

model letter- please personalize

The president's fax is: 011 593 2 258 0714

Doctor Alfredo Palacios
Presidente Constitucional República del Ecuador
Palacio Presidencial
Plaza de la Independencia
Quito, Ecuador

September 19, 2006

SUBJECT: MINING IN INTAG

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to express my concern over the threats that Ascendant Copper Corporation's 'Junin' mining project poses to the people and environment in the Intag area of Cotacachi County, as well as the recent troubling events.

We have received reports of a grave escalation in the conflicts in the region being brought about by what we are told, was the presence of persons identified as workers of the Mining company in lands belonging to the community of Junin. We understand there has already been a violent confrontation, and we urge you to do all that is in your power to find a peaceful solution to this latest crisis before anyone else gets hurt.

There can be no legitimate reason for this mining company to be in the region, given repeated requests by Municipal authorities as well as residents that they leave the area. Given the explicitly stated position of the residents of Intag in opposition to the project, as well as the impending constitutional injunction, the presence of company representatives in the region can only be expected to provoke conflict and escalate existing tensions in the communities. We are also very concerned about reports we have received, that police are being transported in company vehicles to different areas within Intag, and that two Intag residents were arrested without warrant or probable cause, and transported in Ascendant Copper Corporation vehicles to the police station in Ibarra. Another troubling development reported by international observers in the Junin area is the presence of apparent paramilitary personnel in the area, who are being identified as working in support of the mining company. This factor clearly complicates an already difficult situation and will likely result in greater violations of international human right laws as well as national legislation.

I sincerely hope that your government is able to launch a full-scale investigation to try to clear up the troubling news recently emanating from the Intag area.

I likewise urge you to analyze carefully the long-term impacts this project will have on the forests of the Toisan Range and local ecosystems, as well as the implications of

advancing this project in face of so much community opposition and the impacts it will have on relationships with local communities in the region as well as with the County of Cotacachi more broadly. I also support a complete investigation of the numerous human-rights violations people from communities in the Intag area have complained about as a consequence of the presence of mining companies in their territory and which are being documented by CEDHU (*Comision Ecumenica de Derechos Humanos*).

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,