

Speech is golden, silence cannot be bought:

The Fédération québécoise des professeures et professeurs d'université (FQPPU) strongly protests the punitive lawsuits filed by gold-mining corporations against the publisher Écosociété.

Montréal, June 17, 2008 - The FQPPU is outraged by the fact that two major Canadian gold-mining corporations have filed punitive lawsuits against the book publisher Ecosociété over its recent publication of *Noir Canada : Pillage, corruption et criminalité en Afrique*. The authors, Alain Denault, Delphine Abadie and William Sacher, fully documented their work using recognized and credible public resources, accessible to anyone sufficiently interested to consult them. None of the authors they cite have been targeted with legal action.

Committed to defend freedom in research and in publishing research findings, FQPPU believes it to be of the utmost importance that institutions in Quebec and in all Canadian provinces guarantee to all researchers and publishers, whether in the academic, journalistic, community or other field, the conditions needed to conduct their activities with integrity. It is the responsibility of governments to enact measures to ensure that censorship is not imposed by such underhand, abusive or exorbitant means.

Equally committed to the free discussion of ideas, analyses and conclusions in a democratic debate, FQPPU believes that legal attacks based essentially on the financial power of corporations – in this case mining giants Barrick Gold and Banro – are attacks on freedom of expression and on democracy itself. They call on the Quebec government and all Canadian jurisdictions to legislate immediately against gag-lawsuits or SLAPPs, inappropriate and unequal legal manoeuvres designed to stifle democratic discussion. Speech is golden, and wealth should not be used to buy silence.

- 30 -

For information or interviews : FQPPU 514 843-5953

To join the support campaign for Écosociété : <http://slapp.ecosociete.org/>