

## **Statement of solidarity and condemnation of the violent dispersal of an indigenous community barricade of a suspended mine site in Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines**

In solidarity with the people of Didipio, Nueva Vizcaya in asserting their right to a balanced and healthful ecology, ATM, Kalikasan PNE, LRC-KsK/FoE Philippines, and MiningWatch Canada, as well as other national and international groups, condemn the violent dispersal of members of an indigenous community lawfully barricading the large-scale mining operations of Canadian-Australian OceanaGold Philippines, Inc. (OGPI), in Didipio.

On 6 April 2020, a 100-strong team of regional police escorted three diesel tankers and tried to enter the OceanGold mining site, on the strength of a letter by executive secretary Salvador Medialdea authorizing the entry of the tankers. The diesel was said to be going to be used to drain water seeping into the mining tunnels of OceanaGold's suspended operations.

Some 29 members of an Ifugao indigenous community long opposed to mining barred the entry of the tanker as it violated the suspension order against OceanaGold. Operations have been suspended following the expiration of OceanaGold's operating permit on 20 June 2019. After nine months of peacefully blockading the mine without police interference, on this day the community was overwhelmed by the large police force, and a violent dispersal ensued, which included the beating and arrest of community leader Rolando Pulido.

This dispersal contravened the right of the community to assembly and violated local and court orders that have suspended the operations of OceanaGold. The use of violence by the police to disperse a peaceful assembly of indigenous people is a reflection of the extraordinary latitude that the government has given to the mining industry.

What is even more disconcerting is that that this happened at a time when the country is trying to flatten the curve of corona virus infections. The blockaders were therefore following the guidelines provided to avoid the spread of COVID-19. OceanaGold's interests shifted precious government manpower and resources away from that effort to support its business interests.

While many businesses not involved in providing essential goods have shut down operations, a large-scale mining company like OceanaGold wants to be an exception, all in the name of profit. Greed, indeed, does not sleep.

Extractive activities like mining are symptomatic of an economic order that commodifies nature for profit to the detriment of people who rely on a healthy environment for their food security and livelihood. This is worrying because environmentally destructive activities are known to play a role in the [spread of infectious diseases](#).

The community's barricade is a lawful expression of the indigenous peoples of Didipio, local governments, and solidarity groups in support of a local government order suspending OceanaGold's operations. OceanaGold's operations have depleted ground water and contaminated nearby rivers of Nueva Vizcaya and displaced countless families. The mine has sown division in the community. OceanaGold should not be surprised that many members of the community oppose the renewal (for another 25 years) of a mining project that has caused them strife and suffering.

In view of the above, we call on:

- The **Office of the President** to CANCEL the FTAA renewal application of OceanaGold with finality, on the basis of its atrocious environmental and human rights record.

- The **Philippine Commission on Human Rights** to investigate this violent dispersal in the context of longstanding violations of OceanaGold;
- The **Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)** to issue a cease-and-desist order to Oceana Gold, to suspend their illegal operations.
- The **Department of Interior and Local Government** to investigate on the conduct of members of the police from Region 2, Quirino Province and from the Municipality of Kasibu, and to look into violations of quarantine measures by OceanaGold itself.

In solidarity,

1. 11.11.11 Coalition of Belgian North South Movement
2. 350 Pilipinas
3. 350.org Japan
4. Academia Ciudadã - Citizenship Academy
5. AfrosRD
6. Aid/Watch
7. AID/WATCH (Australia)
8. Akbayan and Gamma Epsilon Int'l Fraternity/Sorority Zeta Chapter
9. AKBAYOUTH
10. Alab Katipunan
11. Alyansa Tigil Mina
12. Amherst College, USA
13. Amigos da Terra Brasil
14. Amigos de la Tierra América Latina y el Caribe - ATALC
15. Amigos de la Tierra Argentina
16. AMIHAN National Federation of Peasant Women
17. Anakbayan Ottawa
18. Anakbayan Ottawa
19. Andrew Lees Trust (ALT UK)
20. Art Atak
21. Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development
22. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
23. Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development
24. Asociación ambiental e cultural Petón do Lobo
25. ATALC
26. Ateneo Human Rights Center
27. Balkan Energy and Forest Trends, Serbia
28. Bandilang Itim
29. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association
30. Bangladesh Krishok Federation
31. Bangladesh Krishok Federation
32. Beyond Extraction
33. Bloque Latinoamericano Berlín
34. Both ENDS, Netherlands
35. Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation (BIRUDO)
36. Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines (UK)
37. CANADA-PHILIPPINES SOLIDARITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
38. CCFD-Terre Solidaire
39. CCMCL BAYWATCH FOUNDATION
40. CENSAT Agua Viva Colombia
41. Centar za zivotnu sredinu/ Friends of the Earth Bosnia and Herzegovina
42. Center for Environmental Concerns - Philippines

43. Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
44. Centre for Environmental Justice/ Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka
45. Centre for Human Rights and Development
46. Centre for Human Rights and Development
47. Centre for Indigenous Conservation and Development Alternatives (CICADA), McGill University, Montreal, Canada
48. Centre for Research and Advocacy, Manipur
49. Centre for Transparency and Freedom of Information
50. Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham
51. Civil Expertise
52. Clarion
53. Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN)
54. COECOCEIBA - Amigos de la Tierra Costa Rica
55. Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network (CEMSOJ)
56. Community Resource Centre Foundation
57. Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia
58. Convergence of Initiatives for Environmental Justice, Inc.
59. Damayan BC
60. Damian Law Offices
61. Defenders Protection Initiative
62. Department of Education
63. Dhaatri Trust
64. Digo Bikas Institute
65. Division Federation of Supreme Students Government of Nueva Vizcaya
66. Earthworks
67. Eath Thrive
68. Eco-Justice Unit, Diocese of New Westminster
69. EnergyTransparency Assosiation
70. Environics Trust
71. European Network on Indigenous Peoples (ENIP)
72. Familie
73. Finnish Asiatic Society
74. Focus on the Global South
75. Forest Foundation
76. Forest Foundation Philippines
77. Forest Peoples Programme
78. FORPA Forest Protection Allies
79. FRIENDS
80. Fresh Eyes, UK
81. Friends of the Earth Australia
82. Friends of the Earth Europe
83. Friends of the Earth International
84. Friends of the Earth Japan
85. Friends of the Earth Netherlands / Milieudefensie
86. Friends of the Earth US
87. Friends of the Siberian Forests, Russia
88. Fundacja "Rozwój TAK - Odkrywki NIE" (Poland)
89. Gender, Commications, Global Mobility Studies Unit NDU Lebanon
90. Global Extractivisms and Alternatives Initiative ( EXALT)
91. Global Forest Coalition
92. IBON Foundation

93. ICCA Consortium
94. Igapo Project
95. Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL)
96. Individual
97. Innabuyog Gabriela
98. Institute for Ecology and Action Anthropology, Germany
99. Institute for Policy Studies, Global Economy Project
100. International Accountability Project
101. International Association of People's Lawyers
102. International IPMSDL
103. Isabela State University
104. ISRDS
105. IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands
106. IWGIA
107. Kalikasan-PNE
108. Karapatab Negros
109. Karen Environmental and Social Action Network
110. Knights of Columbus/ Indigenous People
111. Korea Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM)
112. KRuHA Indonesia
113. Kurawal Foundation, Jakarta
114. KWCHRP
115. Limerick Area Conservation Coalition
116. London Mining Network
117. London Mining Network
118. LRC
119. Malach Consulting
120. Malaya-USA, Indiana University
121. Marea Roja Argentina
122. Marian Supreme Government
123. MENSCHENRECHTE 3000 e.V, Germany
124. Migrante Australia of New South Wales
125. Migrante Canada
126. Mines Minerals & RIGHTS former Editor
127. Mines, Minerals & People
128. Mining Injustice Solidarity Network
129. Mining Watch Canada
130. Mongolian Women's Employment Supporting Federation
131. Mongolian women's fund
132. Mongolian Women's Fund
133. Mouvement Ecologique FoE Lux
134. Myanmar Environmental Legal Services (MELS)
135. Myanmar Environmental Legal Services (MELS)
136. National Secretariat of the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples (ECIP-NS)
137. NDU
138. Nepal Integrated Development Initiatives (NIDI), Nepal
139. NGO Forum on ADB
140. Nilad Environment Network
141. NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark
142. NTFP EP Philippines
143. NTFP-EP Asia

144. NTFP-EP India
  145. NTFP-EP Indonesia
  146. NTFP-EP Malaysia
  147. NTFP-EP Vietnam/SIE
  148. Nueva Vizcaya Youth Leaders Network
  149. Oil Workers' Rights Protection Organization Public Union
  150. On behalf of Development Studies, University of Helsinki
  151. Oxfam
  152. Oyu Tolgoi Watch
  153. Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC)
  154. Parish Youth Ministry
  155. PASA
  156. Philippine Misereor Partnership Inc.
  157. Philippines Australia Solidarity Association
  158. PowerShift e.V.
  159. PROCESS Foundation Panay, Inc
  160. Professor (retired) Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
  161. Publish What You Pay
  162. Publish What You Pay Australia
  163. PWYP
  164. PWYP Azerbaijan
  165. PYM
  166. Red Cross Youth
  167. REDES-Friends of the Earth Uruguay
  168. RwB
  169. Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia)
  170. Salva la Selva
  171. Salvemos las Villuercas
  172. Save Our Sky Blue Waters and Save Lake Superior Association
  173. Save Our Sperrins (SOS), IRELAND
  174. SIBUYAN AGAINST MINING
  175. SK
  176. Sk secretary of Bone South Aritao Nueva Vizcaya And Vice President Of Kabataan Kilos
- Kontra Droga At Terorismo
177. Solidariedade Moçambique
  178. Spirit of Eureka South Australia
  179. Stiftung Asienhaus
  180. Sulong UBC
  181. Supreme Student Government
  182. Tanggapang Panligal ng Katutubong Pilipino (PANLIPI)
  183. Task Force Detainees of the Philippines
  184. Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP)
  185. The Development Institute
  186. The Free West Papua Campaign
  187. The Gaia Foundation
  188. The Greens Movement of Georgia/Friends of the Earth-Georgia
  189. The Yemeni Organization for Economic and Social Development
  190. TKPT-Jatam
  191. Tuklas Pilipinas Society
  192. Unifying Sectoral Responses on Environmental Protocols in Sibonga (USREPS)
  193. United Church of Canada

- 194. Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil / Institute for Advanced Study, USA
- 195. UNLAD-BLFFA
- 196. URGEWALD
- 197. vzw Climaxi
- 198. Water JUSTICE AND GENDER
- 199. Witness Radio Organisation - Uganda
- 200. WomanHealth Philippines
- 201. WomanHealth Philippines
- 202. WWF-Philippines
- 203. Youth For Environment Education And Development Foundation (YFEED Foundation), Nepal

#### **Timeline of Events leading to the Violent Dispersal**

- June 20, 2019  
OceanaGold's permit to mine expires. No activity may be conducted by the company. President Duterte, the only person who can authorize a permit, has not granted a renewal of the mine's permit.
- June 20, 2019  
Acting on the permit expiry, Nueva Vizcaya governor Carlos Padilla came out with an advisory enjoining the company to suspend its operations.
- June 25, 2019  
Governor Padilla files an Executive Order ordering the provincial police, the provincial environment office, and the municipal and barangay (village) governments to enforce the suspension of mining operations.
- July 1, 2019 up to the present  
With overwhelming support from government institutions (from the barangay, provincial, and congressional levels) and people's organizations and solidarity groups, the local government and the community mount a people's barricade (that continues to this day) to enforce the executive order.
- July 2019  
OceanaGold files petitions for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction against the local government, both of which were turned down by the Regional Trial Court of Nueva Vizcaya. These court decisions reinforce the legality of the executive order of the provincial government to suspend Oceana's operations.
- January 21, 2020  
Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea sends a letter to DENR secretary Roy Cimatu granting authority to the mining company to bring fuel into the mine site, supposedly for dewatering activities of the mine's project. This letter is cited by the PNP in its dispersal operation.
- April 6, 2020  
Provincial and municipal police escort three fuel tankers and try to disperse the people's barricade against OceanaGold's mining site. Community leader Ronaldo Pulido is arrested.