



Canadian Tibetan Joint Action Committee of Toronto: Tibetan Women's Association * Tibetan Youth Congress * Chushi Gangdruk * Students for a Free Tibet Canada * Canada Tibet Committee * Canadian Tibetan Association of Ontario

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 27th, 2009 **Event advisory included.

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TIBETANS CALL ON HUNTER DICKINSON TO PULL OUT ITS MINING OPERATION IN TIBET HUNDREDS PROTEST AT TORONTO MINING CONVENTION

TORONTO – Several hundred Tibetans and supporters gathered outside the Toronto Metro Convention this morning to protest mining in Tibet by Hunter Dickinson's subsidiary Continental Minerals. Currently leading the charge of Canadian mining companies in Tibet, the junior mining company based out of Vancouver is pursuing the licensing rights to mine gold and copper in the Xietongmen Project in the Tibet Autonomous Region. As Chinese authorities floods Tibet with tens of thousands of troops, ban foreign journalists from entering and attempt to crush all dissenters in the lead up to the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising on March 10th, Tibet rights groups are calling on Hunter Dickinson and other Canadian companies and investors to pull out of Tibet immediately or face increased public and political pressure.

"Tibet is a political landmine ready to blow up any minute," said Kunga Tsering, president of the Canadian-Tibet Joint Action Committee, a coalition of Toronto's six Tibet NGOS. "It's absolutely unconscionable for a Canadian company to be operating inside Tibet when Tibetans are facing the most repressive and volatile times since the Cultural Revolution."

The rush of Canadian junior mining companies to engage in exploratory drilling and mine operations in Tibet in the past few years has sounded the alarm bells for Tibetans and Tibet support groups, both in Canada and around the world. Mining operations in Tibet pose a great risk to the fragile ecosystem of the Tibetan plateau, potentially destroying vast regions of grazing land for animals, and polluting water sources which supply much of Asia.

"It is a black stain on Canada to have a Canadian company like Continental Minerals be complicit in China's unethical and environmentally disastrous pillaging of Tibet when Tibetans clearly have no right to say whether they want the mines there in the first place," said Tsering Lama, national director of Students for a Free Tibet Canada.

Rights activists also view China's push to solicit foreign investment in Tibet as politically motivated to further consolidate control over Tibet through economic means by bringing an influx of ethnic Han Chinese into Tibetan regions and destroying the traditional nomadic Tibetan way of life by displacing Tibetans into resettlement camps.

"After what the First Nations has experienced in Canada, it's unbelievable that Canadian companies are taking part in such unethical investment" said Amchi Kunga of Dhokham Chushi Gangdruk. "In the long run, Hunter Dickinson's Continental Minerals is contributing to the colonizing of Tibet by investing

in China's effort to put hundreds of thousands of nomads in resettlement camps, irrevocably dismantling an entire way of life and preventing any possibility of protests,"

On March 9th, the day before the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising, Tibetans and supporters will be mobilizing to their nations' capitals to meet with and lobby political leaders to push for meaningful action to end the crisis inside Tibet.

"In Canada, we will be going to Ottawa to meet with our political leaders, and we will be sure to raise the issue of Canadian investment inside Tibet," said Sonam Dorjee of the Regional Tibetan Youth Congress of Toronto.

Toronto has one of the largest exiled Tibetan communities in the world. The Canadian Tibetan Joint Action Committee is made up of the six major Tibet NGOs in Toronto.

EVENT ADVISORY:

WHAT: Demonstration against Canadian mining company Hunter Dickinson's operations in Tibet

WHO: Tibetans and their supporters, organized by the Canadian-Tibetan Joint Action Committee

WHERE: Toronto Metro Convention (255 Front Street) at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada's Mining Investment Show

WHEN: 10am – 3pm, Sunday, March 1st

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