



"State of Siege" – Escobal, Guatemala. Photo courtesy James Rodríguez.

Highlights of 2015

International campaigns – Holding government and industry accountable for mining abuses abroad

Calling on Canada to be open for justice, not just open for business

Those harmed by Canadian oil, gas and mining operations abroad should have recourse to justice in Canada. Canada needs an Ombudsman that is independent, impartial, and empowered to investigate complaints, and Canadian companies must be able to be sued for damages in Canada no matter where they operate.

In addition to providing support to plaintiffs and lawyers bringing suits in Canada, outlined below, we worked closely with the Canadian Network for Corporate Accountability to develop a detailed brief on how an effective Ombudsman would work. It's available on the CNCA website.

Preventing corporate abuse of non-judicial grievance mechanisms

MiningWatch and Rights Accountability in Development (RAID)

revisited the North Mara gold mine (Acacia Mining, formerly African Barrick Gold) to conduct a second human rights field assessment. Interviews with more than fifty victims revealed ongoing high levels of violence by mine security, as well as serious allegations against the mine's grievance mechanism. We raised these concerns with the company and released a summary of our findings. Barrick/Acacia responded and we continue to press the company to address these issues.

Tahoe on Trial: Raising the profile of B.C. lawsuit over mining abuses in Guatemala

In November 2015, the British Columbia Supreme Court declined jurisdiction over a lawsuit against Tahoe Resources over violence at its Guatemala mine site. The judge appeared wilfully blind to the gravity of the case and obstacles that the victims face to bring a transnational corporation to justice.

We worked to put the suit in the context of the broader community struggle in Guatemala to protect agricultural livelihoods from further

mine expansion and related militarization of the area. This case has become an important example of why we need access to justice in Canada, as well as respect for communities that say no mining activi-

ties. We will continue to support community efforts and monitor the suit as it moves to the appeal stage.

Regulatory effectiveness in Canada – The need for regulations that protect people and the environment

Preventing mine waste failures

The years 2014 and 2015 saw unprecedented tailings dam failures and mine waste spills deeply impacting ecosystems, waters, and livelihoods in Canada, U.S., Mexico and Brazil. MiningWatch has taken a leading role to address this issue in Canada and has supported international actions.

Following the January release of the Independent Expert Panel Report on the massive Mount Polley mine waste spill, we have pressured the Province of B.C., as well as other provinces and the federal government, to heed the Panel's warnings and not to delay fully implementing its recommendations to prevent future mine waste spills.

We initiated and coordinated a letter campaign, signed by over 70 environmental organizations, scientists, and First Nations, urging Canadian Mines Ministers to halt the permitting of wet tailing facilities for new mines, and support alternative, safer storage methods such as dry stack tailings.

We took the letter to the annual Mines Ministers Conference, leading to a commitment to review the Mount Polley spill and "determine how all jurisdictions can strengthen mine regulations."

We co-organised the first British Columbia Mining Action Network meeting in Vancouver, which strengthened community and orga-

nizational networks. And in response to the B.C. government's Mining Code review, we joined with local organizations to detail how B.C. mining laws should be updated to prevent future tailings disasters in a comprehensive report, "Path to Zero Failures".

Reforming Mining Regulations in Ontario

Ontario is the largest mining jurisdiction in Canada, but still the only one where mines are not automatically subjected to a provincial environmental assessment (EA) and public consultation process. This was one of our key recommendations submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines as part of public consultations on the renewal of its Mineral Development Strategy.

We also petitioned the Auditor General of Ontario to address this issue and undertake a broader "Value-for-Money" analysis of Ontario's management of the mining sector. The Auditor General's Office sought our input for its investigation and, in December, published an alarming report on Ontario's poor economic and environmental management of the mining sector. Our subsequent analysis showed that Ontario ranks worst in Canada for covering environmental liability of mine site clean-up.

Movement building and community support – Working in common cause

In Canada

Stopping the Harper Creek mine, B.C.

We participated in the review of the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Yellowhead Mining for the proposed Harper Creek mine on the traditional unceded territory of the Secwepemc Nation, near Vavenby, British Columbia. We found that the planned mine had real potential for disaster and should be stopped.

In addition, the company's consultation with the Secwepemc First Nations has been improperly conducted and the mine does not have their consent. Yellowhead stalled the project after the provincial government required a review of the tailings facility design.

Halting the Ajax open pit mine project in Kamloops, B.C.

The proposed KGHM Ajax open pit copper and gold mine on the outskirts of Kamloops has raised serious concerns over health impacts, water, and a potential massive tailings spill. Multiple calls for a comprehensive review by a federal assessment panel have been refused; there is only a joint B.C.-federal review without a formal panel.

We provided strategic and technical support to local groups and First Nations affected by the project.

Health impacts at the Malartic open pit mine, Quebec

The Malartic mine is the largest gold mine in Canada and the only big open pit mine located in an urban area in Canada. Health impacts on this community of 3,500 have been much greater than anticipated. More than a third of residents are significantly affected by the mine operations and wish to leave, especially those closer to the mine.

Residents also fear more impacts, as the proponent is seeking to double the size of the mine. We have provided ongoing support to local residents, who initiated discussions with the company to reach a formal resettlement and compensation agreement. Unfortunately, the talks failed; residents are now considering legal options.

Protecting critical waters from the Goliath Gold project, Ontario

Treasury Metals is proposing a combined open pit/underground

mine a few kilometres upstream from Wabigoon First Nation, already massively contaminated with methyl mercury dumped by the pulp-and-paper industry. The area is also used for traditional activities by Eagle Lake First Nations, and hosts many cottages.

We provided technical and strategic support to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, as well as to Treaty 3 Tribal Council, in the context of the ongoing federal environmental assessment. We also identified a water quality expert for the review.

Internationally

Stopping the Suits: International investment agreements threaten people and the environment

A joint trip to El Salvador in early 2015 with the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies improved our coordination with the National Roundtable on Metallic Mining (La Mesa) and local organizations, laying the groundwork for a collaborative research project to look at OceanaGold's current activities in the department of Cabañas.

We also brought a delegation to Canada from El Salvador, including the Adjunct Attorney for the Environment from the Salvadoran Human Rights Ombudsman's office. The delegation raised the profile of the OceanaGold (formerly Pacific Rim) suit against El Salvador with the public, MPs, and the media in anticipation of a final ruling on the case. It also highlighted how investor-state arbitration threatens democratic decision-making, public health, and the environment both domestically and internationally. This coalition work is ongoing and a decision on the Salvador case is still pending.

Meanwhile, we strengthened our participation in trade justice networks in Canada to build attention on the damage caused by investment protection frameworks.

Defending dissent in defence of land and environment

We jointly published a report with the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, "In the National Interest? Criminalization of Land and Environment Defenders in the Americas", which includes cases from Guatemala, Peru, Mexico, Ecuador, and Canada. After its release in the fall 2015, we brought guests from Mexico and Guatemala

who helped promote the report in Canada.

Esperanza Salazar from Bios Iguana, an environmental organization in Colima, Mexico, spoke of Mexican state involvement in violence against the Nahua Indigenous community of Zacualpan, oriented to discredit and destroy her own organization.

Independent Guatemalan journalist Luis Solano described how

communities affected by Tahoe Resources' Escobal mine in southeastern Guatemala have been living "Under Siege" – the title of Solano's six-month investigation, which we co-commissioned with the International Platform against Impunity. The study revealed the dramatic extent of the company's militarized security strategy to quash community opposition to the project.

Communications & advocacy – Getting the word out, reinforcing credibility, ensuring relevance

Uncovering Canadian Embassy complicity in mining abuses in Mexico

We released a joint report with the United Steelworkers, based on an extensive review of documents obtained from the Canadian government through an Access to Information request: *Unearthing Canadian Complicity: Excellon Resources, the Canadian Embassy and the Violation of Land and Labour Rights in Durango, Mexico*.

The report revealed that despite detailed knowledge of community and worker complaints, the Canadian Embassy in Mexico actively supported Excellon. It shared privileged information with the company, facilitated key government contacts and was accepting of repression used against peaceful protests.

Timed at a moment when the community was awaiting the results of legal efforts to rescind their land-use contract with the company, the report got good pick-up in Mexican and Latin American media, and our findings were highlighted on CBC national news.

Tax avoidance is not "victimless"

MiningWatch helped the Dutch Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations, SOMO, develop a report on tax avoidance and austerity in Greece. "Fool's Gold" reveals that Canadian firm Eldorado Gold uses shell companies in the Netherlands to avoid paying taxes in Greece, with a financing structure that channels interest payments

from its Greek subsidiary via the Netherlands to tax haven Barbados.

This case is emblematic: Canada supports tax avoidance through lax disclosure requirements and international tax treaties, both of which mean companies can minimize tax paid anywhere, including both Canada and wherever they operate. Eldorado is also heavily supported by Export Development Canada.

Ontario, too, has its share of corporate tax avoidance. We are working with Canadians for Tax Fairness to raise public awareness and generate media attention. An early result: we were quoted extensively by CBC Radio's Rita Celli in her radio series "Mining for more: How much is mining really worth to Ontario?"

In Quebec, MiningWatch and our partner *Coalition Quebec Meilleure Mine* were also quoted extensively on a tax evasion scheme uncovered for financing the Royal Nickel open pit project.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): Human rights, Indigenous protocols, and good practice

In May, we cosponsored and contributed to a public symposium in Ottawa to discuss the status of FPIC in Canadian and international law and how it may be exercised in crucial decisions facing Indigenous peoples today.

Connecting to new people and reaching a wider audience

Our Facebook fans, Twitter followers, website visitors, and e-mail lists were very active – and numbers, as well as good interactions, retweets, and 'shares' kept rising with over 11,500 Twitter followers and some 5,400 Facebook fans by year-end, and a total of 480,000 website pageviews for the year.

Staff in 2015

Catherine Coumans, Research Coordinator
Jamie Kneen, Communications & Outreach Coordinator
Ugo Lapointe, Canada Program Coordinator
Diana Martin, replacing Susan Murdock as Administration & Resource Development Coordinator
Jen Moore, Latin America Program Coordinator

Board of Directors in 2015

Co-chair: Earl Commanda, Ottawa, Ontario
Treasurer: Ian Thomson, Ottawa, Ontario
Secretary: Esperanza Moreno, Gatineau, Québec
Directors: Ken Luckhardt, Toronto, Ontario
Jennifer Simard, Kapuskasing, Ontario
Jean Symes, Ottawa, Ontario
Arnold Yellowman, Sarnia, Ontario
Kevin O'Reilly, Yellowknife, NWT (resigned in September)
Laura Calm Wind, Thunder Bay, Ontario
Anne Sam, Fort St. James, British Columbia
Bruce Maclean, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Tracy Glynn, Fredericton, New Brunswick

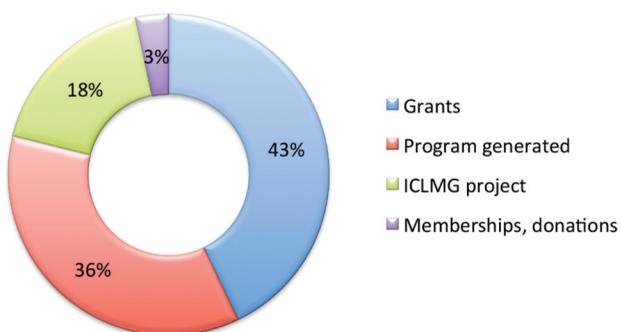
Members in 2015

1. Alternatives North
2. Bathurst Sustainable Development
3. Bedford Mining Alert
4. Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA)
5. Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)
6. Centre for Longterm Environmental Action Newfoundland/Labrador (CLEAN)
7. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
8. Development and Peace
9. Friends of the Earth
10. Friends of the Stikine Society
11. Innu Nation
12. Inter Pares
13. International Institute of Concern for Public Health (IICPH)
14. Kairos - Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
15. Mixedwood Forest Society
16. Nature Canada
17. Northwatch
18. OPSEU (Ontario Public Service Employees Union) Social Justice Fund
19. Polaris Institute
20. Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)
21. Quebec Native Women
22. Rivers Without Borders
23. Sierra Club of Canada
24. Steelworkers Humanity Fund
25. Unifor Social Justice Fund
26. United Church of Canada
27. Yukon Conservation Society (YCS)

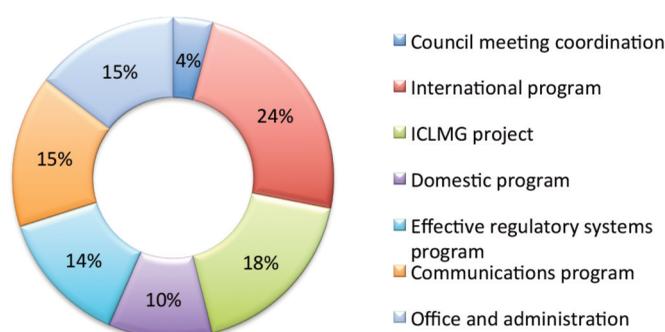
MININGWATCH CANADA / MINES ALERTE CANADA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2015

	2015	2014
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 89,609	\$ 53,393
Short-term investments	138,924	30,000
Accounts receivable	25,062	12,479
Due from Canary Research Institute	83,563	110,045
Prepaid expenses	2,319	3,404
	339,477	209,321
INVESTMENTS	-	105,262
	\$ 339,477	\$ 314,583
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 14,559	\$ 17,024
Government remittances payable	5,567	1,938
Deferred revenue	93,518	75,098
	113,644	94,060
NET ASSETS		
Reserve fund - internally restricted	\$ 152,000	\$ 147,000
Legal fund - internally restricted	25,000	25,000
Unrestricted net assets	48,833	48,523
	225,833	220,523
	\$ 339,477	\$ 314,583

Total Revenue
\$701,546



Total Expense
\$696,236



(Please note that the audited financial statements are available separately.)

The Organization is thankful for support from the following organizations:

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| Canadian Labour Congress | Sigrid Rausing Trust |
| Canadian Union of Public Employees | Swift Foundation via Global Greengrants Fund |
| Inter Pares | United Church of Canada |
| Mountain Equipment Co-op | Unifor Social Justice Fund |
| Ontario Public Service Employees Union | Wallace Global Fund |
| Primate's World Relief and Development Fund | |