

## PHILADELPHIA FILMMAKER SCREENED DOCUMENTARY *RETURN TO EL SALVADOR* TO CANADIAN PARLIAMENT & GETS SUPPORT FROM RALLY ON PARLIAMENT HILL



Philadelphia based filmmaker **Jamie Moffett** screened his documentary *Return to El Salvador* ([www.returntoelsalvador.com](http://www.returntoelsalvador.com)) to Canadian Parliamentarians and International dignitaries on June 15<sup>th</sup> at a Breakfast screening hosted by MP **John McKay** and got support from attendees at the Rally for Mining Justice on Parliament Hill the same day. *Return to El Salvador* was requested by McKay because he is bringing forth Bill C-300, a Corporate Accountability Bill which is invested in the film's message. "*Jamie's portrayal of the issues this country faces, particularly those related to matters of foreign interference demonstrate the importance of our own countries actions, on those living in this small country*" says McKay. Bill C-300 is a mechanism to pressure Canadian extractive companies to follow human rights and environmental best practices when they operate overseas.



*Return to El Salvador* documents the aftermath of a 12 year civil war and the interplay between the Salvadoran people and the US policies that directly influence the Central American country. Narrated by **Martin Sheen**, the film features interviews by former US ambassador to El Salvador **Robert White**, and has been endorsed by Nobel Peace Prize winner **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**.

One aspect of the film outlines the disappearance of prominent mining activist **Marcelo Rivera**. "*I'm eager to share the story of the torture and death of Marcelo Rivera as it relates to Canadian mining corporations,*" says Moffett. "*Canadians need to be aware that some of the 3,000 corporations flying the Canadian flag are operating in ways that are sickening, injuring and killing people.*" Indeed Marcelo's kidnapping, torture and murder signifies a shift in

El Salvador. No longer are people being disappeared solely for political reasons, but now social leaders who would dare to stand up for the environment. Investigating further, Moffett's crew found more and more signs in this mysterious disappearance pointing towards the Vancouver-based Pacific Rim Mining Company.

Pacific Rim is now using its US subsidiary to sue the Salvadoran government for \$77 million dollars under the US-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) for following its own regulations and refusing to licence the company's "El Dorado" project, where three people have been killed in the last year for opposing the project - including **Alicia Dora Sorto**, eight months pregnant when gunned down.

The same day of the parliamentary screening, the **Ottawa-Gatineau Coalition against Gold Mining in El Salvador** organized a **Rally for Mining Justice** on Parliament Hill with the main purpose of supporting the documentary and demand members of parliament to pass Bill C-300; also to show the people of El Salvador that they are not alone in their sovereign decision to refuse the extraction and contamination of their water by cyanide and request Pacific Rim to drop its illegitimate lawsuit. The attendees of the rally also demanded justice for all the communities and affected by the Canadian mining industry.



During the rally, Latin American musicians such as renowned **Tito Medina** and **Shaman Rhythms** warmed up the crowd before several leaders addressed the crowd such as **Liberal MP John McKay**, Sponsor of Bill C-300, **NDP MP Paul Dewar**, **Jamie Kneen** of Mining Watch, **Jamie Moffett**, Producer/Director of *Return to El Salvador*, **Malcolm Rogge**, Producer of *Under Rich Earth*, **Sofia Ramirez** of Barrio Nuevo, **Meera Karunanathan** of Council of Canadians, **Kaithlyn** of the youth section for Development & Peace, **Roberto Miranda** of Cafe Justicia and **Laura Avalos** of the

Salvadorian Canadian Association of Ottawa and NCR- ASCORCAN. A minute of silence for all the people assassinated for defending the environment was also acknowledged.



Action and the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA).

The Ottawa-Gatineau Coalition against Gold Mining in El Salvador has organized in the past year several conferences with the support of the School of Political Science of the University of Ottawa with special guests from affected regions such as **Bernardo Beloso** and **William Castillo** of the National Roundtable against Gold Mining in El Salvador (Mesa) - winners of the 2009 international Lettelier-Moffitt Award for the defence of human rights; **Abraham Rivera** of the Research for economic and political community action (CIEPAC) of Chiapas, Mexico; **Nelly Rivera**, Researcher for the Centre of Research on Investment and Commerce in El Salvador (CEICOM); **Feliciano Orellana**, Rep of the Commission for Justice and Peace of the Franciscan Family, Guatemala; and **François Guindon**, collaborator of Rights

Rally for Mining Justice was endorsed by 40 organizations such as Association for Social Economic Development (ADES), El Salvador; Amanecer Ranchero FM 89.1; Amnesty International, Business and Human Rights Program; Barrio Nuevo; Breaking the Silence; Canadians Against Mining in El Salvador (CAMES); Cafe Justicia; Center for Alternative Mining; Development Policy in La Crosse, Wisconsin, USA; Christian Hispanic Community of Emmanuel United Church; Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine / Committee for Human Rights in Latin America (CDHAL); CLASP (Caribbean & Latin America Support Project - New Paltz, NY); Council of Canadians; Development and Peace; Education In Action; Emmanuel United Church; FMLN Ottawa-Gatineau; Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN); Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Movement Ottawa (IPSMO); Kingston Central American Solidarity Committee; Latin American Solidarity Network; Magazine Vision Latina; Mining Watch Canada; OPIRG; Ottawa-Gatineau Coalition against mining in El Salvador; People's Health Movement; Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Social Justice Fund; Punto de Encuentro, CKCU FM 93.1; Rights Action; Salvadorian Canadian Association of Ottawa and National Capital Region (ASCORCAN); Salvaide; Swedish - Salvadorian Friendship Association of Stockholm (Sweden's capital); Territorio Libre; United Steel Workers, USW and Radio Victoria of Cabanas, El Salvador.



*Return to El Salvador* will be screened to the general public in Ottawa in the months of August and September. Trailer and dates available at [www.returntoelsalvador.com](http://www.returntoelsalvador.com). For videos of the Press conference and Rally for Mining Justice visit: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Xye43CNoWg&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Xye43CNoWg&feature=player_embedded) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxv8xkPK-T4&feature=youtu.be>

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