



Resource Development (Phils.) Inc.

NEWS RELEASE

Indigenous Subanons, Former Moro Rebels and Siocon Barangay Captains Renew Support for TVIRD

Clamor for sustained development in their communities



A fortunate generation. Before TVIRD's entry, the only existing public school in Canatuan only provided Grade 1 up to Grade 3 education. The new generation of Subanons is more fortunate than their parents as they now have schools that offer complete primary and secondary education, complete with libraries that have enough text and reference books.

Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte / August 2016 – In an unprecedented move over the weekend, the indigenous Subanon people of this town along with fishermen and barangay captains pledged anew their unwavering support to TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD), which they regard as “a responsible miner” during its 10-year operations in the ancestral lands of the tribe in Sitio Canatuan, Barangay Tabayo of this municipality.

In a resolution signed by 22 tribal leaders, the Subanons expressed their support to TVIRD and advised mining regulatory bodies and the local government of their support of the company's final mine rehabilitation project since the activity will restore and rehabilitate the areas affected during its years of mining operations.

Rehabilitating the environment

"Rehabilitation of the area is TVIRD's commitment to its stakeholders and to us, owners of the land. It is beneficial to us and the next generation of Subanons, hence, we are 100 percent in support of the activity," declared Timuay (Chieftain) Erdulfo Comisas, Sr., spokesman and authorized representative of the Subanon Council of Elders.

TVIRD has been mining in Canatuan since 2004 and concluded its mining operations in January 2014.

"The Subanons, however, can't forget that during its operations, TVIRD built schools, (provided) college scholarship programs that made many of their children young professionals, extended livelihood projects, built a mini-hospital that catered to their needs as well as those of neighboring barangays, provided them with royalties and gave them priority in employment," Timuay Comisas revealed.

Rehabilitating lives

Aside from the indigenous people, a group of 77 fishermen under the Sta. Maria Fisher Folks Association (SMFA) – all former rebels of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) of this municipality – also support TVIRD's ongoing rehabilitation activity. They returned to the fold of the law following the peace agreement signed by MNLF leadership and the government.

"Rehabilitation is part of responsible mining championed by us. It is an activity that every responsible miner should do to protect the environment. We are in support of it," the association said in a resolution passed and approved by its members.

The fishermen shared that until now they are benefiting the livelihood project implemented by the company through its Social Development and Management Program (SDMP).

Tan Cailo, SMFA founding president disclosed that the company has provided them with a fishing vessel they call a "*kubkoban*" as well as fishing equipment that provides his community with additional income since they started deep sea fishing operations in 2011.

Cailo, a fisherman before he joined the MNLF, said that besides the additional income their respective families are enjoying monthly, funds they save in the bank will now allow them the seed money to build a second *kubkoban*.

“If our plan will be realized, our association will grow since we can expand our membership,” he added.

Mining coexisting with agriculture and fishing

Siocon is primarily an agricultural town with farming as the main source of living of its 45,000 residents composed of Christians, Subanons and Muslims. But owing to its rich seas, fishing is also the principal source of income of people living in coastal barangays. Since TVIRD’s entry, Siocon has maintained its status as one of the major fishing grounds of Zamboanga del Norte province.

“It’s proof that farming and fishing can co-exist,” Cailo, now in his early 60s said. He also disclosed that TVIRD invested Php2.6 million for their first *kubkoban*, which went a long way in bringing peace and progress in the community.

The town was a fourth-class municipality prior to TVIRD’s gold and silver project in 2004 until 2008 – which was followed by copper and zinc operations from 2009 to 2014. The local taxes remitted by TVIRD and the LGU share from excise tax bolstered Siocon’s coffers and propelled it to a first-class municipality by 2010.

Records show that from 2004 up to 2013, TVIRD paid excise tax to the national government that totaled totaling P390 million to the national government. An additional P257 million in the form of IP Royalties and P160 million in SDMP funds were also disbursed by the company during the same period.

Also, records from Siocon’s municipal treasury revealed that it has received P29.6 million from TVIRD’s business tax and another P10 million from real property tax from 2004 to 2012. By 2013 until 2016, it received almost Php7-million from the same taxes.

Sustainable barangays

Members of the Association of Barangay Captains (ABC) of the town, which represents the town’s 26 barangays, who also issued a manifestation in favor of the company that said the organization gladly supports TVIRD owing to the community projects enjoyed by their constituents.

The chairmen endorsed the company’s final mine rehabilitation project and other projects it will undertake, indicating that its SDMP projects have repaired their farm-to-market roads, constructed

barangay halls, school buildings, day care centers for their children, provided books and sent their poor constituents' children to school through its scholarship program.

"We will always be grateful to the government if it will permit the company to operate again in Siocon. We benefited from its SDMP projects, it solved our unemployment problem, it's our source of taxes, and its security force helped us attain peace here. There's really no reason for government not to allow TVIRD to operate again in our ancestral lands," Tabayo barangay Chairman Nenita Davi disclosed.

Before TVIRD, Moro rebels attacked the town center in early 2003, killing hundred of its residents, including two seminarians from the Diocese of Dipolog. Both are residents from the neighboring Labason town.

Like many other barangays of Siocon, Canatuan, which is just a sub-village of Barangay Tabayo, was called the 'wild west' during the 90s until the early part of the last decade. Illegal small scale mining resulted to an influx of people, including armed rebels and dubious characters.

Looking back, Timuay Comisas quipped: "Canatuan was a haven of former illegal miners before. These illegal miners destroyed our land, they turned us into their slaves, including our children by hiring us as their lowly *abanteros* and laborers working in unsafe tunnels. They cheated the government of millions of taxes, they polluted our rivers and creeks with deadly cyanide and mercury, and they cut down our centuries-old trees. We won't allow these things to happen again. Never," he said.

Press photos:



1 *The Subanons in Canatuan with former NCIP Chairman Zenaida Brigida Pawid (in cream blouse) who attended the opening of the Gawad Kalinga-TVIRD Village in Sitio Tanuman. The*

houses now owned by the Subanons were jointly built by GK and TVIRD. Each Subanon family contributed 500 hours labor to own the house.



- 2** *A big catch.* Fresh fish abound in one of the fishing expeditions of the group of Tan Cailo, using the Kubkoban provided to them by TVIRD. At least 77 former Moro rebels and their families continue to benefit from the fishing vessel.



- 3** *This young Subanon nurse is Cynthia Lacpao, former TVIRD scholar and now a registered nurse. Being a company nurse, she is serving not only the employees but also both tribal and non-tribal Canatuan residents.*

About TVI Philippines

TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. ("TVIRD"), is the local affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration, development and production of precious and base metals from district-scale, large-system, high-margin projects located in the Philippines. Concurrent ownership of ventures is shared with partner company, Philippine Resource Holdings Inc.

TVIRD is committed to exploration and mining practices that promote transparency, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the inalienable rights to life, dignity, and sustainable development of its host communities.

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