

# Targeting Canadian Profiteers of the War in Colombia



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The dirty war that has ravaged Colombia for decades has been and continues to be the cause of massacres, forced displacement, torture, political assassinations and the imprisonment of dissidents. This is not a made-in-Colombia conflict, completely removed from Canada; on the contrary, the Canadian government and many Canadian companies—principally in the oil and mining sector—are present and actively doing damage in Colombia.

The Canadian government has presented extractive industry initiatives as international development projects that go to benefit average Colombians. However, far from aiding in development, Canadian investment in the region is responsible for environmental destruction, militarization, and numerous human rights violations including political repression, non-respect for workplace norms, the denial of the right of workers to unionize, non-recognition of land rights, etc.

As Canadians, we stand in solidarity with social organizations in Colombia to declare loud and clear: The war in Colombia is an imperialist one, financed and fuelled by the economic interests of the North. Our international development agency (CIDA) played a critical role in drafting Colombian legislation that favours foreign companies. Our Conservative government signed a free trade agreement with Colombia, legitimizing the paramilitary state and falsely proclaiming the country a democracy. Our oil and mining companies protect the security of their investments by employing military brigades to protect mines and oil pipelines (see excerpt below). Our highly-subsidized agricultural products are dumped in Colombia at unbeatably low prices that hurt small farmers and destroy the local economy. Paramilitary groups 'clear' the countryside for companies to set-up shop by massacring and forcibly displacing the people to whom the land belongs. Hit men are hired by the Colombian government (or multinational companies) to assassinate union leaders.

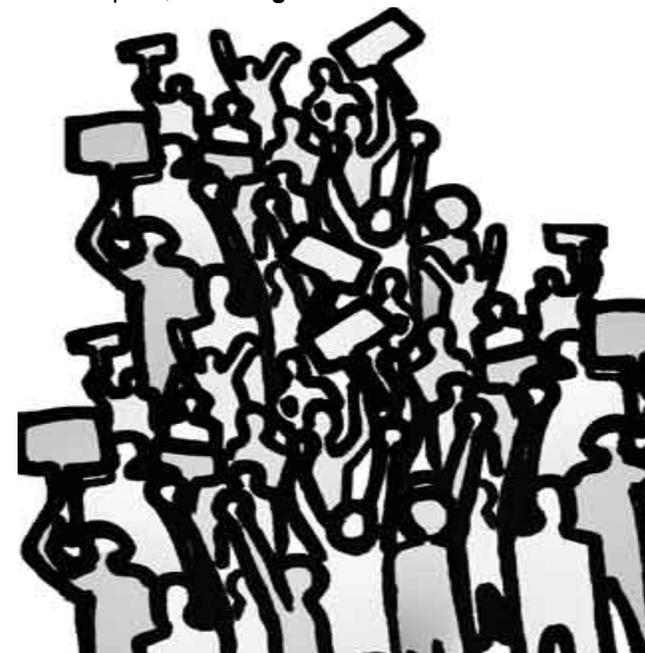
In fact, the Colombian military itself acts in the service of foreign companies:

*The Colombian weekly magazine Semana (June 18, 2011) reports that 11% of all military troops in the country, or roughly 30,000 soldiers, are assigned to protect oil and mining activities. Many of these troops collaborate with private security and mercenary companies. According to the former Colombian Minister of Mines, Rodrigo Rivera, in some Colombian departments, up to 80% of military troops are assigned to protect oil interests.*

(Caracol, August 9, 2011).

We denounce this war, which destroys the lives and dignity of Colombians, while enriching the local oligarchy and by extension the foreign interests that support them. For the reasons above, the PASC has launched a campaign to monitor Canadian business interests in Colombia, and to condemn the ways in which these companies both fuel the conflict and profit from it. In this vein, the PASC wishes to target Canadian companies and their stockholders, which we deem to be "war profiteers."

Because our silence renders us complicit, **let's target Canadian war profiteers!**



## **The Canadian Government Defends War Profiteers**

The Government of Canada argues that it defends 'its interests' with vigour, in order to 'secure Canadian investments' and 'develop markets' for companies and products abroad. The following are five ways in which this imperialist strategy has had a direct impact on increasing poverty and non-respect for human rights in Colombia:

### **The reform of the Colombian mining code for the benefit of foreign companies**

The new mining code in Colombia seems like it was made for Canadian companies, and in many ways, it was. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded the rewriting of the code, along with a number of corporate sponsors: BP Canada Energy, Cargill, Chevron Canada, Conoco, Dow Chemicals, Mobil, Shell, Total Fina ELF, and UNOCAL. The Colombian government hired the Canadian Energy Research Institute (CERI) to draft the new legislation, and CERI itself contracted the law firm Martinez-Cordoba and Associates for the project. At the time, the firm represented more than half of all Canadian mining companies listed on the Colombian extractive industry registry. Colombia's new mining code (law 685) was adopted in 2001, and between 2002 and 2009, foreign investment in the sector grew by 500%. Lawyers for Canadian mining companies seem to have done their homework: Today, Canadian companies own nearly half of all mining exploration projects in Colombia.

### **The privatization of the telecommunications sector**

In 1995, CIDA issued a \$4 million grant to the consulting firm Destrier Management Consultants (Ottawa) for a project that would "contribute to the liberalization of the telecommunications sector in Colombia." As part of this same initiative, Export Development Canada (EDC) gave

Nortel a \$130 million grant for its contract to liquidate the Colombian state telecommunications company TELECOM.

### **Financing and support of Plan Pacifico**

Plan Pacifico is a project aimed at increasing the exploitation of natural resources and international trade in the Pacific region of Colombia, particularly in the Choco Department. It includes provisions for the construction of a stretch of the Panamerican Highway through the region, a deep-water port, large African palm plantations (for the production of bio-fuels), and the 'mapping' of bio-genetic resources. In 1995, CIDA issued a grant of \$241,861 to Radarsat International Inc. (Ottawa) for consulting services and technical assistance to the Colombian government in order to initiate the Plan Pacifico.

### **The Signing of the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement**

In signing the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, the Canadian government was more concerned with its political objectives than it was with its economic ones. Above all, Canada was lending a political hand to the government of Alvaro Uribe, which at the time was unable to reach a similar agreement with the United States. Prior to Canada's signing, no other government dared to sign a free trade agreement with Colombia, given Uribe's support for the paramilitary strategy and his war against social and labour organizations. The agreement, signed in 2008, and adopted by the Canadian parliament in 2010, went into effect in August 2011. The U.S. has since followed in Canada's footsteps, signing its own FTA with Colombia shortly thereafter.

### **The Promotion and financing of partnerships between Canadian NGOs and mining companies**

In September, 2011, the Canadian Minister of International Cooperation announced a new funding program to promote partnerships between Canadian

mining companies and Canadian NGOs. As a result, Colombia is now home to one of three pilot projects aimed at promoting so-called public-private partnerships for economic development.

CIDA already runs similar programs, including the Energy, Environment and Population Program, which grants companies up to \$500,000 to participate in the creation of a 'common vision between governments, the oil and gas industry, and indigenous people, concerning the development of oil and gas projects.' Another such program, entitled, 'Mining Sector - Strengthening the Capacity of Indigenous People,' encourages indigenous people to accept mining projects on their land.

All these initiatives are likely a response to the bad press that Canadian mining companies have received in recent years, especially when it comes to relationships with local communities. According to a study by the

Canadian Centre for the Study of Resource Conflict, Canadian companies are responsible for 33% of all mining-related conflicts in the world. Among these incidents, 60% involve problems with local communities, and 40% are a result of environmental damage. Private security companies are implicated in 30% of all cases.



The Mining Association of Canada, a lobby group representing mining interests, has applauded the new public-private partnership initiative, which aside from providing a new source of public funds to multinational companies, allows them to clean up their image. This improves mining companies'

chances of being accepted, at least initially, by local communities. Therefore, under the guise of "corporate social responsibility," the private sector—aided by the complicity of the Canadian government—is effectively using NGO's to pacify resistance to their projects.

### The Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP and CSIS in Colombia

- Colombia is one of the member countries of Canada's Military Training Cooperation Program (MTCP) for the 2011-2014 cycle.

- The maritime forces of the Canadian Army also participate in the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S), a military strategy in the so-called War on Drugs. Canada provides the JIATF-S with war ships, submarines, and CP-140 Aurora maritime patrolling aircrafts.

- As part of its Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP), Canada has given \$694,000 to the 'Legal Regime against Terrorism in Colombia' project, which aims to strengthen anti-terrorist legislation there. The program also calls for the Military Training Cooperation Program to offer training to members of the Colombian Armed Forces on new technology and intelligence management.

- The RCMP also collaborates with the Colombian national police on investigations into 'terrorist' organizations and drug traffickers. The RCMP also provides training to the Colombian national police.

- CSIS and the RCMP collaborate with Colombian intelligence services.

- In 1999, during the first year of Plan Colombia, the Department of National Defence sold more than 40 Huey Bell CH-135 helicopters to the American State Department. Thirty-three of these helicopters were redirected to Colombia as part of Plan Colombia.

## Talisman Energy and Enbridge

Talisman Energy is a Canadian company, based in Calgary that specializes in oil and gas extraction. Talisman is known in Quebec for its involvement in hydraulic fracturing, but is also highly criticized for its activities in the Soudan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia, Iraq and Algeria, among others. Present in Colombia for more than 10 years, the company prides itself on its promotion of human rights. Ironically, in 2010, in partnership with Ecopetrol (the formerly government-owned company dismantled due to the rise of public-private partnerships) Talisman Energy bought oil exploitation concessions from one of the most infamous companies in Colombia, British Petroleum (BP). Following its disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, BP was quick to distance itself from its poorly-reputed affiliate in Colombia.

In 2009, BP had been forced to pay millions of dollars in damages to Colombian farmers in order to avoid a lawsuit accusing the company of profiting from the violence and terror perpetrated by paramilitary groups hired to protect 730km of the OCENSA oil pipeline, which BP utilized. Enbridge, another Canadian company, has been the largest shareholder in the OCENSA oil pipeline since 1994. (Up until 2000, Enbridge owned the pipeline in partnership with TransCanada Pipelines). In order to protect its concessions in Colombia, Enbridge hired British military contractor Defence Systems Colombia (DSC). DSC worked closely with Brigade 14 of the Colombian army, providing equipment for soldiers, and running a civilian informant program. The program was created to encourage citizens to share information with the army Brigade 14, which was then under investigation for its alleged collaboration with paramilitary groups. The brigade was accused of various crimes, including the massacre of 90 civilians in Segovia in 1998. At the time, an employee of the DSC branch in Colombia admitted to the British media that his work consisted of coordinating a network of spies near the pipeline in order to control union and community leaders.

The pipeline—owned by Enbridge and transporting oil exploited by Talisman Energy—is now home to 17 military bases, housing 1400 soldiers assigned to

protect it. In addition to the political violence caused by the security apparatus surrounding the pipeline, the actual construction of the pipeline has forced nearly 350 small farmers to abandon their land due to contamination. Enbridge plans to widen the OCENSA pipeline in 2012, and begin construction of the new OAP pipeline, designed to transport Colombian oil to Asian markets by way of the Pacific coast.

It must be noted that when the president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Perrin Beatty, sent a letter to the Government of Canada in May 2008 encouraging it to ratify a free trade agreement with Colombia, representatives of three prominent Canadian oil companies signed as well: Enbridge, Talisman Energy, and Nexen. Canadian oil companies are increasingly interested in extracting Colombian resources, especially given the privatization of the formerly state-owned oil company, Ecopetrol, which occurred as a result of the CIDA-backed legislative energy reform in Colombia.

Oil companies also receive security guarantees from the Colombian government. On a tour of Canada in 2010, the National Oil and Gas Agency of Colombia promised investors that it would form a new military brigade to protect companies as they carry out exploration activities. This represents a new step towards the privatization of security in Colombia, as military outfits previously only protected exploitation activities, not exploration. This new military battalion will be added to the 11 others included in the “Special Plan for Energy and Transport” (comprised of 12,000 soldiers) and to the special brigades. All to please foreign companies like Talisman Energy, which announced in 2010 that it would invest \$80 million in new oil exploration projects in Colombia.

### War profiteers also have names and addresses:

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## Pacific Rubiales

Canadian oil company Pacific Rubiales Energy employs roughly 14,000 contract workers at Campo Rubiales, in the Puerto Gaítan region of the Meta department. These workers, paid on thirty-day contracts, are subjected to up to 18-hour work days and can work up to 40 days in a row without time off. The company pays the workers minimum wage, which is equal to only one-fourth of the standard wage for oil workers in Colombia. Due to the isolation of Pacific Rubiales' oil fields as well as the lack of transportation, workers must live in makeshift tents that house roughly 240 people.

For the past 6 years, the inhabitants of Puerto Gaítan have demanded that the company carry out a number of environmental and social reforms. These include reducing contamination, changing local hiring practices, and investing in infrastructure. They have also demanded respect for a number of workers' rights, including those specified in Colombian labour law, as well as their right to unionize. Pacific Rubiales, however, refuses to negotiate in good faith, threatening to fire any worker who attempts to unionize.

The work conflict has recently heated up, as 6,000 contract workers have declared themselves in 'Permanent Assembly,' in order to organize local communities in support of their cause. The military has systematically quashed protests organized by workers and local residents, injuring roughly 50 people. In response to these demonstrations, oil companies in the region, (including Pacific Rubiales) fired about 7000 workers suspected of carrying out union activities. At the same time, union leaders received death threats from paramilitary groups.

On September 20, 2011, acting on orders from the Colombian government, the National Army and Police dispersed a crowd of protestors using stun grenades modified with pieces of shrapnel, tear gas, and rubber bullets. Pacific Rubiales also blocked the public road between the city of Puerto Gaítan and its oil fields, preventing local residents from accessing

their land. Given the company's failure to respect negotiations with the Colombian national oil workers union (USO), (which had been carried out in the presence of the Canadian embassy and Colombian officials), 10,000 contract workers went on strike in November 2011.

Instead of negotiating in good faith, Pacific Rubiales launched a media campaign against the USO and the striking workers. It pulled out of negotiations with USO, and instead, quickly signed an agreement with the UTEN, a "yellow dog" union that is not independent from the employers and therefore not representative of the workers. Having arrived at Campo Rubiales on October 4th, 2011, by October 6th, the UTEN had 'unionized' 700 administrative employees; the following day, the company announced that it had signed an agreement. UTEN then organized a protest, in which it denounced the 'terrorist activities' of USO. Covered by all major media outlets in Colombia, the protest was a blatant media strategy on behalf of Pacific Rubiales to discredit union activities and criminalize striking workers.

Aside from a slight wage increase for administrative staff directly employed by the company, the agreement with UTEN did not solve the labour conflict. There are still roughly 14,000 contract workers who are demanding better working and social conditions, 5,000 of whom are affiliated with the USO.

### War profiteers also have names and addresses:

Serafino Iacono (Co-Chairman and Executive Director)  
Miguel de la Campa (Co-Chairman and Executive Director)  
Ronald Pantin (Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director)

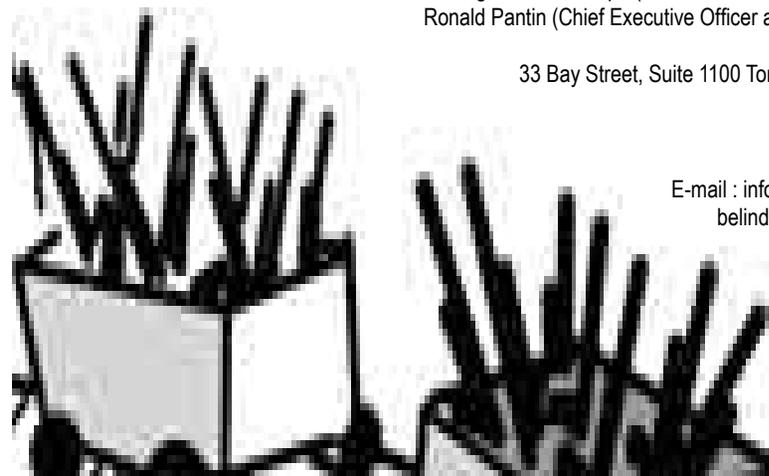
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## La Gran Tierra Energy

La Gran Tierra Energy is a multinational oil and gas company based in Calgary. It owns operations in several Latin American countries, including Colombia, where it reports producing 23,000 barrels of oil per day.

In the Putumayo department, its oil extraction projects are located on indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and campesino land. These communities have hotly contested Gran Tierra Energy's presence, arguing that since the arrival of oil workers in the region, the cost of living has increased as have alcohol consumption and prostitution. The military presence in the region has intensified as well, with the Colombian army assigning new battalions to protect oil installations. What is more, they claim that the drug trafficking problem in the region has gotten worse, as oil extraction sites contain chemicals used to process cocaine.

Workers at Gran Tierra themselves have formed a union called SintraPetroPutumayo, demanding that the company respect Colombian labour laws and their right to organize. The union has called on the company to adopt a social and environmental rights policy in collaboration with representatives from local communities. Despite being under the jurisdiction of Colombian labour law, the Canadian company has refused to recognize the union. Local officials and the Governor of Putumayo have supported Gran Tierra, accusing labour leaders of being on 'the margins of the law', and 'terrorist allies' (referring to guerrilla groups like the FARC). This is meant to delegitimize and criminalize the regional labour and social movements opposed to oil extraction.

Given this context, it is no surprise that union leaders are the target of the region's paramilitary strategy. Armed actors, calling themselves the Aguilas Negras, patrol the region, threatening and intimidating workers and those who oppose the oil industry. Paramilitary groups claim to be acting on a

contract to eliminate "spokesmen for guerrilla groups." On their black list, however, are a number of members of the SintraPetroPutumayo union, and community leaders who are opposed to oil extraction in their territory. A number of local labour and social leaders have received death threats, and some have been forced to leave the region following failed attempts on their lives and the lives of their families.

Given the company's failure to take their demands into consideration, workers and the local community organized a protest against La Gran Tierra on October 17, 2010. As part of the protest, members of neighbouring indigenous groups occupied one of the company's oil wells in an attempt to force it to negotiate. A response came not from the company, but on behalf of the Colombian army and police, which swiftly cracked down on the occupation. Six members of the Nasa indigenous people were arrested and are currently facing a number of serious charges. Despite ongoing resistance efforts, the Canadian company still refuses to negotiate with workers and affected communities.



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## SNC-Lavalin

SNC-Lavalin is a construction and engineering firm based in Montreal. The company has been criticized for taking contracts to build prisons in Libya, providing consultants for the construction of oil pipelines in occupied Iraq, as well as producing munitions for the American military in Iraq. SNC-Lavalin is now increasing its presence in Colombia, offering its expertise in consulting for infrastructure, mining, and gas projects. In 2009, it even opened a subsidiary in Bogota.

In 2011, SNC-Lavalin signed a consulting contract with mining companies BHP Billiton (Australia and the UK), Xstrata (Switzerland), and Anglo America (UK) for the expansion of the controversial Carrejón coal mining project in La Guajira. Carrejón is the largest open pit coal mine in the world, producing half of all the coal exported from Colombia every year. The mining project began in 1976, and has since caused forced displacement, numerous human rights abuses, and massive environmental damage. Contamination is so bad that many local subsistence farmers can no longer cultivate their land.

In order to facilitate the expansion of the mine in 2001, the Colombian military and police bulldozed the village of Tobacco, violently evicting 700 inhabitants. In 2004, authorities decided to expand the Puerto Bolivar port in order to meet increasing coal shipping needs. To do so, they destroyed a neighbourhood of 350 people. When residents organized a popular movement against relocation, they were violently repressed. Eleven activists were assassinated and thirty went missing.

Despite this, Export Development Canada (EDC) floated the Colombian government a US\$160 line of credit for the purchase of Canadian mining equipment for work at the Carrejón mine. Two Canadian companies, Nova Scotia Power and New Brunswick Power, also buy a large portion of the coal produced at the mine. In Quebec, donors linked to SNC-Lavalin gave \$1.6

million to the Liberal Party of Quebec between 2000 and 2009. Recently (as if to say thank you) the provincial government awarded the company a huge contract to repair the Gentilly II nuclear power plant in Bécancour. The Carrejón coal mine continues to expand and threaten local communities.

### War profiteers also have names and addresses:

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### Gran Colombia Gold (recently merged with Medoro Resources)

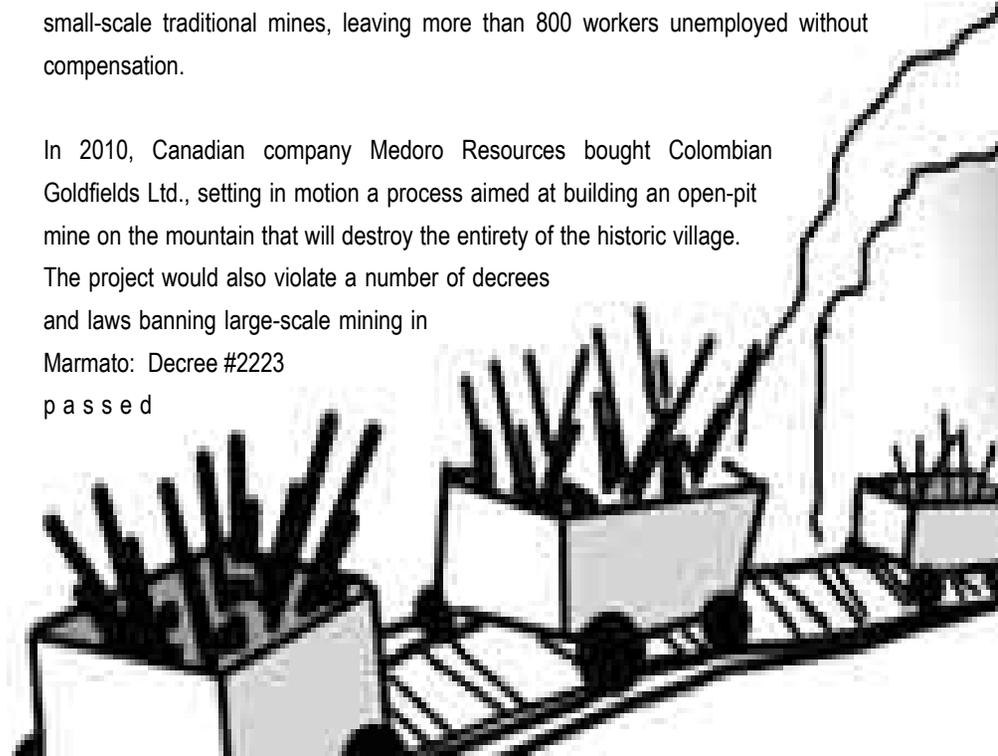
In 2005, Colombian Goldfields Ltd. arrived in Marmato, a small village located on a mountain in the Caldas department. Aside from being a national historic site, Marmato is home to 2,500 artisanal miners. In 2008 the Colombian government began shutting down small-scale traditional mines, leaving more than 800 workers unemployed without compensation.

In 2010, Canadian company Medoro Resources bought Colombian Goldfields Ltd., setting in motion a process aimed at building an open-pit mine on the mountain that will destroy the entirety of the historic village.

The project would also violate a number of decrees and laws banning large-scale mining in

Marmato: Decree #2223

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in 1954 states that only subsistence mining can be practised on the upper part of the mountain, where the town is located; Article 35 of the Colombian mining code prohibits mining in urban areas; and Article 6 of the Marmato land regulation organization states that large-scale mining should be avoided at all costs in order to ensure the sustainability of resources for future generations.

In order to bypass these laws, the government of Caldas, which supports the project, issued a landslide alert for the town. Officials called for the entire population of Marmato to be relocated. Scientific studies quickly disproved the claim, however, demonstrating that the land was stable and not at risk for landslides.

As a follow-up to this failed strategy, Medoro hired two false-NGOs to lead efforts towards reconciliation with the local population, attempting to win the favour of a portion of the residents with small development projects, gifts and false promises about the proposed mine. This divide-and-conquer strategy failed as well, as the community organized an even stronger protest against their forced displacement. In June 2010, residents of Marmato announced that they were going on “general strike in peaceful protest against Medoro.” In January 2011, miners organized to contest the local ban on the sale of dynamite in Marmato, forcing them to use homemade explosives that lead to serious accidents. In response, police evicted 400 artisanal miners. In May 2011, 4,000 local residents set up road blocks to protest the project. Again, police, aided by Medoro’s private security guards, put down the protest.

In June 2011, Medoro Resources merged with Gran Colombia Gold, another Canadian-registered company. This wasn’t much of a merger though, given that two founding members of Gran Colombia Gold, Serafino Lacono and Miguel de la Campa 1, were also executives at Medoro. Even more tight-knit are the links between Gran Colombia Gold and the government of Colombia. The company’s corporate manager, Juan Carlos Santos, is the cousin of the president of Colombia. The former Minister of Mines and Energy under Alvaro Uribe, Hernán Martínez, sits on Gran Colombia’s Executive Board. And the president of Gran Colombia Gold is María Consuelo Araújo, ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs under Uribe. (She resigned from her position after an investigation began into her father’s and brother’s alleged ties to paramilitary groups.)

1-Serafino Lacono and Miguel de la Campa also are funders of the Pacific Rubiales (see page 10)

Local residents opposed to the open-pit mining project have denounced and are actively opposing their forced displacement, the destruction of their town as a heritage site, the massive loss of jobs, fomenting community conflict, and environmental destruction. Local priest José Reinel Restrepo also opposed the project. In a televised interview conducted in the fall of 2011—a mere few days before he was assassinated—Restrepo stated: “This Canadian multinational wants to take advantage of the population. It’s managers want to chase them away (...) They’ve gone so far as to want to relocate the church, and they came to ask me if I agreed with the relocation of the town. (...) I openly told them that I disagreed with the project.” Assassinated on September 3, 2011, Father Restrepo’s body was found riddled with bullets. To this day, no one has been brought to justice for this crime.

This is not the first time that Medoro and Gran Colombia Gold have gotten bad press. The UN Organization for Industrial Development has named Colombia as the country with the highest levels of mercury contamination in the world. Contamination is highest in the gold mining zone of Segovia, Antioquia, where both Medoro and Gran Colombia Gold have operations. Despite all this, the Canada Pension Plan has invested \$6 million in Gran Colombia Gold.

In October 2011, more than 800 villagers occupied two Gran Colombia Gold mining encampments in the department of Nariño in order to stop exploratory drilling on their lands. The encampments were part of Gran Colombia’s “Mazamorra Gold” project situated in the municipalities of San Lorenzo and Arboleda, the latter of which is classified as a National Monument and National Archaeological Reserve.

In an effort to suppress opposition, Gran Colombia hired the security firm Coservipp Ltd. which has armed more than sixty youth in the region, all of whom have previously served in the Colombian military. Villagers have denounced multiple death threats and other acts of intimidation on the part of these private security forces that patrol the territory in military garb, often wearing masks to conceal their identities.



As a response to the continued repression of community residents by Gran Colombia's private security guards, the protesters set fire to the mining encampments forcing the Canadian company to negotiate. The mining company, represented by engineer Edgar Salazar, came to an accord with the community, promising to suspend operations for one month. During this time, the Governor of Narino would hold an open forum with representatives from all multinational companies operating in the department, the national government, and communities from across the region.

When it came time to sign the accord, representatives of Gran Colombia did not show and instead sent word that they refused to sign the agreement and would instead take legal action against the protestors. Gran Colombia also publicly requested that the Colombian government dispatch a supplementary military battalion to ensure the "security" of its activities. Though drilling activities remain underway, popular resistance against the project and the violence it engenders is growing.

#### **War profiteers also have names and addresses:**

##### **Gran Colombia Gold**

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## **La Sunward Resources**

La Sunward Resources is a small company based in Vancouver which specializes in the extraction of gold and copper. Its mining activities are concentrated in the departments of Antioquia (Titicaca) and Choco (Murindo). In an effort to establish the largest prospecting operation in the world, Sunward purchased Muriel Mining Company, a subsidiary of Goldplata International which is still in its exploratory phase. As part of the deal, Sunward was obligated to sell 50% of Muriel shares back to Goldplata. Other shareholders include Canadian financial institutions RBC, Manulife, and TD.

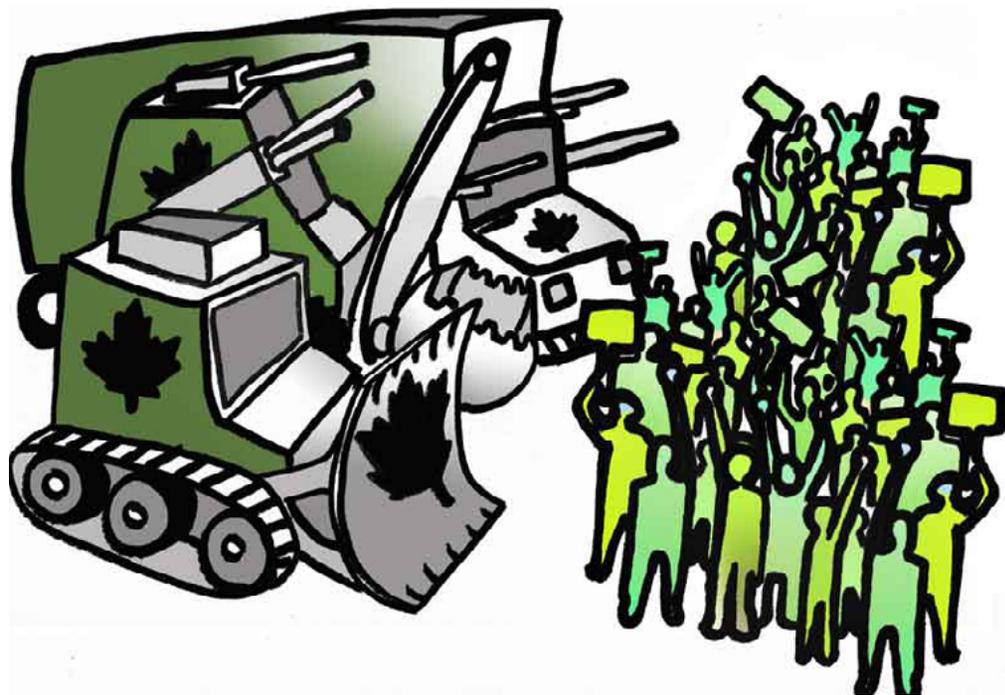
Sunward intends to exploit the Carreperro mountain, situated in the Jiguamiando (Choco) region. This is a sacred mountain in the heart of collective territories belonging to indigenous Embera and Afro-Colombian communities. Muriel had already developed a bad reputation in this territory due to a complete lack of community consultation prior to engaging in exploration activities. Under the Colombian constitution and Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization, companies are obligated to consult with impacted communities before engaging in such practices. Residents also associate Muriel with numerous actions of the Colombian military in the area where the proposed mine is to be located. These include acts of intimidation and death threats, bombing of villages and forced displacement of inhabitants.

In 2008, Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities launched their own autonomous consultation process where inhabitants came to the unanimous position: NO TO INDUSTRIAL MINING EXPLORATION IN THE REGION! Thus, with indigenous women leading the convoy, the Embara community organized a march to the mining encampment where they successfully expelled the engineers—along with the soldiers protecting them—from their ancestral territories.

Though the project is on hold for the time being, Sunward intends to continue where Muriel left off, using whatever means necessary to 'convince' the communities to accept it. In 2011, paramilitary forces began patrolling the region once again, posing a constant threat to communities in resistance against the industrial agriculture and mining projects that are fully endorsed by the Colombian government.

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## Eco Oro Mineral Corp.: The Greenwashing of Greystar

In the north-eastern department of Santander, Greystar Resources Ltd., a Canadian company based in Vancouver, plans to make large profits from the rising price of gold on the world market. The initial project, Angostura, planned for the exploitation of an enormous open-pit gold and silver mine which would use 40 tons of cyanide per day. The project was to take place in the 'Paramo de Santander,' an ecosystem that feeds four major rivers in the area, providing water to 21 municipalities in the departments of Santander and Norte de Santander, as well as 2.2 million inhabitants of the cities of Bucaramanga and Cucuta.



On February 25, 2011, more than 30,000 people assembled in the streets of Bucaramanga to declare their opposition to the Greystar project. A large solidarity demonstration was also held in Bogota. The pressure was so strong that the Colombian government was forced to back down, announcing on March 17 that the project, as originally proposed, would not be eligible for an environmental permit and that, as a result, Greystar was to withdraw its project.

It would be naive to think that the Canadian company would so easily abandon its plans to extract and process nearly 10 million ounces of gold over a fifteen year period. The next day, Greystar declared its intention to modify the project to better meet environmental standards. In this second version of the project, Greystar proposed to replace strip-mining with a new plan for underground mineral exploitation. This was only a band-aid solution, though, as subsurface excavation would risk breaching underground aquifers, thus compromising the regional ecosystem and water supply just the same.



On the 10th of August, 2011, in keeping with its new plan, the company changed its name to «Eco Oro Mineral Corp.» hoping to repaint itself as a «green» business. In doing so, the company sought to present itself as a new player in an environment that was hostile to any projects associated with the name Greystar. Many forget that Greystar already operates the Vitas and California mines in the Paramo de

Santurban. Villagers in the region have long been denouncing the company which they claim helped finance the infamous 5th Brigade of the Colombian Army. This brigade is notorious for its complicity with paramilitary forces in the region that have a fifteen-year track-record of assassinating local civilians who resist against the exploitation of their land.

**War profiteers also have names and addresses:**

President : Rafael Nieto Loaiza

Interim CEO - Chief Executive Officer - : David Rovig  
Office in Canada

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**We are also monitoring:**

**B2Gold** for its «Gramalote» gold mine, a joint project with Anglo Gold Ashanti in the department of Antioquia. Extractive activities in the region have been condemned for contaminating the water supply. Local organizations also condemn transnational companies for relying on brigades of the Colombian military to protect their installations and pacify opposition.

**Bell Helicopter Textron Canada** who sold helicopters to Victor Carranza, a rich Colombian financier and drug trafficker with links to the mining industry. Carranza subsequently sold these helicopters to the Colombian military. He is also accused financing paramilitary forces.

**COSIGO resources.** Numerous indigenous peoples in the department of Cauca



are opposed to COSIGO's mining project in their territory. In 2009 five leaders of the movement opposed to the mine were assassinated and many others have received threats from paramilitary forces. These crimes remain unpunished.

**Export Development Canada (EDC)**, a Canadian government organization which, among other projects, has financed the Urrál dam to the tune of \$18.2 million. Canadian engineering firm AGRA Monenco and Canadian company BFC Construction also participated in the project. This dam is built on the Sinu River in the territory of the Embera-Katio people in the department of Cordoba. Between 1992 and 1998 the dam flooded 7,400 hectares of land inhabited by 411 families. On top of the 2,800 people forcibly displaced from their lands, the Embera-Katio communities have denounced the assassination of 6 people opposed to the project, and the disappearance of 10 more.

In addition to financing the projects of Canadian companies abroad, EDC also provides insurance against «political risks.» The insurance offers a guarantee on Canadian investments in the case of political violence, suspension of operations, and nationalization. In effect, through CIDA and EDC, the Canadian government not only subsidizes private operations abroad it also compensates companies for losses incurred due to sabotage and strikes.

**Nortel** played a lead role in the privatization (read liquidation) of the state company TELECOM, which led to the termination of 8,000 unionized jobs. Between 2002 and 2004 Nortel received \$130 million from EDC to carry out this process.

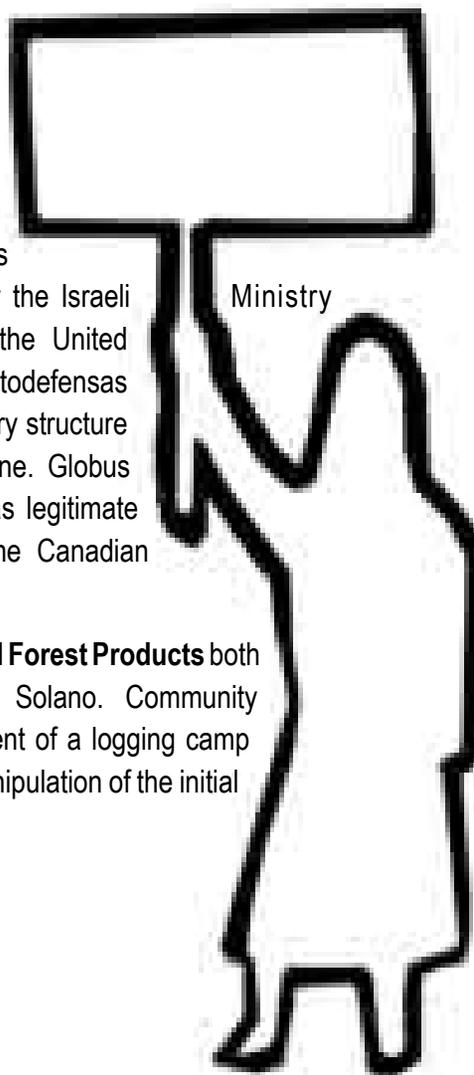
**MDA (MacDonald Dettwiler and Associates)**, is a consulting firm specializing in intelligence and surveillance. In 2000 and 2001 MDA provided three detailed 3D models of Colombia, based on satellite imagery, to the U.S. Department of National Defence. These models were used as blueprints for Plan Colombia.

**Petrobank.** Through its subsidiary **Petrominerales**, the company operates oil wells in the region of Llamos (the departments of Arauca, Casanare, Vichada, and Meta) and is engaged in exploration activities in Neiva and the Putumayo (the Amazon). Its acquisition of oil fields in the Colombian Amazon would have been impossible were it not for the forced displacement of indigenous people from their land. Petrominerales relies on paramilitary troops to carry out these actions and calls on a battalion of the Colombian military to maintain the security of its oil installations in the region. Petrobank has also supplied helicopters to the Colombian army to facilitate their surveillance of these installations.

**Canwest Global Communications Corporation**, which has been bought up by **Postmedia Network Canada Corp.** In 2004, Israeli company Globus

Aviation was put under investigation by the Israeli of Defence for selling helicopters to the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia, or Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), a paramilitary structure which acts as a key exporter of cocaine. Globus Aviation argued that the transaction was legitimate because it was carried out through the Canadian intermediary Canwest Global.

**La Prima Colombia Hardwood and REM Forest Products** both plan to harvest clear-cuts in Bahia Solano. Community organizations denounce the establishment of a logging camp on the beach of Huaca as well as the manipulation of the initial community consultation process.



As well as...

**AGRA Monenco**, **Alange**, *Alder Resources*, *AuRo Resources*, *Antioquia Gold*, *ARCTURUS VENTURES*, **AUX Canada**, *Bandera Gold LTD*, *Barrick Gold*, *Batero Gold*, *Bata Shoe Organization*, **Bell Canada International**, *Bellhaven Copper & Gold Inc*, *BFC Construction*, *Blue Sky Uranium CORP*, *Bolivar Energy*, **C&C ENERGY**, *Cadan Resources Corporation*, **Caerus resources**, *Canacol Energy*, *Canadian Occidental Petroleum*, *CB Gold*, *Coal Corp mining*, *Continental Gold*, **Colombia Gold Crest**, *COLOMBIAN MINES CORPORATION*, **CuOro Resources**, *debasau soparin*, *GALWAY RESOURCES* *Frontier Pacific Mining CORP*, **Gemini Explorations inc**, *Grupo de Bullet*, **International Grain Trade**, *International Road Dynamics Inc*, **KRUGER PAPER**, *Latin American Minerals INC.*, *Loon Energy*, **Maple Leaf Foods**, *Mercer Gold*, *METAPETROLEUM*, *Miranda Gold Corp*, **Midasco Capital**, **New Global Venture**, *NEXEN*, *Nextel ltd.*, **Nortel**, *Norvista Gold*, **PACIFIC COAL**, **Parex ressources Incorporated**, *PETROAMERICA*, *Petrovista Energy*, **Quebecor World Colombia**, **Quia Resources**, *Rio Verde Industries Inc.*, *Sandwell*, **U308 Corp (Mega Uranium)**, *Seafield Resources*, **Solana**, **SOLVISTA GOLD**, *Surocco Energy*, *Ventana Gold*, **Waymar ressources**.

## How to participate in the campaign Targeting Canadian Profiteers of the War in Colombia ?

Encourage your labour union, student union, or community organization to endorse the PASC campaign (contact us for a model resolution!)

Subscribe to the PASC listserv (through our website) to receive information concerning Canadian war profiteers. Read the materials and distribute them to your own networks. Distribute this pamphlet widely.

Distribute PASC's newsletter, La Piedra en el Zapato (no. 8 from spring, 2011 focuses on the War Profiteers campaign).

Establish links between your union and a union representing workers at a Canadian company operating in Colombia.

Write your own articles or distribute those of the PASC to local and regional media outlets as well as to the newsletters of your own organization.

Invite PASC to do a workshop in your community.

Form a «watchdog committee» to follow the actions of a Canadian company operating in Colombia.

Follow the money! What are the names of the stockholders, law firms, and investment funds that aid and/or benefit from Canadian war profiteers?

Ask questions and inform yourself! Is your pension or savings plan invested in Canadian companies operating in Colombia?

Attend the shareholders meeting of Canadian companies operating in Colombia to share your concerns and demand accountability.

Establish a delegation within your organization to visit workers and communities affected by «Canadian war profiteers.» Have your delegation visit the Canadian embassy in Colombia to declare what you have witnessed.

Write to companies, to the Canadian embassy, and to your member of parliament to express your concern with the actions of Canadian companies in Colombia.

Organize actions at the offices of Canadian companies operating in Colombia to increase awareness of the consequences of their operations for Colombian communities.

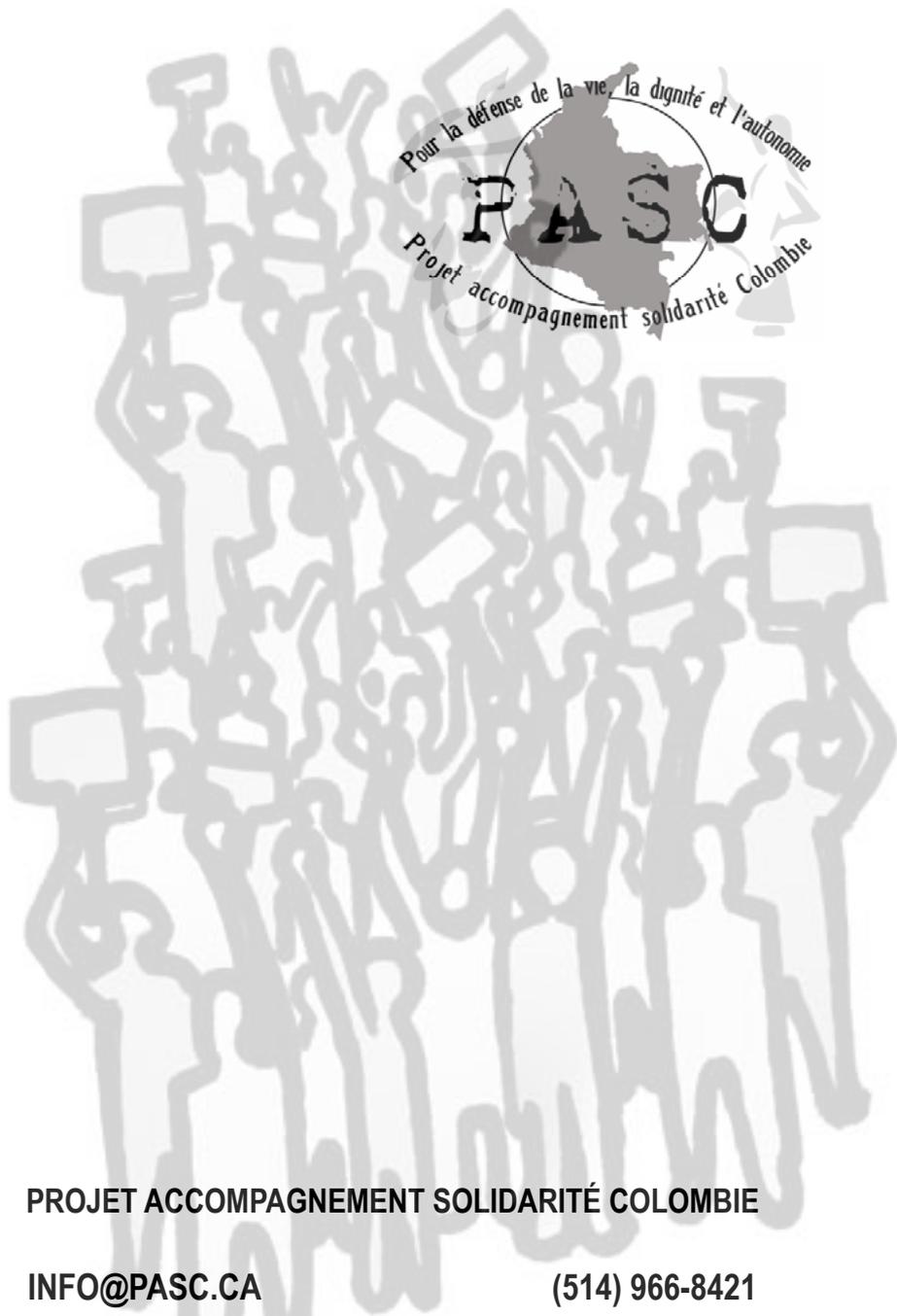
Organize actions at the offices of the Canadian government to denounce its free trade agreement with Colombia and its endorsement of War Profiteers.

Offer to help PASC translate documents related to this campaign in French, English and Spanish.

Provide financial support to the campaign (see how on the PASC website)



**For more information, visit  
WWW.PASC.CA**



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