



PRESS RELEASE – 17 MARCH 2022

Latin American communities martyred by mining travel to Europe to denounce their situation and discuss the care of the Common Home.

The voices of the victims of mining extractivism, and voices in defense of the Common Home, will arrive in Europe. Their purpose is to denounce the human rights violations that are experienced as a result of the imposition of an extractivist agenda that does not stop in Latin America.

"We are thousands, who in an organized resistance, demand justice, demand the stopping of colonialist impositions, demand that our rights to decide and to live in peace are respected. We demand violence to stop and that those responsible for the pain, devastation and death of these socio-environmental crimes, pay." They claim.

Community leaders, pastoral agents, activists and researchers are traveling from Brazil, Colombia, Honduras and Ecuador. The **Latin American Caravan for the defense of the integral ecology in extractive times**, will arrive in Germany on March 22 and will also visit Italy, Belgium, Austria and will end in Spain on April 6.

The National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), through the Special Commission on Integral Ecology and Mining (CEEM), and the communities accompanied by the Churches and Mining Network (IyM), through the *Divest in Mining Campaign*, will amplify their voices and allow "the cry of the land of the poor" to be heard (LS 49). The cry resounding from communities martyred by extractive economies and the historical violation of the Common Home by mining activities, calls for an urgent ecological conversion, as expressed by the Pope in the Encyclical *Laudato Si*.

The Caravan expresses its solidarity with Europe and the victims of the war that has broken out. A situation that is a reflection of the permanent state of war in each of our countries, sustained by an extractivist economic system that generates inequality, violence and suffering. A war that continues to enrich itself, with the inflation in commodities, which is reflected in historic profits for transnational mining companies that have reached their maximum levels, after a year of pandemic, extremely fruitful for extractive activities. The Caravan denounces mining activities that also support the war industry.

Catholic partner organizations in Europe such as the International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (CIDSE), Misereor (Germany), DKA (Austria), Redes and the Enládate por la Justicia campaign in Spain, promote these meetings. The delegation will be present in Europe promoting dialogues with the desire to reinforce the globalization of hope and North-South co-responsibility. Meetings will be held with leaders of the Catholic Church, such as Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, he is a promoter of divestment in extractivism and president of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE). There will also be meetings with deputies and civil society entities and religious congregations with instances such as the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and the Dicastery for Integral Human Development. Dialogues are being prepared in the Vatican with authorities such as the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and also with the Dicastery for Promoting Human Integral Development.

The agenda seeks to influence the European Parliament, the Banks and Church organizations, on issues such as due diligence, the treaty on Human Rights and Companies, the practices of financial violence, with investments in mining that are linked to European and faith organizations.

The cases that will be present are in the following territories:

Piquiá de Baxio - Brazil: iron extraction, slave labor, contamination of water sources, bad health indices of the population. Resistance and organization of the population has achieved the relocation to a new place called "Piquiá de la Conquista".

BrumadinHo - Brazil: toxic sludge spill that left 272 deaths, in another environmental crime of the Vale company that still does not find justice. Families who have lost everything, landless and homeless farmers, displaced population.

Putumayo, Mocoa - Colombia: mining concessions for copper extraction, in the Colombian Amazon, affecting water sources, headwaters of rivers, indigenous territories, in a territory already affected and displaced by the armed conflict.

Jericó - Suroeste Antioqueño - Colombia: around 90% of the territory is given over to the extraction of copper, gold and silver. It has annulled local productive activities, based on agriculture, exacerbated violence between inhabitants and outsiders, and occupied ancestral territories. Organization and resistance have succeeded in stopping part of the mining concession in the municipality of Jericho, but the threat persists.

One of the fundamental objectives is to advance in the consolidation of networks and alliances of solidarity between the Church of the North and the Global South, committing to advocacy, from the voice and the views of the victims, from their proposals, to accompany their alternatives of resistance and defense of life, to make visible the realities and to understand the global and integral dimension of these affectations, in a world that is intimately interconnected. As well as, to accompany the pastoral processes of the local churches in Latin America, which with courage and prophecy remain on the side of those affected, seeking Integral Ecology.

The Churches and Mining Network and the Divest in Mining Campaign:

The Churches and Mining Network is an ecumenical space, made up of Christian communities, pastoral teams, religious congregations, theological reflection groups, laity, lay people, bishops and pastors who seek to respond to the challenges of the impacts and violations of socio-environmental rights caused by mining activities in the territories where we live and work.

The Divest in Mining Campaign is promoted by the Churches and Mining Network. Divestment is a concrete tool to confront an extractivist economic model that generates devastation and inequality. The Campaign accompanies faith-based organizations in their commitment to fair finance and provides advice, technical tools and concrete alternatives to achieve a transformation within the Churches. In addition, it seeks to advocate and make visible the violations of rights and environmental impacts generated by mining. It seeks to make the life and demands of peoples and nature heard.

Contacts:

Guilherme Cavalli, delegation coordinating team.
E-mail: guilhecavalli@gmail.com
Whatsapp: +55 54 9653-0369

Daniela Andrade, communications officer
E-mail: daniela.iglesiasymineria@gmail.com
Whatsapp: +51916196141