



- The big polluters: political action vital
- Why are Guatemalan famers becoming migrants?
- Land defender killed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Human trafficking in Canada

THE BIG POLLUTERS: POLITICAL ACTION VITAL

There are 20 fossil fuel corporations behind one third of all carbon pollution, according to an article in *The Guardian*. Twelve of them are state owned (SO) and eight are private (P) companies. This illustrates the importance of political action against these polluters as well as the over-riding role of the economy in carbon pollution.

The twelve largest of these companies are listed below in order of the size of their carbon emissions between the years 1965 – 2017. The emissions are measured in billions of tonnes.

Saudi Aram Co. (SO)	59.26 billion
Chevron (P)	43.35
Gazprom (SO)	43.23
Exon Mobile (P)	41.90
National Iranian Oil Co (SO)	35.66
BP (P)	34.02
Royal Dutch Shell (P)	31.95
Coal India (SO)	23.12
Pemex (SO)	22.65
Petroleos de Venezuela (SO)	15.75
Petrol China (SO)	15.63

The top 20 corporations are responsible for 35% of all carbon dioxide and methane emissions. They have emitted 480 billion tonnes in the period 1965 – 2017.

As *The Guardian* notes: ‘The great tragedy of the Climate Crisis is that seven and a half billion people must pay the price – in the form of a degraded planet – so that a couple of dozen polluting interests can continue to make record profits. It is a great moral failing of our political system that we have allowed this to happen’.

Where to start, you ask? The political system promotes and enables these companies and therefore political action is needed to rein in the state and private oil, gas and coal companies.

Source: Summarised by Mary Boyd. You can find the whole article at:
www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/09/revealed-20-firms-third-carbon-emissions

WHY ARE GUATEMALAN FAMERS BECOMING MIGRANTS?

Many Central Americans arriving at the USA southern border are escaping a toxic mix of gang violence, poverty and corruption. However, for the record numbers of Guatemalans deciding to emigrate more recently, the root cause appears to be climate change and the

devastating effect it has had on that country's coffee crop. The Guatemalan coffee industry is the country's largest rural employer. Farmers and agricultural labourers, once employed in the sector, now find themselves largely out of work. They are abandoning their plantations and joining the exodus north.

Experts say climate change, caused for the most part by pollution from the developed North, is disrupting formerly predictable rain cycles. Complicating attempts to revitalize the industry were a recent drop in global coffee prices and a pervasive disease, exacerbated by shifting climate patterns, that killed off coffee plants. It is the biggest challenge with coffee right now. Guatemala is consistently listed among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change.

But the problem is not restricted to coffee alone. Drought hasn't spared staple food crops such as corn or beans. This has pushed rural communities to the edge of poverty.

Central America has a 'dry corridor' comprising parts of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua. This region is most prone to famine, and is home to around 3.5 million people. Extreme weather phenomena have wreaked havoc on the livelihoods of those living there. Farmers used to plant crops based on their knowledge of seasonal weather. But the erratic weather conditions and lack of information have posed new challenges.

'Farmers are completely confused. They are walking in the dark about important questions on when to plant,' said Daniel McQuillan, technical adviser for agriculture at Catholic Relief Services. 'If farmers miss the window for planting a crop, their food supply dwindles.

And for years now, they've watched as their stocks deplete'.

Based on conversations with members of coffee co-operatives in the region, McQuillan reported 5% to 10% 'members leaving for the USA every month'.

Experts say that the prolonged drought and erratic weather in Guatemala is a direct result of climate change in the region. 'We are at the mercy of larger countries that produce climate change. They feel very little responsibility. They need to reduce greenhouse gases'.

The condition in Guatemala has also worsened since the Trump administration suspended aid to the country as punishment for not doing enough to curb migration to the USA. This move has affected rural communities the most, and with no work and no food, people are now forced to make the journey north. Cutting down or shutting down aid only increases the pressure to migrate. Despite the Trump administration's 'zero tolerance policy' to prosecute all who enter the USA illegally and recent actions to limit asylum, the numbers continue to rise.

*Source: Sarah Salvadore, Sept 20, 2019, National Catholic Reporter (NCR), ssalvadore@ncronline.org
Edited A Healey.*

LAND DEFENDER KILLED IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

A member of the Congolese environmental and human rights organisation, RIAO-RDC, was brutally killed by a security guard of the Canadian palm oil company Feronia Inc. on Sunday, July 21, 2019, near the company's Boteka plantations in Bempumba, Equateur Province.

The killing follows months of intimidation directed by the company at members of RIAO-RDC, who are supporting local communities in filing a grievance against the company for its occupation of their lands.

Joël Imbangola Luneza was a driver of a motorised boat used to transport people and goods between the villages around Feronia's Boteka plantations and the city of Mbandaka. He played a particularly important role in ensuring communications between the local communities and RIAO-RDC.

As Mr Joël was preparing to transport several passengers and their luggage on his small boat, he was approached by Mr. Boketsu Ebuka, a security guard working at Feronia's Boteka plantations. Mr. Ebuka accused Mr. Joël of transporting containers of stolen palm oil from

Feronia's plantations. The passengers and other witnesses to the scene say that when Mr Joël denied the charge, Mr. Ebuka beat him and eventually strangled him to death. He then threw Mr. Joël's body into the Moboyo River. It is reported that Mr. Ebuka is now in hiding.

Tensions between Feronia and the local communities at the company's three different plantation sites in the DRC have been rising and. RIAO-RDC has been trying to bring a peaceful solution to the conflict. The first mediation process in 2017 came to an abrupt end when Feronia pulled out of the process after only a couple of weeks. In November 2018, RIAO-RDC began supporting nine affected communities in another mediation process, this time using the International Complaints Mechanism (ICM) of the German, Dutch and French development banks that finance Feronia.

Since this second mediation process was initiated, RIAO-RDC has faced increased efforts by Feronia to discredit RIAO-RDC, by accusing the organisation of being an agent for foreign interests. At the same time its security

guards have increased their intimidation of local members of RIAO-RDC. As well, the communities living within and alongside Feronia's plantations are routinely harassed by company security guards who accuse them of stealing oil palm fruits from the plantation, even though these communities have been harvesting palm fruits from their community forests and producing palm oil for generations and long before the arrival of Feronia.

Feronia and its international funders as well as the local authorities have all been informed of these regular occurrences and urged to correct them, but with no results. RIAO-RDC is now calling on higher relevant authorities of the DRC and international human rights bodies to investigate Mr. Joël's murder without delay..

Mr. Joël was the sole income earner of the family and leaves behind his wife and five children.

Source: Odile Ntakirutimana, 24 July 2019, in AEFJN(Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network) Echoes 60. September 2019, jnnews@aeijn.org Edited A Healey

The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability. Remember this: We be many and they be few. They need us more than we need them. Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy, War Talk

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CANADA

Although we don't often hear about human trafficking in Canada, it exists and is growing, according to a Conference sponsored by St Mary's University, Halifax, Criminology Department and held on 14th September. The conference was organized by human trafficking abolitionist and survivor of sexual exploitation, Cheyenne Jones, to bring awareness of the origin of the trafficking network: the buyers.

'We feel that the root of the issue is the men who buy sex, since they're the ones fuelling

the demand'. Jones believes that more facilities are needed to help survivors heal. She also wants local police and federal policing systems to hold the buyers accountable. According to a 2016 report, Halifax and Ottawa lead the nation for the highest rates of police-reported incidents of sex trafficking – at nearly five times the national level. Halifax also reported the highest rates of cross-border human trafficking in Canada. Although over 90 % of trafficking takes place within the country, Halifax police are trying to get to the bottom of a supply link between Halifax and

Toronto into which many women and girls from Nova Scotia are smuggled to fill the demand in the latter city.

Dr. Heather Thompson, a Nova Scotia obstetrician and gynaecologist and advisor to an NGO called *Global Health Promise* described the effects of trafficking on the health of trafficked victims: 'If you dig deeper beyond the more obvious sexually transmitted infections, the result is death and violence. Trafficking victims have a 40 times higher rate of death than average; and at least 75% of them experience violence at the hands of pimps. Victims are prone to depression and a higher rate of sub-stance abuse'.

In the meantime, *The Circle* NGO of Calgary, Alberta, has outlined some of the myths that are circulating about trafficking. They explain that the legal definition of human trafficking requires three elements:

- the act of recruitment, transportation or harbouring a person,
- by means of exercising control, direction or influence over their movements,
- for the purpose of exploiting that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour.

It is believed that most trafficking victims in Canada are sexually exploited.

Myth Trafficking is the same as smuggling.

Fact Trafficked victims are not necessarily moved across borders. Approximately 94% of cases of sex trafficking identified in Canada have occurred within its borders. Trafficking can be less problematic, easier to conceal and more profitable than selling drugs. On average, every trafficked woman in Canada generates just under \$300,000 per year for her boss.

Myth Only certain people are considered to be 'at risk'. The major risk factors are poverty, having a personal history of violence or neglect, or being vulnerable to manipulation.

Fact The number one risk is being female. Women and children from every socio-economic background are at risk and anyone can be targeted and exploited. Approximately 95% of trafficked victims are female, most under the age of 25. In Canada, indigenous women are disproportionately affected. Although indigenous people make up approximately 4% of the population, they account for approximately 50% of sex trafficking victims.

Myth Victims are physically forced into trafficking.

Fact. Relationships between traffickers and their victims often begin with what the victim believes to be a friendship or romantic relationship. A common technique used to lure teens and young women into sex trafficking is to treat them well - initially. Most victims are recruited through the internet or by an acquaintance. Often, the victim is 'groomed' by someone pretending to be her boyfriend or friend who promises her a better life and buys her gifts. The average age of girls manipulated in this manner is 13. In the case of an older victim, the trafficker also buys gifts and may promise her a good job in the city. Once a relationship is developed, the trafficker is more easily able to manipulate the victim emotionally and exploit her vulnerabilities.

Trafficking is a hidden crime as most of it has been moved from the street to the internet. The solicitation of sex predominately occurs online through classified and escort pages.

Prosecution can be difficult because victims are often frightened and unwilling to testify. The coercive nature of the relationship between the victim and the trafficker also makes the crime difficult to prove in court.

Source: Media report of the St. Mary's Conference and 'Facts and Myths about Sex Trafficking in Canada' by Helen Maguire and Susan Fraser of the Calgary Circle. Prepared by Mary Boyd.

**Contributions to Bulletin and responses to its content are welcomed.
Publication bi-monthly from office in Sydney. Deadline: 14th of each publication month.**

The Bulletin is currently produced by two networks: *Justice and Trade Agreements* and *Human Trafficking*. Coordinators: JTA - Mary Boyd (maryboyd@live.ca); Alison Healey (grailsydney@ozemail.com.au); HT - Patricia Foito e Camisao (pcamisao@gmail.com); Angelina Kyondo (mksgrail@yahoo.com). Design: Thanks to Marian Kelly for her donation of time and talent.