

KAIROS Partners Respond to the April 8th Appointment of CORE

Full responses

Natalia Atz Sunuc

Maya Kaqchikel, human rights defender, Guatemala



It is an indignation that the Government of Canada can ask us to continue to wait for an effective and independent ombudsperson, despite the overwhelming participation and pressure from social movements in Canada and all over the world.

Last month, I was in San Miguel with communities impacted by the destruction caused during the exploration and exploitation phases of the Marlin Mine. Now that the mine has closed, the Canadian company does not want to be responsible for the damages wrought on local communities. Communities are now divided; families, who became dependent on a mine salary and who once had land to grow their own food, now have nothing; there is a scarcity of water; there is prostitution. After two years of dialogue between local communities and the mining company, the company did not accept responsibility for damages and reparations. There is nothing.

The complicity that exists between corporations and governments damages Mother Earth, meaning the life of people, animals, the environment, and the planet in general.

I think it is important to denounce this complicity between governments and corporations, which, through the quest for capital accumulation, leads to human rights violations in other countries. The Government of Canada must adopt the UN's recommendations so that Canadian companies respect human rights abroad.

This appointment also distorts the requests for respect of those Indigenous communities that have already been impacted by Canadian mining companies, such as the case of Guatemala.

Beverly Longid

Coordinator, Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation of the Philippines (IPMSDL), Philippines



Disappointing. This news shall not stop Indigenous peoples and others negatively impacted by Canadian mining companies from demanding redress, justice, and clean up/rehabilitation. The case of Marinduque and others shall never be forgotten. Canada is equally accountable for the destruction unleashed by companies.

We shall continue building our unity and strength—our defense of our lands against destructive mining. We shall not stop calling the attention of governments, the UN, and other human rights mechanisms on the need to put a stop to and regulate future mining corporations.

It is important to put Indigenous people and their communities at the heart of development.

Sherry Pictou, PhD

Assistant Professor, Women's Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia



Foreign court cases filed against Canadian mining companies for horrendous human rights abuses, including murder and sexual violence and rape against Indigenous women in particular, unveil just how profit margins at the expense of fundamental human rights are deeply entrenched in Canada's approach to development—abroad and here at home.

The failure of the Government of Canada to appoint an Ombudsperson without defining any real powers to investigate and redress abuses by Canadian companies is another great injustice added to a long list of political deceptions in upholding International human rights law, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Canada's own Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

While the political economic interconnections between Canada and other parts of the world may not be readily apparent, for Indigenous women they are deeply interrelated. The link between development, particularly in the extraction industry, and violence against Indigenous women is becoming more evident.

Furthermore, preliminary findings of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry reveal just how Canada's own legal system is failing Indigenous women if not perpetuating violence. This added to recent political maneuvers against the former Attorney General, an Indigenous Woman herself for holding the government and a major company to account, and now the obscurity surrounding this recent appointment, underscore a reinforcement, if not a reinterpretation of laws to protect corporations over human and Indigenous rights, especially over the rights of Indigenous Women.

If Canada is not willing to uphold international human and Indigenous rights abroad, how can we expect Canada to uphold those rights here at home.

Ivonne Yanez

President, Acción Ecológica, Ecuador



The Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise must take action in regard to extractive companies that may be acting in contempt of court and community decisions abroad.

A case in point: the Loma Larga project in Quimsacocha, Ecuador.

After hydrology experts concluded that the mining project would likely lead to the contamination of local water sources and would contribute to the loss of surface water, local Indigenous communities recently voted against the Loma Larga mining project operated by INV Metals, a Canadian company. Previous corporate behavior suggests that INV Metals might not respect and accept the community's decision.

INV Metals must respect community's decision, and the Government of Ecuador must proceed to cancel the project.