



# MAYA LEADERS ALLIANCE

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Government of Belize and US Capital Energy Disrespects Maya Leadership**

The Maya Leaders Alliance (MLA) and the Toledo Alcaldes Association (TAA) informs the public that Mr Ligorio Coy of Santa Anna Village in the Toledo District is no longer the MLA spokesperson and has no relationship whatsoever with the MLA. Please be further advised that the comments made by Mr. Coy at the meeting in Sunday Wood on Thursday the 25th October were his own views and were not comments he was authorized to say on behalf of the MLA or any organization the MLA is associated with. As of Thursday the 25th October 2012, all statements and dealings of Mr. Coy are unrelated to the MLA and anything said to the contrary is false.

The Maya Leaders are saddened when our brothers and sisters feel that they are so desperate that they cannot resist the persistent temptation offered by the oil company. We are outraged that these foreign companies come to our land, supported by our own government, and try to buy us and our resources as in the days of Christopher Columbus. When they cannot buy us, they try to marginalize and isolate us.

The government of Belize and the oil company continue to demonstrate blatant and utter disregard for the Maya leadership. They view our people and leadership as if we are for sale and expendable. The disrespect and discrimination with which the government treats us is nothing new. When foreign companies come, the government tells them not to worry about us. The government tells these companies and their local mouthpieces that we have been kept so poor and ignorant that they can offer us anything and we will accept it and be satisfied. A good example of this is the lack of meaningful consultation and inadequate space for people to exercise their freedom of speech. To this end, the MLA and the TAA denounce the October 25<sup>th</sup> EIA Consultation. The government should be looking out for our best interest but instead they are selling us out and our heritage. This will not stand unchallenged.

Maya people, like indigenous peoples worldwide, have for centuries had to fight against all odds to be treated as humans worthy of and entitled to the same fundamental rights as other persons. Rest assured, the MLA along with the Maya peoples shall continue that fight.