

**STATEMENT BY BISHOP JOSE MANGUIRAN, OF DIPOLOG CITY, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE, MINDANAO,
PHILIPPINES**

TO

**THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

MARCH 23, 2005 – OTTAWA

Dear Chairman Kilgour and honourable members of this Subcommittee,

TVI, a Canadian mining company, has been developing and operating an open pit gold mine in Canatuan, Siocon since 1994. These mining operations are against the wishes of most of the people of Siocon. The Municipal Mayor Cesar Soriano has repeatedly stated his opposition along with numerous other civil society groups including the different faith communities in town. The legitimate organization of the Subanon people of Canatuan has also continually voiced its opposition to the destructive presence of these miners in the community. This stance has been echoed by other Subanon communities who are aware of the situation.

The opposition of the people has been made abundantly clear and maintained consistently for a long time. They have maintained their opposition even when shot at and wounded in 2004 or beaten and arrested in 1999.

The operations of the company have already caused grave environment damage to an important watershed. The mountain is also a sacred place to the Subanon and it has been violated. The Subanon have suffered abuses at the hands of the company guards. Their community has been disrupted and divided against itself to serve the interests of the company.

A grouping of respected elders of the Subanon have condemned efforts to falsely project some supporters of the company as the leaders of the community while the real traditional leader of the local Subanon, Timuay Jose Anoy, is not even free to live in his home or enter his ancestral lands.

At this time TVI has issued eviction orders against long term residents of Canatuan and is planning to demolish their houses. Urgent action is needed to prevent this abuse and halt the destruction.

There have been many false claims and misinformation presented about the situation in Canatuan. The true voice of the people and their cries for help are not heard in Manila yet their problems are grave and urgent.

We invited those who wish to know the truth to travel to Siocon where the real wishes of the people cannot be hidden and the real problems created by the mining operations can be plainly seen.

Signed

Msgr. Jose R. Manguiran, D.D.
Bishop, Diocese of Dipolog
DCMI Bishop in Charge