The Centro de Gestion Integral de Residuos S.A. (CEGIR) proposal to build a hazardous dump site in Quitovac has been defeated by Traditional O’odham communities and local State of Sonora, Mexico communities

We would like to send our sincere appreciation to all of you, Greenaction our main advisor, and the 569 international organizations and individuals that supported our efforts to have this hazardous dump canceled. We would also especially like to thank everyone who signed our online petition. We would also like to thank the 21 original organizations that signed our letter to the Environmental and Natural Resources Department of Mexico (SEMARNAT). We would also like to give great thanks to support efforts of Jeff Hendricks of Tiamat Publications and all of Resistant Culture.

The O’odham VOICE Against the WALL and the O’odham Rights Cultural and Environmental Justice Coalition have worked for a number of years to maintain the integrity of Quitovac, an O’odham sacred site, while at the same time building an international coalition to stop this proposed hazardous dump.

Our coalition represents thousands of people in diverse communities across Mexico and the United States spanning many different ethnic and economic backgrounds. Our coalition will remain diligent in maintaining watch on CEGIR and other companies invading O’odham traditional lands and local communities.

The attempt by CEGIR to build this toxic dump was in total violation of the Human Rights of O’odham Indigenous communities. If this dump had been built, it would have been in violation of the integral O’odham right to protect their traditional homelands and their continued responsibility to conduct their traditional way of life through ceremonies that have been held at Quitovac since time immemorial.

This would have been yet another devastating episode in the ongoing destruction of the culture, traditions, and spiritual well-being of the O’odham people in both Mexico and the US which has been being carried out by the occupation governments of Mexico and the United States for many years.

The proposed facility would have exposed nearby communities to dangerous toxins released in the land and the air. The proposed hazardous waste facility would have received large amounts of hazardous waste materials annually, including radioactive materials, explosives, aliphatic peroxides, compressed gasses, polychlorinated biphenyl
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(PCB) wastes, dioxins, and infectious biological wastes. Such contaminates would have contaminated the underground well water the community of Quitovac depends on.

We strongly urge the Mexican government – just as we urge the United States government – to deal with hazardous waste issues in a manner that protects the environment and does not harm the lives, culture, traditions and sacred sites of Indigenous peoples.

CEGIR violated the La Paz Agreement between Mexico and the United States which requires that official notification be given to stakeholders of the proposed site region. These stakeholders include the traditional O’odham communities in Mexico and the local community of Quitovac.

The exclusion of the O’odham and the residents of Quitovac in the decision making process for the planning of the CEGIR hazardous dump was an intentional injustice.

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