

Guatemala churches supporting families opposed to mining

News

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(ENInews)--Member churches of the Christian Ecumenical Council of Guatemala are expressing support for rural indigenous families protesting mining activity in their territories.

In a public statement, the Council decried the mining operations in the Polochic Valley, saying hundreds of people have been forcibly evicted from 14 villages to make way for mining and oil exploration and the building of hydroelectric dams, the Latin America and Caribbean Communication Agency reported.

"As churches we insist on the strengthening of social investment, while at the same time the population's demands are heard with regard to the approval of laws in benefit of the impoverished peoples and communities, such as the National System of Integral Rural Development Law, the agrarian codes (both in their content and procedure), among others," the statement read.

The Council also supported a protest march by people in the region, which took them more than 200 kilometers in order to demonstrate in front of the National Palace in Guatemala City.

The Council's statement ends by encouraging resident of the urban areas to be in solidarity with the indigenous march and demands, "that remind us of the suffering of Jesus Christ in the Via Crucis, which is the starting point for the building of signs of hope, of communities that are alive, and in support of the peaceful and organized resistance of the peoples!"

The Christian Ecumenical Council of Guatemala is a member of ACT Alliance and is made up of the Ecumenical Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Guatemala, the Catholic Conference of Religious Orders of Guatemala, the Episcopal Church of Guatemala, the Guatemalan Lutheran Church, the Alliance of Reformed Presbyteries of Guatemala and Saint John the Apostle Evangelical Church.