

Anti-Mining Protests in Nicaragua

By [International Allies Coalition Against Mining in El Salvador](#)

Global Research, August 15, 2014

International Allies Coalition Against Mining
in El Salvador 13 August 2014

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)
Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

While the Nicaraguan government opens its doors to foreign investment through the 1st International Mining Congress, more than 1,000 people from communities affected by mining projects are being detained to prevent them from mobilization to Managua to publicly express their concerns about negative impacts of mining in their communities.

Managua, Nicaragua – Today, social organizations concerned with the protection of the environment organized an environmental walk in Managua to express concerns about the negative impacts that mining projects are having on communities around the country, but as the organization of the walk progressed, several measures were taken by government officials to prevent the mobilization of communities to defend their commons and mother earth.

On August 12, 2014, officials with the national police called drivers hired to mobilize from Matagalpa to inform them that they did not have permission to drive to Managua and were directed to cancel already scheduled trips to Rancho Grande that would mobilize people to the environmental walk Managua. Today, August 13, 500 members of the Movement Yaoska Guardians community organization are retained in the town of Palo Solo, Peñas Blanca in Matagalpa by riot patrol and traffic police. The police are withholding documents (licenses and vehicle registration) and are telling community members that they are not allowed to travel to Managua.

Rancho Grande is a highly productive district, which generates by the main export of the country (coffee), in an organic and sustainable manner. Community members argue that any extractive activity will destroy the environmental conditions that exist in the area ensure sustainable production which already provides general employment, a sustainable local economy and a sustainable development model for the country.

The 36 communities in the municipality have publicly rejected the “El Pavón” mining project owned by Canadian mining company B2Gold.

In the town of Santo Domingo, 500 people are also been detained by the national police, and also prevented from participating in the walk for the defense of the environment in Managua. In a similar fashion, community members were not given permission to leave the town, and finally 3 buses full of people have been retained.

In this municipality, communities are opposed to the “El Jabali” mining project which has operated without prior consent from the population since 2012. This project is also owned Canadian mining company B2Gold.

Janeth Castillo, Member of the strategic alliance for the defense of the environment of Matagalpa stated that “Government authorities are violating Articles 53 and 54 of the Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua that guarantees freedom of movement and freedom of expression and the right to protest and express ourselves in defense of our commons “.

Given the above stated facts:

- We, men and women of organizations and social movements in the Central America region, demand respect for the civil and political rights of the inhabitants of these municipalities, particularly their freedom of movement and freedom to speak freely in defense of our common goods.
- We demand that the Government of Nicaragua guarantees the integrity of the people who are being detained.
- We express our opposition to the installation of extractive projects in our countries, because of the environmental and social costs they bring to the region.
- We demand the creation of sustainable development policies that guarantee the right to life, to a healthy environment for future generations.

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