



For Immediate Release: 3/21/07

Contact:

Luis Eduardo Cisneros 9371 4481 (Lima)

Martin Wagner, (USA) 1-510-550-6714 mwagner@earthjustice.org

Astrid Puentes, apuentes@aida-americas.org

**Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to Examine
Responsibility for Violations at La Oroya, Peru**
Children breathe sulfur dioxide pollution at 300 times level permitted by WHO

Lima, Peru/Washington, D.C. – Public health and environmental organizations from throughout the Western Hemisphere today announced the filing of a petition with the human rights division of the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. The petition accuses the Peruvian government of doing little to halt contamination from a metallurgical complex that is impacting the lives and health of the citizens of La Oroya, Peru.

The petition's filing was announced at a press conference in Lima, Peru this morning by Carlos Chirinos of the Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental (SPDA), Astrid Puentes of the Interamerican Association Environmental Defense (AIDA), Earthjustice, and the Centro de Derechos Humanos y Ambiente (CEDHA).

The petition claims the Peruvian government failed to place pollution controls on the metallurgical complex that operates in La Oroya, a situation that tramples on the human rights of the town's citizens. Located in the city of La Oroya, some 175 kms from Lima, the complex has been operating for 80 years. Doe Run Peru, a subsidiary of Doe Run Company of St. Louis, Missouri, USA owns the complex.

Recent monitoring of air quality – performed by Doe Run itself – has shown that daily average sulfur dioxide levels are between 80 and 300 times the maximum level permitted by the World Health Organization. The Blacksmith Institute even declared the city of La Oroya one of the Top Ten Most Polluted cities in the world.

The petition asks the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to recommend that the Peruvian government implement urgent measures to halt the grave violations against the health and lives of the citizens of La Oroya.

Learn more about the conditions in La Oroya by watching a short film:

<http://www.youtube.com/v/gY6WXa9aKrM>

More Background

<http://www.aida-americas.org/aida.php?page=laoroya>

Read a copy of the petition here (in Spanish):

http://www.earthjustice.org/library/legal_docs/human-rights-petition-on-la-oroya-to-iachr.pdf