

World Bank divests from Condor Gold mining project in Nicaragua

The National Environmentalist Movement Against Industrial Mining (MONAFMI) announces to the Nicaraguan people that, after several years of advocacy, the community of Santa Cruz de la India and this organization celebrate the divestment of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank (WB) from the controversial mining project undertaken by Condor Gold, Plc., which has generated intense conflict and violence in this region of Nicaragua.

This decision comes in the wake of a complaint filed with the accountability mechanism of the IFC in 2018 and a series of international criticisms due to the pattern of repression that has accompanied the project from its inception. This repression has taken the form of threats, harassment, and criminalization of environmental defenders and community leaders who have criticized the project for its lack of consultation, which results from the absence of strong institutions in the country.

We welcome the IFC's decision to divest, as the Condor Gold project represents a critical threat both to our communities and to the water and the environment in the region. Among the most concerning impacts of the project is the anticipated eviction of people who live in the area, in addition to the destruction of the livelihoods of residents who depend on artisanal mining. The mining project would also jeopardize affected communities' access to potable water, with devastating consequences for their health, as well as for ecosystems in the affected area.

We believe that the decision to withdraw from the Condor Gold project in Nicaragua was necessary in light of the company's failure to comply with the IFC's own Environmental and Social Policies and Performance Standards. Affected communities turned to the IFC because of its role as a key investor in the project, and its decision to leave the project reflects a lack of confidence in the project's viability and in the company that is implementing it. Nevertheless, we remain deeply worried by the fact that Condor Gold continues to operate in Mina La India, especially since it is doing so with the endorsement and assistance of the government of Nicaragua, which has facilitated Condor Gold's use of the repressive state apparatus in order to perpetually harass and threaten the population, as well as community leaders in particular.

Situations at other mining districts in Nicaragua

A similar situation is playing out in the various mining districts of the country, where harassment, threats, and criminalization have increased against community leaders. As it is implementing so-called "development" alternatives, the government is sacrificing the environment and putting life in grave danger.

In El Jícaro, Nueva Segovia, the mining company Nicos Resources has cut down 40 hectares of pine trees, while in Rancho Grande, Matagalpa, artisanal mining has been set up with authorities' consent. Within this sociopolitical context, the government has authorized the implementation of the Jabalí Antenna open-pit project in Santo Domingo, Chontales, evicting residents from their homes. Those residents who resist are then forced to live in unhealthy, insecure, and deteriorating conditions. In Quizaltepe, within the municipalities of San Lorenzo and Camoapa, in the Department of Boaco, new mining concessions have been granted without any transparency or participation from the population, even as community leaders are being threatened and harassed.

In Río San Juan, within the buffer zone of the Indio Maíz Biological Reserve, a concerning situation is unfolding in which artisanal mining has proliferated without the oversight of the authorities. The state is committing ecocide by permitting this activity to destroy natural resources.

Note for Editors:

The divestment of the International Finance Corporation from Condor Gold, Plc took place on June 11, 2019, when the percentage of voting rights linked to the IFC's shares in Condor Gold, Plc decreased from 3.44% to 0%. This change is reflected on the website of Condor Gold:

[http://www.condorgold.com/sites/default/files/news/TR1%20Form%20\(Completed\)%20-%2011%20June.pdf](http://www.condorgold.com/sites/default/files/news/TR1%20Form%20(Completed)%20-%2011%20June.pdf)