

Ejido de Carrizalillo
Municipality of Eduardo Neri
Guerrero, México



September 13, 2020

On September 11, the Ejido and the company arrived at an agreement to begin a process of developing a new agreement that would ensure that our agreement is not violated again, and to avoid racist and discriminatory acts in response to complaints we make in order to ensure the agreement is fulfilled. **The minutes of the agreement reached Friday to address the conflict** included two important aspects, among others, which we finally reached between both parts. First, the Ejido would let the company reinitiate operations, which took place the same day, leading the company to go back to work. The second point of agreement was that the camp would remain in place and that the company would increase security measures in the area of the camp to avoid any unforeseen events.

Today, in the morning, we were surprised to find out that Peter Burger and the company Equinox Gold, once again from a position of arrogance and in violation of agreements reached between both parts, sent us notice taking a hard line to condition the development of a new agreement, which for the Ejido is the most significant objective because of the possibility of achieving a bit of healthy living, clean water, medicine and other basic conditions to remain a place that we know is not adequate to live in.

Once again, the company and Mr. Burger fail to take seriously the conditions decided on with our Ejido, which were starting to address the conflict and advance toward negotiations, and lifting of the encampment which we began on September 3. All of this in the interest of moving toward the most important point: **address the company's repeat violation of our social agreement**. In response to the company's request to restart mining activities, **our community decided to let them do so** and, in exchange, we included several conditions of our own to restart negotiations and review the failures with the earlier agreement, about which we were clear: **the company's talk of trust and respect is not worth much when the company is acting to the contrary**.

The company resorted again to arrogance and to feeling itself empowered to put us down. Two days after it restarted operations, the company sent us its new demand stating its concern to protect the population and the children in the encampment, which according to the company, are at risk from passing vehicles. We have lived for years, as people, workers and families with illnesseses and harms that have not been recognized or addressed by the series of companies that have operated the Los Filos project. **We feel offended by the hypocritical discourse of Mr. Peter Burger**.

During the first meeting to restart dialogue, the company took a more flexible position. As a result, both parties accepted the conditions discussed, which permitted the restart of activities. During this meeting, the company's team was represented by the company's

interim mine manager, Engineer Carlos Almazán, and we all came out of the meeting believing that, finally, there was a bit of respect for us. For us, it is very important to maintain the encampment and, for the company, it is very important to restart operations. Both points were agreed upon. But today, the company sends us a message that is discriminatory and racist toward our community and its residents. What we understand from this is that nothing will be resolved without the orders of Viceroy Peter Burger because he thinks that the land, the community and the people are all his. Today, it is clear from his attitude that no mine operator or manager has the capacity to think, act, decide, and share with workers or with the community. All decisions will be made with upper management and without the rest.

Not even today was Mr. Burger capable of looking our community in the eye. While we are demonstrating with our struggle that we will fight tirelessly every humiliating act, today Mr. Burger sent a group of people that are clearly without any decision making power and who are literally spokespeople submissive to the decisions of the Senior Vice President of the company, Peter Burger, who demands in his letter that we lift our encampment with the threat of breaking off the negotiation if we do not follow through on his arrogant request. **Mr. Burger, this might be what you want and perhaps you could do so in South Africa** where we know that there is a tremendous struggle for human rights, but in Mexico we have some room to fight with people like yourself on the basis of our rights and in a peaceful manner.

This act of arrogance, racism and discrimination has caused us to pause once again to repeat what we have said over and over to the company, **to negotiate we only ask for respect** and if you are incapable of this, we refuse to recognize you as the interlocutor and will wait for the company, in Canada, to send us a person who will respect us. **Your behaviour once again violates the agreement that we have sought and that was established on Friday September 11** between us and the company to restart work at the mine while the camp would remain in place and a new social agreement would be developed in our interests.

As a community, we have again decided to stop activities at the mine and to remove the workers that we agreed could go back to work since September 11, and we will continue to do so until the company and its operators at any level, treat us with respect and dignity, in what should be a real negotiation that is coherent and with people who have decision making power and who are not discriminatory.

We will hold the mining company Equinox Gold directly responsible for any aggression, violence, intimidation and criminalization that we might suffer each and every one of the residents of the Ejido of Carrizalillo. To the state and federal government, we ask you to stay on the margins of this, especially if we do not invite you to meet with us and, in any case, **know that it is the company that, from its concept of power, believes that it is fine to walk all over people.**



We want and have taken steps to try to address this conflict, but the company and Mr. Peter Burger want us to be subjected to their interests. We say that this will never happen without he and his arrogant company facing social, political and financial costs. We will struggle as we know how from the same position as always: according to the law, in a peaceful manner, in defense of our rights and open to dialogue, but not at any cost.

Attentively,

The Leadership Council of the Ejido of Carrizalillo



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