

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 26, 2015

President Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre  
President of Guatemala  
Casa Presidencial  
6 ta. Avenida "A" 4-18, Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Dear President Maldonado:

You take Presidential office at a historic moment in Guatemala, in which the government is undergoing tremendous change. We are pleased to hear of your support for the democratic process and the rule of law as your administration has been vocal about its intent to make this transitional government accountable to the people and free from corruption.

We write you to share specific concerns about the El Tambor gold mine in San Pedro Ayampuc. The U.S.-based company Kappes, Cassiday and Associates (KCA), and its subsidiary Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala (EXMINGUA) are directing the project. On July 15, 2015, a Guatemalan court ruling ordered EXMINGUA to suspend its mining activities at El Tambor. The court ruling clearly states that EXMINGUA has been operating without a valid permit from the municipal government, did not consult with affected communities before the project began in accordance with Guatemalan and International law, and that the company's Environmental Impact Assessment was plagued with serious deficiencies.

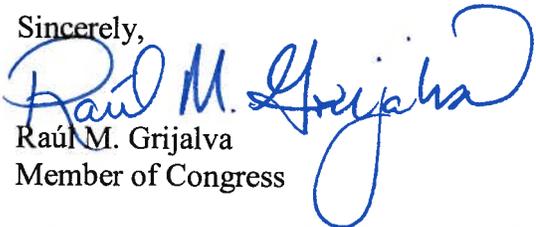
KCA and EXMINGUA were given 15 days to cease construction work, however, mining operations have continued. Throughout August and September, these ongoing operations, a direct violation of the July injunction, have been well documented. Residents affected by the project have been peacefully protesting at the mine entrance since 2012, and have been the victims of intimidation and abuse, including an assassination attempt against La Puya community leader Yolanda Oqueli.

As you lead Guatemala through this transition time, demonstrating the utmost respect for the rule of law will be paramount in gaining citizen trust. We request that you use your authority to ensure that KCA and EXMINGUA immediately comply with the July 15, 2015 court ruling and cease all illegal operations.

We ask you to ensure environmental concerns surrounding the mine are fully addressed and that a fair and transparent Environmental Impact Assessment is completed. Issues of past violence must be addressed and a full and impartial investigation into the assassination attempt and the excessive use of force by the police on protestors should be conducted. Finally, we encourage your administration to take active steps to initiate dialogue with the residents of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampuc which may lead to a peaceful resolution to this conflict. It is imperative that the Guatemalan government refrain from using spurious legal charges against community members and leaders who oppose the El Tambor gold mine, and that those who have been wrongly accused are released.

We look forward to working with you on this important matter and supporting the rule of law and respect for human rights in Guatemala.

Sincerely,

  
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

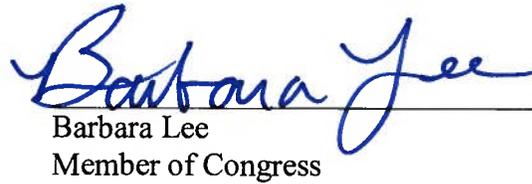
  
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