

Press Announcement from Drummond Ltd. in Answer to Accusations of Leo W. Gerard of the United Steelworkers

In a letter written to Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, Leo W. Gerard, International President of the United Steelworkers, has stated that Drummond has fired the entire executive board of the local Drummond union of Sintramienergetica in Colombia and has petitioned to fire all of its 4,000 or so unionized workers. This is a reckless, malicious and punitive untruth.

The truth of the matter is that following an illegal strike at its Pribbenow Mine, which does employ approximately 4,000 union workers as mentioned by Gerard, the Company dismissed five union workers and suspended four others for participation in an illegal strike which cost Drummond Ltd. millions of dollars. The suspension before dismissal is awaiting a decision from the Colombian Supreme Court as appealed from the lower court in Valledupar.

Drummond believes that the mention by Gerard of the firing of the 4,000 workers was an effort to bring undue political pressures to Drummond as witnessed by his copies to the President of Colombia, Alvaro Uribe Velez; the Speaker of the House of the U.S., Nancy Pelosi; and five other members of the U.S. Congress. Drummond has no intention of dismissing the 4,000 workers as stated by Gerard, but on the contrary, appreciates its Colombian union workers and is doing its utmost to keep all of the workers fully employed at good wages in a world-wide depressed economy.

This recent attempt to discredit and slander Drummond's business in Colombia is just another of many other efforts to do the same perpetrated by the United Steelworkers.

Drummond is proud of its business operations in Colombia having built a company in 15 years with an employment of approximately 15,000 workers (direct and indirect), paying the highest tier of wages in Colombia to its employees, having a safety incident rate lower than the average in the U.S. coal industry and is one of the largest exporters from Colombia and overall among the 15 largest companies in Colombia. Drummond has done this while treating its workers with respect.