

Rights Action

info@rightsaction.org • www.rightsaction.org • December 2010

Solidarity Is Not an Act of Charity

“International solidarity is not an act of charity: It is an act of unity between allies fighting on different terrains toward the same objective. The foremost of these objectives is to aid the development of humanity to the highest level possible.”

– Samora Machel, leader of FRELIMO, First President of Mozambique

Dear Friend,
Extreme poverty, violence and destruction of the environment in our world today are problems so overwhelming it is hard to believe they can be stopped.

In Rights Action, we know a better world is possible. We know this because the most impoverished communities in Guatemala and Honduras, and in El Salvador, Chiapas and Haiti, that are working to protect their environment, working for community-controlled sustainable development and who often are victims of repression, ... they show us and teach us that the struggle continues and that there are real solutions.

- **Solution #1 – All Rights Protected:** To advance an environmentally sound, sustainable development model, it is necessary to protect all rights, individual and collective, economic, civil, social, political and cultural.

- **Solution #2 – All Actors Accountable:** The problems our partner groups confront (poverty, environmental destruction, repression) are the result of policies and decisions that benefit a few people, governments, corporations and investors. The policies and decisions are carried out by specific people, corporations, investors, agencies and governments - with names. All actors who violate rights must be held responsible for actions and omissions that cause or contribute to violations.
- **Solution #3 – Critical Understanding:** To understand and put an end to poverty, repression and enviro-destruction, we must take into account racism and sexism, and we must understand local-to-global and historical perspectives.
- **Solution #4 – Community Action/Global Movement:** Community-based, grassroots

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TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS:

Make checks payable to “Rights Action” and mail to the appropriate US or Canadian office.

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552-351 Queen St E,
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SPECIAL THANKS TO

Jim Schrider
Rosalind Gill

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organizations that take action to defend rights and create development and environmental alternatives are at the forefront of the growing movement to build a global community based on equality, justice and respect for the environment and all human rights.

Think globally, act locally

Think locally, act globally

Sounds good, but how does Rights Action contribute to these solutions?

RA provides funding directly to community organizations to undertake projects designed and implemented by themselves.

RA provides technical support to community organizations by facilitating community to community popular education exchanges of experiences, information, analysis and skills.

RA accompanies community defenders at risk of repression because of their work for justice, development or environmental protection.

RA brings the work and struggle home to North America by identifying the northern actors (governments, companies, investors, agencies, etc) responsible for violations, and encouraging education and activism in the USA and Canada to stop and reform our harmful economic and military policies.

“Our privileges are located on the same map as their suffering, and may, in ways that we prefer not to imagine, be linked to their suffering, as the wealth of some may imply the destitution of others.”

— Susan Sontag

Program areas

Rights Action’s work can be divided in the following Program Areas. In all of these Program Areas we fund community organizations and their projects and struggles, we write articles and reports, we coordinate speaking tours, we accompany threatened activists, we identify and pressure the responsible governments, companies, investors, agencies, etc.

- **Truth and Justice – The Struggle to End Impunity:** Truth commissions, investigations, public testimony, legal cases, exhumations of mass graves, protests are all ways victim organizations seek truth and justice for the authors of rights violations and other harms.



- **Emergency and Disaster Response:** Community defenders threatened by repression, communities victims to floods, mudslides or droughts are all emergencies RA responds to.
- **Mega “Development” Mines, Dams and Bio-Fuels:** RA supports communities in watershed regions harmed by mining companies, hydro-electric dams and bio-fuel production.
- **Climate Change and Environmental Justice:** Climate change (CC) is already altering weather patterns, bringing floods and droughts that create mudslides and famine. CC most impacts the poor, while transnational corporations benefit from environmental destruction and subsidies provided to purportedly to stop it! RA supports sustainable development and environmental well-being community projects that combat and defend against CC.
- **Sustainable Development:** Food security, food sovereignty, access to education and health care, solidarity economy and fair trade, indigenous autonomy and community control of territory — all of these are expressions of sustainable development. RA funds communities to undertake the full range of sustainable development projects.



“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

— Lilla Watson, Indigenous activist and organizer

To date, in 2010, we have channeled over \$650,000 of your grants and individual donations to community-based partner groups in Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in El Salvador, Chiapas and Haiti.

There are many ways to be an activist, and giving funds is an important one. Thank-you for your financial support for and trust in this work.

Annie Bird, annie@rightsaction.org
 Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org
 Karen Spring (in Honduras), spring.kj@gmail.com

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

BOOKS: RECOVERING OUR HISTORICAL MEMORY & OUR CULTURE IS OUR RESISTANCE

"Recovering Our Historical Memory", a book of photos & commentary by Jonathan Moller, is a visual testimony to Guatemalans working for truth, memory & justice and for reconciliation for the victims of the violence.

"Our Culture is Our Resistance" is a book of photos & commentary by Jonathan Moller. It is said the bones of the dead tell no lies. In Guatemala, mass grave dug up, every bone recovered from Mother Earth speaks of the people who were massacred; the bones speak of crimes against humanity, of genocide committed by the Army against the indigenous population. The photographs also show the face of life, hope, redemption, and demands for change.

TO ORDER: Katy Troyer (katytroyer@gmail.com) or Jonathan Moller (jonas@igc.org)

FILM: THE BUSINESS OF GOLD IN GUATEMALA: TALE OF A CONFLICT FORETOLD

"The Business of Gold in Guatemala" is a 50 minute film by Gregory Lassalle about the resistance of the Mayan-Mam

people of San Miguel Ixtahuacan against the Canadian company Goldcorp Inc. and the harms and violations caused by its "Marlin" open-pit, cyanide-leaching mine.

TO PURCHASE: info@rightsaction.org

FILM: ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

"All That Glitters Isn't Gold" is a 60 minute film by Steven Schnoor about the resistance of community members harmed by Goldcorp's "San Martin" open-pit, cyanide-leaching gold mine in Honduras' Siria Valley.

TO PURCHASE: info@rightsaction.org

BOOKS: CODE Z59.5: THERE IS ONLY ONE PEOPLE HERE & THE NEVER ENDING

"Code Z59.5" (2010) and "The Never Ending" (1993), by Grahame Russell, are books of diary excerpts (comments, facts, quotes, stories, etc.) from the 1990s and 2000s related to the author's work in Central America, Mexico and North America, in defense of human rights, in favour of a caring and just global economic development model.

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