



February 27, 2023

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Subject: Concerns brought to our attention related to the mining activities of Altai Philippines Mining Corporation (APMC), a subsidiary of a Canadian company, Altai Resources, Inc., on the island of Sibuyan, province of Romblon. And requests for action from Global Affairs Canada.

Dear Ms. Goodge O'Brien,

We bring to your attention the concerns of Philippine partners about the mining activities of Altai Philippines Mining Corporation (APMC), a subsidiary of a Canadian company, Altai Resources, Inc., on the island of Sibuyan, province of Romblon. The violation of laws and regulations committed by the company and its use of violence and harassment against the local people who peacefully protest the mine's activities are alarming. We strongly urge you to discuss these concerns with the Embassy of Canada in the Philippines and take immediate measures.

**These are the concerns brought to our attention by Philippine partners regarding APMC:**

1. The nickel mine of APMC has been vehemently opposed by the people of Sibuyan, who have fought for decades to stop mining exploration that would destroy the rich biodiversity of the island known as the Galapagos of Asia. APMC was granted exploration rights in 2009, but due to public protests, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau issued a Cease-and-Desist Order (CDO) against APMC in 2011. In 2021, the Mines and Geosciences Bureau granted the appeal of APMC to dismiss the CDO, and the mining exploration

activities of APMC began. Protest actions by the people of Sibuyan have been ongoing since then.

2. For 11 days, residents of Sibuyan staged a barricade to halt mining trucks of APMC from transporting nickel ore from the island. The protest was violently dispersed by police, leaving at least two protestors injured and one local councillor arrested.
3. The Commission on Human Rights has been investigating complaints that even before the dispersal incident, local anti-mining advocates had been the target of harassment and intimidation by APMC. Victims reported that the company barred teachers from participating in anti-mining gatherings and posting anti-mining sentiments online. Two students were allegedly brought before barangay officials and forced to issue a public apology.
4. On February 6, the DENR initiated an investigation into the mining activities of APMC and issued a Joint Order requiring the following:
  - a. Altai to CEASE AND DESIST the construction and operation of its causeway in Sitio Bato, Brgy. España, San Fernando, Romblon;
  - b. Ore Transport Permit No. OTP-APMC-162-001-2022-MIMAROPA issued to APMC be SUSPENDED, given the non-operation of its causeway;
  - c. APMC to STOP transporting ore from the contract site to the causeway;
  - d. Denied APMC's application for Miscellaneous Lease Agreement for its violations of Commonwealth Act 141, as amended, otherwise known as the Public Land Act, and its related issuances;
  - e. PENRO (Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office) Romblon to file appropriate legal actions, if warranted, on the reported cutting of trees without a permit; and
  - f. PENRO Romblon to investigate the alleged damage/destruction of seagrass and other marine resources.

The DENR Environmental Management Bureau in the administrative region of MIMAROPA also issued Notices of Violation to APMC for violation of Section 4 of Presidential Decree No. 1586 or the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System, Republic Act (RA) 6969 or the Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990, RA 9275 or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004, and Presidential Decree 705 for cutting trees without a permit.

**These are our requests of action from GAC:**

Canada's Responsible Business Conduct Abroad (RBC) says that the Government of Canada expects Canadian companies operating abroad to adopt best practices and internationally respected guidelines on responsible business conduct. Canadian companies operating abroad must abide by all relevant laws and respect human rights while avoiding and addressing adverse impacts of their operations. Canada's RBC says that Global Affairs Canada, through the Trade Commissioner Service, is to help Canadian companies understand and manage risks related to human rights, the environment and due diligence and to help them solve problems related to responsible business practices.

In this regard:

1. Is Altai receiving exceptional services from the Trade Commissioner? (The RBC requires Canadian companies using TCS services to adhere to Canadian laws and other international legal norms and conventions concerning human rights, labour rights and the environment).
2. Is APMC following the RBC requirements that Canadian companies operating overseas must complete a Digital RBC Attestation, a prerequisite for access to TCS services and referrals to Export Development Canada and the Canadian Commercial Corporation?
3. Has APMC completed the Digital RBC Attestation through which it acknowledges the importance of RBC and declares that it operates in a manner consistent with the UN Guiding Principles and the OECD Guidelines and complies with Canada's laws, policies, and standards?
4. If APMC has completed the Digital RBC Attestation, how does the Embassy ensure that the company lives up to the RBC policy?
5. Has the Embassy received information and complaints regarding the illegal activities and human rights abuses of APMC in Sibuyan? What actions has the Embassy taken in line with its responsibility under Canada's RBC?
6. Does the Embassy know whether APMC has the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of the people of Sibuyan for their operations?
7. What steps has the Embassy taken to protect the human rights of the people of Sibuyan and to mitigate the harm caused by APMC to the people and the environment in Sibuyan?

It is imperative for the Canadian Government, through Global Affairs Canada, to take immediate and concrete steps to halt the harmful activities of APMC, protect the human rights of the Sibuyan people affected by its actions and ensure that the company rectifies the harm the company has done in the island. Canada must protect the rights of those harmed by Canadian mining companies operating overseas.

We ask that you inform us of GAC's steps through the Embassy of Canada in the Philippines.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Lisson (Rev.)  
Chairperson, International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines-Canada



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