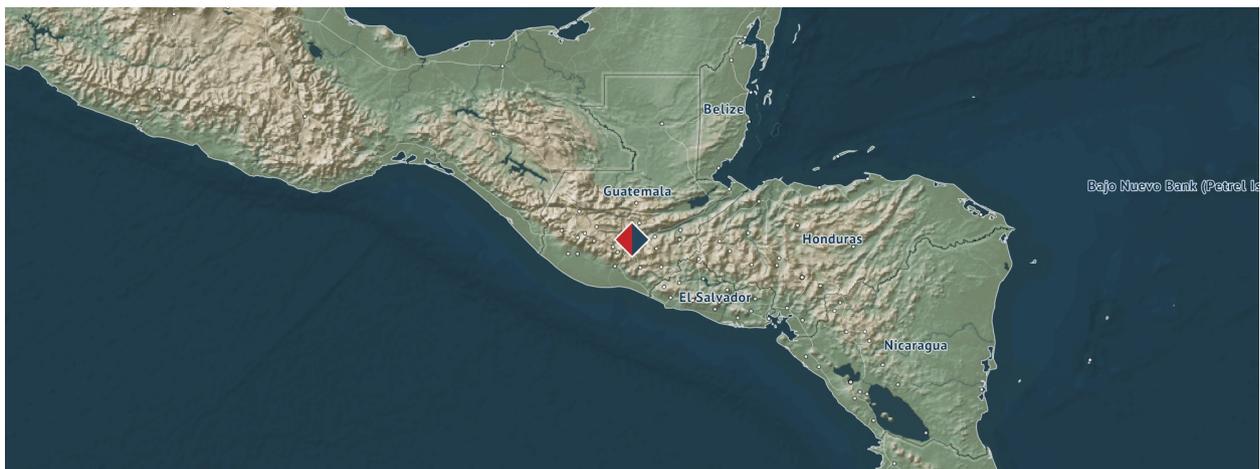




Conflict Factsheet

## El Tambor Mining Conflict in Guatemala

Type of conflict <b>Main</b>	Intensity <b>1.5</b>
Conflict Locality <b>Central America</b>	Time <b>2011 –ongoing</b>
Countries <b>Guatemala</b>	Resources <b>Water</b>

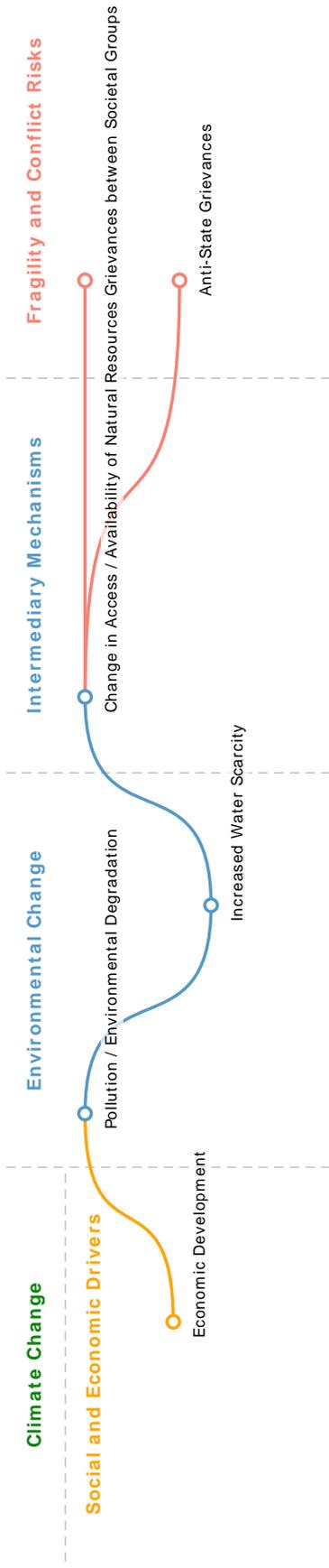


### Conflict Summary

The “El Tambor” mining project, also known as “Progreso VII”, operates through the Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala S.A. Company (Exmigua), a subsidiary of the Kappes, Cassiday & Associates (KCA) Company, and is located in the municipalities of San Pedro Ayampuc and San José del Golfo, in Southern Guatemala. Local residents allege that the gold and silver extraction was damaging water sources. A process of dialogue among companies, government and residents, beginning in 2013, was paralyzed and residents who had organized a sit-in at the mine entrance, attempting to keep out the heavy machinery, were violently removed by the military (PrensaLibre 2014a; PrensaLibre 2014b).



### Conceptual Model



### Context Factors



Water



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## Conflict History

In 2011, the Guatemalan Government approved the gold and silver mining concession for the El Tambor mine for the Exploraciones Mineras de Guatemala S.A. Company. The local population, because of fears that the mining would cause the same damage as in other zones of the country, began expressing their disagreement and concern, above all considering the pollution that mining activity would have on their water sources. The environmental impact assessment had already been approved by the Ministry of Energies and Mines, and the mining extraction license had already been granted, without having consulted in a free, well-informed prior manner with local residents, as prescribed by international standards on indigenous rights.

### Environmental Impact Assessment joint evaluation

Beginning in June 2013, a series of meetings were held between representatives of the communities affected by the El Tambor mine, the President of the Republic, representatives of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Environment and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Governance, to review and jointly evaluate the Environmental Impact Assessment, and therefore consider the mitigation measures adopted by the mining company.

### Eruption of violence

Nevertheless, in these meetings, no agreement was reached. In 2014, the National Dialogue System hosted new meetings among the parties in conflict in order to reach an agreement. However, on 23th of May 2014 at dawn the company's machinery came to the mine's entrance and, along with the police, began removing the community demonstrators ([PrensaLibre, 2014a](#)). The situation became violent, with 23 demonstrators wounded and 15 police agents as well ([PrensaLibre, 2014a](#)).

### United Nations condemnation

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which had sent its representatives to verify due compliance with the established protocols about the use of force in this type of situations, condemned the way the government used force for this activity: "The number of persons hurt reveals a failure to adequately apply protocols on the use of force in accordance with human rights". The High Commissioner also called for resumption of the dialogue attempted in 2013 ([Telediario, 2014](#)). At this time residents remain present at the mine entrance and are demanding resumption of the dialogue and negotiation among companies, residents and the government ([PrensaLibre, 2014b](#)).

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## Resolution Efforts

In summary, the conflict resolution modes range from peaceful conflict resolution, to violent military repression against the opposition. The former include peaceful mobilizations by residents, to bring political pressure on decision-makers. Further, impartial agencies such as United Nations mechanisms facilitate dialogue and negotiation among the parties in conflict. And finally, the use of military force has been a factor exacerbating the conflict and hardening both parties' positions, and continues to this day. The dynamics of the conflict depend at this time largely on the possibility of resuming the dialogue among the parties.



## Intensities & Influences



### INTENSITIES

International / Geopolitical Intensity



Human Suffering



### INFLUENCES

Environmental Influences



Societal Influences



Violent Conflict

**Yes**



Salience with nation

**National**



Mass displacement

**None**



Cross Border Mass Displacement

**No**



## Resolution Success

Reduction in geographical scope

**There has been no reduction in geographical scope.**

-

Increased capacity to address grievance in the future

**There is no increased capacity to address grievances in the future.**

-

Grievance Resolution

**Grievances have been completely ignored.**

-

Causal Attribution of Decrease in Conflict Intensity

**There has been no reduction in intensity**

-



## Entry Points for Resilience and Peace Building

### Dialogue

2

A series of meetings were held between community representatives and government authorities to review the environmental impact assessment and jointly consider the mitigation measures to be adopted by the mining company. Subsequently, the National Dialogue System hosted new meetings among the parties in conflict in order to reach an agreement. Nevertheless, no agreement was reached and the use of military force has halted any dialogue.

### Mediation & arbitration

1

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned the government's use of force against demonstrators and called for a resumption of dialogue.

### Social inclusion & empowerment

0

Prior consultation with local residents is required during the planning of mining projects as prescribed by international standards on indigenous rights. However, this requirement was not upheld.

## Resources and Materials

### References with URL

[PrensaLibre \(2014a\). Desalojo violento en La Puya deja 26 lesionados.](#)

[PrensaLibre \(2014b\). Pobladores de La Puya llaman al diálogo.](#)

[Telediario \(2014\). Oficina de ONU en Guatemala insta al diálogo tras enfrentamiento por minería.](#)

Further information

<https://factbook.ecc-platform.org/conflicts/el-tambor-mining-conflict-guatemala>