



Türk Tabipleri Birliđi
____ Turkish Medical Association ____



DR. GIGI OSLER
PRESIDENT CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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2208/2019

08.08.2019

Dear Dr. Gigi Osler,
President
Canadian Medical Association

The Statement on the Role of Physicians in Environmental Issues adopted by the World Medical Association draws attention to the role of medical associations in protecting and preventing the destruction of air, water and soil that are commons of humanity essential for life and health and to the need of partnership in coordinating international efforts to this end. As the Turkish Medical Association we would like to inform you about an environmental 'assault' and kindly ask for your cooperation in this regard.

Today, people living in Turkey are confronted with a huge environmental hazard in a geographical area that is the common heritage of humanity particularly with its historical/mythological significance. The area lies in western Turkey, on the shore of Aegean Sea, on and around Kazdaglari which is known as Mount Ida in mythology and which contains a unique biodiversity. The Trojan War narrated by Homer in his *Iliad* took place on the foot of this mountain. The best quality olives in Turkey are grown in this area. Throughout the ages, people settling here enjoyed a healthy and happy life.

Now unfortunately a Canada-based company, ALAMOS GOLD INC, received gold mining permission for three different projects in an area of 25 square kilometres. The area concerned also covers the location Kirazlı Atikhisar which is the unique source of potable water for Çanakkale province. The original plan was to cut down 45,000 trees as a part of preparatory work. But, presently, even before the clearance of the area where gold is to be extracted, 195,000 trees have already been cut down. Wildlife in the area has already suffered significant harm (Please see the photos below).

Türk Tabipleri Birliđi Merkez Konseyi

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When the enterprise begins operating, 20,000 tons of cyanide will be used and thousands of tons of heavy metals like arsenic, antimony, lead, cadmium and chrome will dissolve in processing and contaminate the environment. This already grim picture is likely to be further aggravated by dust, possible accidents (as witnessed in similar cases), and earthquake.

In addition, the mining sector is among the leading activities that result in deforestation. Forests, which contribute to reduction in carbon emissions and thus to combating climate crisis, are being destroyed. Today, one of the basic strategies in combating

climate crisis is to avoid deforestation, reducing biodiversity loss and to develop adaptation strategies that put “climate first” in relation to activities placing pressure on ecosystems. the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) particularly stressed that reducing deforestation is a major instrument in combating climate change. Hence, it wouldn't be appropriate to consider the effects of mining activities on Mount Ida as something that will remain limited to a specific area.

Most importantly, the people living in the region is almost completely against this 'assault'. They are regularly organizing protests to make their voice heard including gatherings, demonstrations and signing petitions (as for today, the number of signatories is more than 500,000 and counting).



However, both Turkish Government and John McCluskey, the CEO of the company, are uncooperative and unapologetic towards the multiple environmental and human concerns protesters have raised. McCluskey blames protesting people for having a political agenda: “I believe that this whole attack is essentially just an environmental cloak that is being put over what is really a deep political agenda” (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-environment-alamos-ceo/after-protests-alamos-ceo-defends-turkish-mine-project-against-misinformation-idUSKCN1UX106>)

In addition, The Canadian Government has clearly indicated that the release of cyanides is of serious concern to the health of persons and environments. Currently they are proposing much more stringent risk management procedures and environmental effects monitoring to manage the risks associated with cyanide (<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/evaluating-existing->

[substances/risk-management-scope-cyanides.html#toc0](#)). Such a clear statement on behalf of the Canadian government should be taken into account when Canadian corporations pursue mining activity in sensitive environments beyond Canada's borders.

As the Turkish Medical Association we have serious concerns and we are waging a struggle to stop further degradation of this unique area with its natural and historical properties, prevent the dislocation of thousands of inhabitants and destruction of local habitat, and to protect the health of people. The implications of the ALAMOS GOLD project in Turkey will impact climate change and environmental degradation in ways that exceed national borders. A global effort is needed by medical associations and the Canadian Medical Association is well placed to intervene given the attention the Canadian government has given the question of cyanides and environment. We need your help to put an end to environmental destruction committed by ALAMOS GOLD INC to protect habitat and health in a very precious part of earth, our common home, which is a part of the memory of humanity. In this context we ask our Canadian colleagues to inform Canadian authorities and public about the activities of ALAMOS GOLD INC in our country and its consequences with the aim of mobilizing democratic pressure for the cessation of these activities. We would like to thank you for your cooperation and kind efforts to help in advance.

Yours respectfully,



Prof.Dr. Sinan Adıyaman

President
Turkish Medical Association