



CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE
*For the Defense of the Ancestral Domain
and for Self Determination*

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January 26, 2009

Statement of Solidarity to the Indigenous Peoples of Ecuador in their Struggle against Large and Destructive Mining

The Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), an indigenous grassroots organization in the Cordillera Region, Philippines, expresses strong solidarity to the indigenous peoples of Ecuador and to the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) in their ongoing fight for the respect and recognition of human rights and against large and destructive mining.

We strongly urge President Rafael Correa to respect indigenous peoples collective rights as they exercise their democratic rights in protest against the country's opening to large metal mining, which would primarily benefit Canadian mining companies. We also urge the government of Ecuador to reconsider its passing of a Mining Law, which would lead to further exploitation of indigenous peoples' territory and resources.

As indigenous peoples, we are likewise confronted with the plunder of our ancestral land and resources both by local and foreign corporations, from dams, mines to large logging concessions. We have forged collective actions and united firmly to defend the ancestral land from development aggression with the entry of large dams, logging and mining into our indigenous territories. There are Canadian mines that have attempted to operate in our country, such as Olympus Pacific Minerals and TVI Pacific Developments but the people's unwavering opposition and collective action have frustrated the company's attempts. Both companies have in fact violated indigenous peoples' right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and have employed military might to quell people's opposition.

The fight for indigenous peoples' collective rights to land and resources is an issue of life and death. It is the culture, identity, resource base, socio-political systems and way of life that is at stake. As distinct peoples, governments must recognize that indigenous peoples' necessarily need to chart their own path of development, and should desist from imposing projects and policies that exploit and ruin the material basis of existence—land.

Also, in due respect to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, States must respect and recognize indigenous peoples' right to self determination and ancestral land. We hope the government of Ecuador would also consider this in their policy-making decisions and programs.

The CPA assures continued solidarity to CONAIE in their struggle for self determination and ancestral land, as we assert our collective rights as indigenous peoples. #

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Reference: Jill Cariño
Vice Chairperson for External Affairs