

**Presentation at National Roundtable on Corporate Social Responsibility and the
Canadian Extractive Sector in Developing Countries
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Submitted by Amanda Quiche, a representative of the Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network

Hi, my name is Amanda Quiche. I come from a beautiful land, full of rich natural resources, but unfortunately it is disappearing. I come to tell you a story with not a happy ending. But you can help me to make it end happy.

My people have been struggling for more than 500 hundred years ever since Europeans came and took over the land of Guatemala leaving misery and poverty that persists to this day in 2006. Not long ago from 1977 to 1983, Exmibal, a subsidiary of the large Canadian corporation INCO was implicated in several violent and repressive acts and murders of 100 Mayas and many others including activists, university students, and professors who were critical of INCO (Jamie Swift: Big Nickel: Inco at Home and Abroad).

In 1999, the UN documented many cases where murders and abuses where associated with INCO. Because abuses had already happen and there has been no justice, now there is resistance to more mining. Now Canadian companies and INCO have returned. Inco sold el Estor operation to Skye Resources but still owns 17% of Skye's shares.

Recently Mayans took back their lands in September 2006 but international media unfairly report that Mayans are "invading their land" but the land was always Mayan land. In January 11, 2006 a farmer was killed and 20 others were seriously injured in action opposing the Canadian/American Glamis mining operation in Guatemala. The farmer was killed in a confrontation with 2,000 soldiers and police who were sent to protect a convoy of equipments owned by the Canadian mining company. This was a culmination of 40 days of protest.

ILO Convention 169 was violated when Glamis Gold obtained exploration permits for its Marlin mine project under the Guatemalan administration.

ILO was ratified in 1996 as a key element in the peace accords that ended 36 years of civilian war in Guatemala. Glamis Gold claims to have held meetings attended by local residents but there is no evidence that they had any real influence in the decision to establish the mine.

Former Canadian ambassador James Lambert defended the interests of the Canadian companies. He wrote an article in one of local newspapers about the positive impacts of development for communities where mines operate. What kind of development was he talking about? Development of illness, poverty, misery and pollution for Guatemalan people but of course development for the government who is making agreement for it's

own benefits. For example, the current Guatemalan president has many family relatives working in the Skye-Inco project.

My recommendations include:

Breaking the Silence Network members demand that the Canadian government stop promoting Canadian Corporation that undermine Mayan rights in Guatemala and in other countries.

Local organizations and communities affected by mining are demanding that the government delay work on the Glamis Gold Mining Operation and establish a transparent and public dialogue with the communities affect by the mine.

Local communities are also asking that Glamis Gold, the World Bank and Canadian Government insist that the Guatemala Government not call in the military to forcibly escort transport truck and equipment into these regions.

It is long overdue that Canadian corporations be regulated in Canada for crimes they committed overseas when laws in the countries where they are operating do not protect basic human rights and environment

My hopes for Guatemala's future include it being able to benefit from it's own natural resources. We hope that mining industries develop in a manner that respects the rights of Mayan people, international laws and the environment.