

via US mail Excmo. Sr. Otto Perez Molina President of the Republic of Guatemala	via fax: 011 502 2413 8888 ext. 2290 Sr. Ministro Mauricio Lopez Bonilla Minister of the Interior of Guatemala
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June 26, 2012

Estimado Sr. Presidente and Estimado Sr. Ministro:

We are concerned for the safety of **Yolanda Oqueli**, an anti-mining activist, who was shot on June 13 in the town of San José del Golfo, in the department of Guatemala, about 35km from Guatemala City. She is a leader of FRENAM (Northern Front of the Metropolitan Area), which has been protesting against the negative effects of the El Tambor mining project in her community.

Since March 2012, environmentalists have maintained a protest outside the entrance to the mine, which covers parts of the municipalities of San José del Golfo and San Pedro Ayampic. Those opposing the mine claim that it will pollute the water supply and that local communities were not consulted about its potential impact. The mine is operated by Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala, S.A. (EXMIGUA), a local wholly-owned subsidiary of the Canadian company Radius Gold, Inc.

At around 6:30pm on June 13, Yolanda Oqueli was driving home after taking part in a protest outside a mine site in San José del Golfo. As she approached her house, two men on a motorbike shot her with a .38 caliber pistol and hit her with a bullet that lodged close to her liver. Three other bullets hit her vehicle. Yolanda Oqueli was admitted to the hospital in serious but stable condition.

The attempted assassination of Yolanda Oqueli is the latest in a series of attacks against the organized movement opposing large-scale industrial mining in Guatemala. As a result of her work as a human rights defender, since August 2011 Yolanda Oqueli has filed several complaints with the Public Prosecutor's office—most recently on May 11—about threats and harassment against her and other activists, including threatening phone calls, her house being vandalized with paint, and death threats.

Because we believe that Yolanda Oqueli and other environmental activists who oppose industrial-scale mining are at risk, we urge you to:

- order an independent, thorough and impartial investigation into the shooting of Yolanda Oqueli and the threats against her, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice, and
- take immediate steps to provide appropriate protection to Yolanda Oqueli and her family, and to activists working against human rights violations caused by mining operations in the area of San José del Golfo—in strict accordance with their wishes

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Coordinator

cc: MADRESELVA ~ via email
Radius Gold ~ via fax and via email
Francisco Villagran de Leon, Guatemalan Ambassador to the US ~ via fax: 202 745 1908
Arnold A. Chacon, US Ambassador to Guatemala ~ via fax: 011-502-2331-2348
Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur for Guatemala, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: (202)458-3992
Siobhan Sheils, Guatemala Desk, US State Dept ~ via fax: 202-647-2597
Christopher Johnson, Diplomacy Officer for Central America, US State Dept. ~ via email
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Kaptur, Kucinich, LaTourette, Latta, Renacci, Ryan, Sutton ~ via email

UA 170/12 Guatemala

The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: