

Jean-Rabel, Haiti
April 21, 2020

On the Occasion of Newmont's Annual General Meeting, Communities in Haiti Say NO to Gold Mining

Communities under metal mining permit in Haiti must remain vigilant to prevent the extractive industry and the State from pillaging our resources and continuing their projects that destroy lives and communities! The undersigned, engaged citizens and organizations from the Northwest department, encourage communities that are under threat of metal mining, especially farmers, to remain vigilant of the State and mining companies, and ensure that they do not take advantage of the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent economic crisis to push their projects forward and take our land. On this day we denounce, with all our might, the government of Jovenel-Jouthe for forcing more than 300 farmer families off of the land that they had worked for more than 25 years in the commune Caracol and Terrier Rouge, in the Northeast department.

We remember that it was after the earthquake on January 12th, 2010, that Newmont arrived in our communities and forced the farmers of Jean-Rabel to sign a document that gave the company the right to use their land. This document violated our rights to work our land. We remember, too, the lies and misinformation that company officials shared to zombify the population in order to pillage our resources in the last meeting, on July 22nd, 2017 in the community of Pelye, in the 6th section of Jean-Rabel. **Lies and propaganda do not fly here!**

History demonstrates how extractive industry companies often take advantage of vulnerable communities in moments of crisis, causing damage, violating human rights, and destroying ecological equilibrium. We recall that after the economic crisis in 2007-2008, extractive industry companies went around the world in search of metals to mine. At the same time, Newmont was accumulating permits to explore for gold in Haiti. Between 2006 and 2009, Newmont was granted more than 50 exploration permits for the little piece of land that Haitian people call home. After the January 12, 2010 earthquake, the international community encouraged the Haitian government to pursue mining projects, without considering the negative consequences that Haiti's degraded environment, people, and ecological systems would face. Further, Haiti sits upon fault lines—it is not only Port-au-Prince that is at risk of the earth shaking.

Keep Watch Over Newmont!

After Newmont and Goldcorp merged in January of 2019, Newmont is the biggest gold mining company in the world. Newmont holds the most permits of any companies in Haiti. They have previously operated bases in Jean-Rabel, in the Northwest department, and La Miel in the Central Plateau department, and communities have protested against their exploration activities. Although coronavirus is wreaking havoc across the world, mining companies continue to operate, often putting their workers at risk.

Newmont is holding a big meeting today, Tuesday April 21st 2020, with its shareholders. We see how Newmont has **violated the rights of Máxima Acuña** in Peru. The way that Newmont manipulated Haitian farmers and forced them to sign a paper that revoked their right to their land suggests that we could be on the same path as Máxima. **Farmers cannot live without land, water and seeds, and we**

know that once mining companies build a mine, our water and land are threatened. We have learned about the real consequences of mining from communities that have already lived or are already living it. For example, in 2016 a fellow activist of Máxima from Peru traveled to La Miel to share about the farmers' struggle to show that water is more valuable than gold. In Jean-Rabel, an activist from El Salvador, where the government concluded that metal mining is not an appropriate activity, prohibiting it by law, showed photos and shared stories of the movement to protect peoples' lives. These exchanges gave us great strength.

Solidarity is an important tool. All communities under threat of metal mining or that are already victim to metal mining should unite in solidarity! It is often the same company that makes the sausage, exploiting resources, destroying the environment, violating the rights of a population to live as humans on the land. In many cases, companies, governments and investors are the three actors that come together against the community. We must stand together, community to community, people to people—this is the best strategy against metal mining, which threatens to destroy us.

We stand vigilant and united!

Signatories:

Tèt kole ti peyizan Ayisyen (Small Holder Farmers Heads Together, TK), Northwest department: Sidolin PIERRE

Kowòdinasyon òganizasyon peyizan ba Basenble (Coalition of Farmers Organizations in Bassin Bleu, COPBB), Northwest department: Ylleson AUGUSTAVE

Vizyon sitwayen pou devlopman Nòdwès (Citizen Vision for Development of the Northwest, VISDNO): Veloude CADET

Asosyasyon Travayè Roger Bananye blan (Workers' Association Roger Bananye, ATRB): Rosly ROSIMA

Sosyete Kiltirèl Jèn Ayisyen (Young Haitian Cultural Society, SOKIJA): Watson GERCILUS

Mouvement des organisations pour le progrès du Mole St-Nicolas (Movement of organizations for the development of Mole St. Nicolas, MOPM): Wilner NORTILUS

Association des Planteurs, Eleveurs, Pêcheurs de l'Anse-A-Foleur (Association of Planters, breeders, and fiserhmen of Anse-a-Foleur, APEPAF): Theophyle AUGUSTIN

Asosyans Jèn pou Liberasyon Lakou Lakay (Association of Young People for Haitian Liberation AJ3L): Kerby JOSEPH