves the luxury of despair, but continue with exposing the violations perpetrated by mining companies and our governments.*

*We wish all our sisters in this struggle a strong hope for women’s peace and security of life in the year ahead.*

*With New Year greetings,*

*International Secretariat,*

*International Women and Mining Network*

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*The Earth Can Be Healed*  
*What was given was taken and can be given again,*  
*But not just to one race of men,*  
*As on this continent exist many men*  
*Mixed of many races,*  
*A blending of many faces,*  
*Will join together in many places,*  
*With combined heart and soul,*  
*Joined through the wheel,*  
*The earth can be healed*  
*And again become whole,*  
*Look to your soul*  
*There you will see*  
*There you will know.*

*Poem from a Native American Woman*

### **The 15<sup>th</sup> UN Convention on Climate Change, 7-18 December 2009 Copenhagen, Denmark – a Failed Event for Women and the World**

Whilst it is universally recognized that the conference failed to deliver any meaningful agreement to limit climate change, it also failed to even acknowledge the requests from women's group to recognize the varying gender impacts of climate change. Across the world, demonstrations and alternative events organised by women and focusing on women, took place in the lead up to and during the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Copenhagen between the 7<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> of December 2009. Women's groups organized these important events



for months with a view to ensuring that the conference's agenda as well as the UNFCCC's final paper is gender sensitive. Neither the UNFCCC nor the Kyoto Protocol recognize the gender dimension of climate change, and there was great hope amongst women's organizations that this year's conference would finally represent a turning point. Sadly their voices were once again left unheard.

Women are caretakers and managers of natural resources around the world, so changes in the natural environment have a more direct and severe impact upon women and their families. Women still represent the large majority of the world's poorest and remain the most vulnerable section of society. As such, it is fundamental that women's expertise is included in all aspects of climate change decision making and implementation. The 2007 Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) is a network of civil society organizations and UN partners which has been created by women

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and for women. GGCA seeks to address the lack of gender sensitive approaches and to ensure that all climate change policies, decision-making processes and finance mechanisms are gender-responsive. All the GGCA partners have stressed the importance of the agreement's adaptation measures being consistent with the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); of the participation of women as stakeholders; and of gender equality being an integral part of its effective implementation, monitoring and reporting.

Women participated in numerous ways in the lead up to the Copenhagen conference to ensure that gender and a gender sensitive language was considered at the event and incorporated in the drafting of the final document. Women's groups met in Bangkok, Barcelona and Bonn in preparation for the event. They lobbied for a general paragraph in the shared vision as an increasing number of gender-references are deleted from the official negotiation text. Despite some significant early advances in the use of gender sensitive language, specific gender references slowly fell from the agenda of politicians and governments.

Since the ratification of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in the early 1990's there has been a lack of political will from governments to take effective steps and measures. In the past, governments from both developed and developing countries have respectively been blaming each other for lack of action and commitment. Sadly, this year's event has proven once more to be a failure; governments have not only ignored the gender aspect of climate change but failed to take any concrete action. Women need to stop being portrayed exclusively as victims, they need to be appreciated and valued as intelligent individuals who can bring forward positive change. Their ideas and future plans-of-action need to be considered, included and valued as a fundamental contribution towards current and future policies. A legally binding document to limit the impacts of climate change is imperative and urgent. The inclusion of views from women's groups may not only protect women's interests but perhaps also help create a meaningful outcome from the next climate change event; something sadly lacking from Copenhagen.

*For more info visit the UN official website  
: <http://unfccc.int/2860.php> and  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>*

## **Indigenous Communities' Exclusion from the XV UN Climate Change Conference**

Despite the fact that indigenous communities are probably the worst affected by climate change and global warming, they have been completely excluded from the COP 15 (Conference of the Parties) in Copenhagen. Sadly, as it often happens in high profile political meetings and events, especially when governments and companies are desperate to defend their private interests, indigenous

people had to push their way through to the event. They gathered in Copenhagen and in other parts of the world to make their voices being heard by deaf politicians. As part of their campaign, they produced a series of video documentaries called "Conversation with the Earth". The documentaries feature videos created by indigenous communities from four different continents, offering touching

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testimonials and numerous evidences on the effects of climate change on their communities. They are hoping that governments, especially those of developed countries, will eventually become more accountable and will agree on a significant reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.

Indigenous communities around the world have a very close relationship with the Earth and are highly dependent and symbiotic, yet respectful, relationship with its natural resources. The presence of representatives from such communities should be mandatory in events like the COP, as due to their close relationship with nature, indigenous communities have been - and continue to be - the worst affected by changes in the climate and the environment. Over the centuries these communities have increasingly lost access to their land and resources and their living conditions have deteriorated significantly over the past decades due to climate change and global warming. Sadly, the outlook for positive change appears to have improved little as they continue to be left out from decision making. Despite not holding any official seat, indigenous people from various remote areas have been present at this year's COP to ensure that they can make a positive contribution to the event. They presented solutions on climate change

drawing from traditional knowledge, including: mobile pastoralism in drylands and rangelands, rotational agriculture and ecological agriculture in tropical forest regions and the conservation, management and restoration of other natural ecosystems such as mangroves, savannahs, wetlands and others.



Indigenous communities hold a very precious and antique knowledge about the Earth and traditional values which treasure the environment rather than ignore it. Their voices should not only be heard but become a priority in policies and future plans of action for politicians and policy makers. Such action is for the benefit of these communities but also for the well-being of the entire humankind.

**Global MINGA - 517 Years after the Discovery of the New Continent, Indigenous People in Latin America Continue Fighting For Peace, Freedom and Justice**

Most Native Americans remember the 12<sup>th</sup> October as a sad anniversary. 517 years ago their continent was discovered and plundered by foreign powers, with most of its native population subsequently displaced and savagely killed. The 12<sup>th</sup> October is commemorated across the globe as the “Race Day”, a day that according to historians and intellectuals who seem to have lost their historical memory, ironically

has to be celebrated for its emblematic meaning of union, as well as cultural and human exchange amongst cultures and different traditions. Nevertheless, according to history, there was nothing resembling a peaceful cultural and human exchange between cultures as the colonisation of the ‘New Continent’ signaled the start of five centuries of violent repression and oppression that has caused the almost

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entire extermination of indigenous communities of the American Continent.

Despite difficulties in acquiring official data on the number of indigenous people murdered and forcibly disappeared in Latin America, it is important to mention some sporadic data on the massacres of these extremely vulnerable communities. Indigenous people in Colombia are probably the worst affected by the wave of violence and abuse against natives. In the South American state, between January 2002 and October 2008, more than 1,240 indigenous people have been killed and around 53,885 have been displaced, with 94 indigenous killed within the first ten months of 2009<sup>1</sup>. In Brazil, between 2007 and 2008, 152 indigenous people have been killed<sup>2</sup>. In Peru last June in just a couple of days, more than 30 indigenous people were murdered and an even higher number has been forcibly disappeared<sup>3</sup>. Despite lack of official data on the number of indigenous people forcibly disappeared and killed in other countries of Latin America, there are numerous reported cases of political violence in the entire sub-continent. Indigenous women are even more vulnerable to violence and abuse from the army, the police and paramilitaries groups who support the interests of governments and multinationals. Their bodies and souls become war chests for unscrupulous people.

Despite the continuous repression and violence against indigenous communities, their struggle continues. Indigenous people around the world are mobilising in events like the one on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, strengthening their process of resistance and autonomy despite 500 years of



colonisation, abuse and violence. Celebrating the 12<sup>th</sup> October is fundamental not only to support the struggle and resistance of the natives but also to remember the immensity of our Mother Earth, whilst creating more conscience on issues fundamental for the survival and well-being of indigenous communities like prevention from global warming and pollution of natural resources and the environment. The 12<sup>th</sup> October represents another occasion to protest against the plundering of mineral resources and bio-fuels, to rebel against the Free Trade Agreement with the EU and United States and to ensure that indigenous people will finally be able to freely manage their lands and resources without fear of being threatened, persecuted and murdered. The 12<sup>th</sup> October also represents a day to increase awareness on the history of these communities and end the cycle of violence against them.

According to tradition, last October numerous indigenous communities from Central and South America marched entire days to protest against abuse, exploitation and injustice committed against them. The MINGA, a *quechua* word for a peaceful event, is a gathering with a fundamental symbolic meaning that saw thousands and

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<sup>1</sup> [www.fidh.org](http://www.fidh.org) › [english] › Americas › Colombia

<sup>2</sup> <http://argentina.indymedia.org/news/2009/05/669804.php>

<sup>3</sup> [www.redperiodistasinfronteras.org/?html=leer...fl...](http://www.redperiodistasinfronteras.org/?html=leer...fl...)

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thousands of people marching and protesting together, sharing new ideas and future plans, rebuilding the past and a common historical memory, whilst analysing the present and looking towards the future with hope. It is sad to see how on one hand these communities continue to live in an extreme situation of poverty, whilst on the other, governments with the full backing of the police and the army continue with their lies, false promises, lack of compromise and violence against anyone who tries to rebel against the interests of multinationals and the capitalist elite.

Notwithstanding the peaceful nature of the word MINGA and the similarly peaceful intentions of the event, usually a meeting or a communal task/work that becomes a joyful gathering of people, October's demonstrations are typically repressed with guns and ended in bloodshed. Unfortunately, the MINGA of last October was no exception. During the event in Guatemala, a 19 year old protester was shot dead and two others were injured whilst in Colombia several people were arbitrarily detained. Moreover, last year's event in Colombia saw two indigenous people killed and hundreds injured by indiscriminate police attacks. In previous years more people have been displaced, injured and killed for protesting against the current exploitative system and the corruption of governments.

Despite the violent episodes listed above, the MINGA in Latin America continued bravely. After four days of meetings, talks, debates alternated with music and dancing, the event ended on the 16th October with a series of declarations about future actions. The demonstrators reiterated their willingness to promote a political process where governments' representatives are elected in a free, legitimate and democratic

way and where they truly represent the interests of civilians. At the marches, indigenous people showed the need of being part of a state where their fundamental rights are protected, including: the right to education in their native language; the right to medical attention; the right to participation and informed consent; freedom of expression and the right to autonomy. They also showed the need of developing an alternative economic system that promotes people's development and well being which respects human rights and the environment. An economic system which permits indigenous people to freely manage their mineral and natural resources without fear of being displaced, threatened, forcibly disappeared and killed. In the conclusive remarks, the indigenous communities present at the MINGA demanded the respect of fundamental human rights in compliance with international law: The UN Declaration on Indigenous Rights, The 169 'ILO' Convention and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Events like the one that takes place each 12th October are of fundamental importance in order to increase awareness on issues related to these vulnerable communities as well as supporting them in their struggle and resistance. However, in order to stop abuse and violence and to stop indigenous communities in Latin America and elsewhere from being invisible, it is important to continue with similar campaigns and events all year round. Protection of indigenous rights with particular attention to women and gender disparities should become a priority for all oppressing governments who are supporting and silently contributing to the extermination of our brothers and sisters.

## Women's Struggle for the Right to Access Water in Talcher, India

Women in the Talcher district of Orissa-India, have had to fight for the right to access water ever since MCL-Mahanadi Coalfields Limited and NALCO-National Aluminium Co LTD started coal mining and aluminium smelting in their lands. Water scarcity and lack of access to potable water represents one of the major issues for women and entire communities in Talcher. As the RIMM team drove through villages around the mining town we encountered several women walking long distances with pots on their heads, to fetch water. They told us how the course of natural water sources have been diverted for the use of mining activities and how they are now left with no option but to “steal” a few drops of water from water tankers of the company. As expected, mining companies as well as the local government have not provided local villagers with alternate sources of water, rather, they have polluted the few springs that remain, as the waste from the mines is irresponsibly discharged into the water bodies. Women showed us how all the rain water ponds and tube-wells have dried up. They have to now dig up to 200 feet in search of water compared to the earlier depth of 15 feet. While those who lost their lands for mining now depend on mine labour alone, many villages have lost their livelihoods due to repeated crop failure because of dust pollution and depletion of ground water tables. Every house, traditionally, boasted of a small kitchen garden called *bagicha*, which was the pride of these women who had the sole rights and control over these plots. It was also the main source of food security for the women who used these bagichas to provide for the daily nutrition of their families. When the RIMM team visited the area, the women sadly walked us through these kitchen gardens which, today only have weeds and stunted plants. Water pollution is having a serious impact on the health of women as several of them

complained of skin infections, stomach pain and diarrhoea. The women also spoke about how they find it difficult to wash clothes as the air and water are too polluted. We found quite a few physically and mentally challenged women and children in this coal belt. Predictably, a survey conducted by the local women's organisation called Nari Surakhya Samiti reflects the social disarray of a village converted into a mining town. They identified several cases of single and unwed mothers who are barely managing to survive and take care of their offspring.



Not once were any women called by the government or by the mining companies to participate in consultations for rehabilitation or compensation. On the other hand, single women headed households were clearly told that they were ineligible for rehabilitation or employment in the company. Incidentally, the MCL is a World Bank supported project which is deemed to have completed an extensive rehabilitation programme for the PAPs.

*Info based on a Fieldtrip in Talcher, Samata-December 2009*



De la Red Latinoamericana  
de Mujeres Defensoras de  
Derechos Sociales y Ambientales

Retomando nuestras relaciones,  
Recuperando solidaridades,  
Fortaleciendo nuestras luchas de...

...resistencia a la Minería

**From RIMM we would like to highlight the existence of the “Latin American Women’s Network in Defence of Social and Environmental Rights.”** The Network is an international platform that aims at exposing the negative impacts of mining on women in Latin America. The platform focuses on women’s struggles against mining exploitation, whilst questioning and denouncing the current system which is exploiting entire communities, lands, women and the environment. Mining companies are often responsible for increasing violence amongst communities and for violating fundamental rights, especially amongst women. The International Women Network aims at defending the environment and its natural resources; it promotes events at a national and international level where people can express their ideas, denounce violations, share their investigations and campaigns. The Network has the following main objectives: protection of women who have been threatened due to their political activism against mining companies; collection of data on the negative impacts of mining companies in Latin America; creation of a database containing emblematic testimonies of women fighting against mineral exploitation and investigation on the effects of large scale mining on women. The following countries are part of the International Women Network: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Chile, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. *See brochure attached to this newsletter and –or email: mujeresdefensoras@yahoo.es*

## News from RNMM “Red Nacional Mujeres y Minería”

**Communal Radio:** Thanks to the funds received by the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID), RNMM has been able to develop a communal and popular radio project which aims at empowering Bolivian women mine workers through the promotion of human rights and development, as well as strengthening their relationship.

**Oruro-Bolivia 1500 People signed a Petition Demanding the Right to Water.** On the 13th of October, a group of local youngsters together with several organizations and institutions took part in the campaign “Water for our Community and Neighborhood”. As part of the campaign, environmental activists collected 1500 signatures to support a petition demanding the right to water for their community that will be handed to the Mayor and Governor of Oruro.

## Interview with Jaqueline Espinosa Lens, Mine Worker in the Gold Mines of Tipuani, Bolivia.



“The work that miners carry out in Tipuani is dangerous and physically challenging. They have to work deep inside the mine. Some cooperatives pay a salary to

workers whereas others use the old system, always according to the same timetable. In some cooperatives miners have to work outside with heavy machineries like tractors, lorries, shovels and excavators. Men usually don't work inside the mine but outside, whereas women usually have to work inside or go to the river in search of minerals.

We have the primary and secondary school “Oscar Unsaga de la Vega” but unfortunately the teachers are not very good. We also have the primary school “Eduardo Avaroa” and a Technical Institute where people can access various courses on accountancy, business management and other technical careers.

There are hospitals but they do not have facilities for X rays and they don't have specialised doctors. At the hospital in Tipuani they don't do surgeries, in order to do that you have to go to Caranavi or La Paz, we are still very behind in healthcare terms.

We have enough drinking water, but people do not care about the environment. They throw rubbish everywhere, there are also bad people who burn and cut trees and hurt little animals.

My mom lives close to the river, her courtyard is big but has become smaller over the years due to the fact that the river level has increased constantly destroying the restraining wall. My mom went several times to complain to the Major but no one cares...Everything is for them, nothing is for the people that are really in need. Monday the 31<sup>st</sup> of August several staff members from the major's office of Tipuano organised a meal for the elderly; they gave them food, drinks, beers and made them dance. On that day people enjoyed themselves but after that they had to go back to their routine and miserable situation.”

## Other News from the World

*Once again, people across the globe are protesting against abuse and violations carried out by unscrupulous mining companies and multinationals. Indigenous communities and women are playing a fundamental role in the struggle for justice and freedom and are fighting against the exploitation of their land and natural resources, in defense of the right to self determination and participation. Moreover, it appears that economists are finally becoming aware of the importance of women's empowerment and participation in decision making not only for the future of the global economy but also for the well being of future generations. Women are becoming increasingly aware of their rights and key players in the struggle against injustice and exploitation.*

**091228 EL SALVADOR Another Political Killing:** On December 26, Dora “Alicia” Recinos Sorto, age 32, was assassinated, the second anti-mining activist killed this week in the small community of Nueva Trinidad in the department of Cabañas. Recinos Sorto was eight months pregnant and carrying her two-year old child when she was shot on her way back from doing

**091110 GUATEMALA: “Communities living in Huehuetanano Declare Their Land Free From Large Scale Mining.”** “Aware of our right to participate and take decision on our territory, we are here today to hand in the results of the consultation that took place amongst the Maya Chui community of San Sebastian Coatan, whereby 13,088 people

laundry at a nearby river. She and her husband, José Santos Rodríguez, were outspoken opponents of the non-operational El Dorado mine which Pacific Rim, a Vancouver-based mining company is desperate to reopen despite widespread community opposition. Rodríguez is a board member of the Environmental Committee of Cabañas, an organization that formed to educate the community about health and environmental risks of cyanide contamination from gold extraction. The Committee's vice-president, Ramiro Rivera, was gunned down on December. These attacks follow the late June kidnapping, torture and assassination of Marcelo Rivera (no relation), in the nearby municipality of San Isidro. Earlier this year, Recinos Sorto reported that her husband was receiving death threats and that unidentified men had come looking for him at their home. The ongoing violence in Cabañas, including assaults, attempted kidnappings and death threats, seems to be centered around the controversial presence of Pacific Rim Mining in the region, with prominent anti-mining leaders coming under attack. Pacific Rim ceased operations at El Dorado after local protests forced the company out and the Salvadoran government subsequently denied extraction permits [upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/2279/74/](http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/2279/74/)

**091029 UK: “Community Representatives in London to Challenge World’s Biggest Mining Multinational.”** Representatives of indigenous communities facing displacement by the massive Cerrejon mine are attending the annual general meeting of BHP Billiton plc in London today. BHP Billiton is the biggest mining company in the world Coal Company, which operates the biggest opencast coal export mine in the world. The mine is in the Colombian department (province) of La Guajira. [http://www.colombiasolidarity.org.uk/component/options,com\\_frontpage/Itemid,1/](http://www.colombiasolidarity.org.uk/component/options,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/)

expressed their rejection on large scale mining projects as well as any other project that threatens the integrity of our territory.” <http://www.gritomesoamerica.org>

**091017 PHILIPPINES: “Typhoon Pepeng Brings Death and Destruction in the Philippines.”** The Serve the People Brigade-Cordillera Disaster Response (STPB-CDR) Network has already provided relief services to at least 669 families and more than 4,000 individuals affected by Typhoon “Pepeng” in the city of Baguio and some towns of Benguet. The CPA said the climate crisis could be attributed to the global capitalist production and exploitation of the earth’s environment and resources, and to the irresponsibility of the government and top bureaucrats who passed laws worsening climate change and environmental disasters. The CPA added disasters experienced not only in the region but also in Marinduque and Albay and other provinces proved that extractive industries, corporate mining in particular, only leads to irreparable environmental disasters. Aside from this, the CPA stated that it also makes the lives of indigenous peoples much harder with the violation of their collective rights to ancestral lands and resources resulting to displacements and a blow to their right to self-determination. <http://www.bulatlat.com/main/2009/10/17/serve-the-people-brigade-continues-to-extend-help-to-typhoon-victims/>

**091012 UK: “Women Fight South American Mines.”** The London Mining Network (LMN) member group Latin America Mining Monitoring Program ([LAMMP](#)) organised a successful visit to London by women activists from Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru, all of whom are under threat for their resistance to large-scale mining projects. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/oct/12/women-fight-south-american-mines>

**091012 UK: “Government Criticizes Mining Company's Treatment of Local Tribe.”** The British government openly criticized the mining company Vedanta Resources today over its treatment of local tribes in a sacred mountain area of India where it plans to open a bauxite mine. In an unprecedented attack on a FTSE 100 company, the government ruled that Vedanta "did not respect the rights" of the area's indigenous people; "did not consider the impact of the construction of the mine on the [tribe's] rights"; and "failed to put in place an adequate and timely consultation mechanism". The report concluded that a change in the company's behavior' was "essential". Despite repeated British government requests, Vedanta "failed to provide any evidence during the examination". This is the only time a company has refused to participate in an OECD investigation.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/oct/12/government-criticises-mining-company-vedanta>

**090925 AUSTRALIA: “Indigenous People Power Challenges Mining Might.”** The Martidja Manyjima people have decided the damage to their responsibilities to the land of water degradation and destruction of sacred sites by the owners of the nearby massive Hope Downs mine is just too great. They don't want money, they want to limit the endless expansion of mining on their country. [londonminingnetwork.org](http://londonminingnetwork.org)

**090918 PERU: “After Protests, UN Raps Peru on Tribal Rights.”** Peru is violating the rights of indigenous people by failing to secure their consent before energy companies drill on their lands, the United Nations said... Its report was issued three months after clashes between police and indigenous groups, angered over plans to open their land to investment...”In practice, the right of indigenous people to

**091011: “Harassment, Ridicule Didn't Stop Women Mining Pioneers.”** In the late 1970s and early 1980s, few women worked in or around the coal mines. Underground operations were considered male bastions. The first women to enter the mine shaft were subjected to ridicule and sexual harassment.

<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2009/oct/11/tough-job-in-mines/>

**091009 GUATEMALA: “Murders: Canadian Company with Links to Vedanta in the Frame.”** Barely three weeks following the assassination of the son of a well-known anti-mining activist, two Indigenous leaders were also murdered, and more than a dozen wounded, as they sought to defend their land in Guatemala. Nineteen-year old Walter Mendez Velasquez was shot dead on September 7th. In May 2009, his father, Arturo, had spoken out against Canada's Goldcorp at the company's annual general meeting. The year before, Arturo received an anonymous letter threatening to kill a member of his family. On September 27 and 28th, attacks were leveled against Qeqchi leaders fighting a nickel mine owned by Hudbay of Canada. Initial reports implicate the company's security force in at least some of the shootings. Read more at <http://www.minesandcommunities.org/article.php?a=9526>

**090916 ZIMBAWE: “-Magodonga Mahlangu and Her Organization, Women of Zimbabwe Arise- Is The Winner of the 2009 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award.”** Mahlangu and WOZA have empowered thousands of women across Zimbabwe to stand up for human rights and speak up about the worsening economic, social, and political conditions under an oppressive

be consulted and give their informed consent prior to the start of extractive work on their lands is not fully respected in some cases,” the U.N. Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination said...Environmental and human rights organizations say energy operations in the jungle threaten to damage the environment and risk exposing remote tribes to new and deadly diseases. See <http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis>

**090829 COLOMBIA:** *“Women Lead Opposition to Gold Mine in Colombia’s Central Mountains.”* They’re young, educated, angry – and they’re women. They are prominent leaders of a social movement in Colombia which is fighting against a mine proposed by Africa’s leading gold mining outfit, London-listed Anglo-Gold Ashanti. Now they’re waiting to hear whether their protests will be recognised by the powers that be. <http://www.londonminingnetwork.org/>

**090727 US:** *“The League of Women Voters (LWV) of the United States Has a Long History of Fighting the Pollution of Natural Resources in the Interest of Protecting the Environment and Public Health.”* The LWV of Colorado has positions on both hazardous and radioactive materials and the wise and balanced use of water resources in Colorado. The League’s position is that activities involving hazardous and radioactive materials should not take place in areas that supply drinking water, such as sole source aquifers, or in areas with significant renewable resource value, such as prime agricultural lands, aquifers, and significant grazing and forest lands. <http://www.nunnglow.com/latest/league-of-women-voters-of-larimer-county-oppose-uranium-mine-near-nunn.htm>

government. [www.rfkcenter.org/node/370](http://www.rfkcenter.org/node/370)  
**090908 ECUADOR:** *“Thousands of Workers and People From Various Non-Governmental Organizations Marched Against the Correa’s Government.”* Around 4000 people marched Wednesday the 2nd of September on the streets of Quito against the Correa Government. Various popular sections of society sang: “Down the liar! Out the false socialist! Green, green, green is the flag that kills us, the working class! Out the current government which is a slave of mining companies!” [nomineria.blogspot.com/.../miles-de-obreros-y-otras-organizaciones.html](http://nomineria.blogspot.com/.../miles-de-obreros-y-otras-organizaciones.html)

**090818 UK:** *“While Anglo American’s CEO is Among the Most Powerful Women in the World.”* Cynthia Carroll, CEO of Anglo American, is the world’s fourth most powerful woman, says Forbes magazine. See [http://www.forbes.com/2009/08/18/worlds-most-powerful-women-forbes-woman-power-women-09-angela-merkel\\_land.html](http://www.forbes.com/2009/08/18/worlds-most-powerful-women-forbes-woman-power-women-09-angela-merkel_land.html)

**090825 BOLIVIA:** *“Report on Quechua Women.”* Teenage Aymara girls only mature as women in the eyes of their community when they are able to demonstrate great industriousness and knowledge of traditional tasks. But by virtue of that same condition they are denied rights, justice and access to community leadership positions. These are some of the findings of a research study on gender rights in the Bolivian highlands, which illustrates the little-known reality of women who must skilfully manage a wide range of obligations, such as running the household, educating their children, making crafts and working in the fields alongside the men, while not fully enjoying their rights. <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48214>

## Upcoming Events and Other Info

“UN World Survey on the Role of Women in Development 2009”: “Women’s equal access to and control over economic and financial resources is critical for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women and for equitable and sustainable economic growth and development. Long-standing inequalities in the gender distribution of economic and financial resources have placed women at a disadvantage relative to men in their capability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from broader processes of development. Despite considerable progress on many aspects of women’s economic empowerment through, inter alia, increases in educational attainment and share of paid work, deeply entrenched inequality persists as a result of discriminatory norms and practices, and the pace of change has been slow and uneven across regions. The current financial and economic crisis is already threatening the progress made towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The manner in which countries respond to the recession can have disproportionate impacts on women and girls, possibly reversing gains made, particularly through cuts in public spending on health and education and through inequitably designed safety nets. There is also increased risk of reductions in allocations to gender equality and women’s empowerment.”

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/WorldSurvey2009.pdf>

For other upcoming events, conferences and campaigns see the UNIFEM webpage: [http://www.unifem.org/news\\_events/events](http://www.unifem.org/news_events/events).

**“Courageous Women from Sulawesi, Indonesia Share their Stories and Struggles Resisting Mining Activities by Canadian Nickel Mining Corporation Vale Inco.”**

[http://www.youtube.com/view\\_play\\_list?p=6F50E277963577E0](http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=6F50E277963577E0)

**“Women Children and Anglo American”** is a short video documentary about women and children defending their land and survival against the Anglo-American Mining Company, one of the biggest mining companies of the world, in joint venture with Manila Mining Company (MMC).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnA7bqM-84U>

**20-22-05 2010 Christina Conference on Gender Studies-University of Helsinki, Finland.** The 4th Christina conference explores the complex connections among gender, nature and culture. Recent research has increasingly viewed nature and culture as inherently entangled and inseparable, suggesting that nature is often understood through discourses of gender and, conversely, that gender is made sense of through historically contingent assumptions about nature.

<http://www.helsinki.fi/kristiina-instituutti/conference/callforpapers.html>

New Report from Oxfam: **“Women, Communities and Mining: The Gender Impacts of Mining and the Role of Gender Impact Assessment”** [www.oxfam.org.au/resources/filestore/.../OAU-MiningAndGender-1209.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.au/resources/filestore/.../OAU-MiningAndGender-1209.pdf)