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## Chilean and Canadian miners sign Teck Cominco Chain Global Accord

*Thursday, 22 May, 2008*

Representatives of the Quebrada Blanca Mining Workers' Union in Chile and the United Steelworkers have signed a historic accord to make the giant Teck Cominco corporation more accountable to workers and communities in their global operations. The Teck Cominco Chain Global Accord was signed in Kamloops by Mr Jorge Flores president of the Quebrada Blanca Mining Workers' Union, Mr Stephen Hunt USW Western Canada Director and five local union presidents of Teck Cominco mines in the province of British Columbia in Canada.

The accord initiates an era of cooperation by workers in both countries to bring together unionized Teck Cominco workers around the world. The accord addresses the need to make Teck Cominco a world leader in the health and safety of workers, in management of mineral and other resources, in training and apprenticeships, in respecting workers' rights to join the union of their choice and to bargain freely, and in being responsible to aboriginal peoples and the communities where they operate.

Mr Hunt said that "Teck Cominco is a Canadian mining corporation with global investments that affect the social, economic and environmental well being of workers and communities in Canada, Chile and elsewhere. Workers in Chile and Canada have been confronted with a corporation that must be made more accountable in the fundamental manner it deals with workers and communities. We believe our willingness to work together will make Teck Cominco a better company."

Mr Hunt said that "Our unions support the firm position that aboriginal peoples must have their treaties settled fairly and expeditiously and that exploration and mining activities be done in a way that is responsible to the social, economic and environmental well being of aboriginal communities." He added that "By working together, workers in Canada and Chile have begun a process that will eventually lead to more interactions with this corporation and with various levels of governments and other stakeholders in our nations."

Teck Cominco has a 76.5% interest in the Quebrada Blanca open pit mine, which is located about 170 kilometers south of Iquique at an elevation of 4,000 meters.

The Quebrada Blanca Mining Workers Union represents nearly 500 workers while the United Steelworkers represents some 4,000 workers at Teck Cominco operations in the province of British Columbia in Canada.

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