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Dear Brothers Bob, Willie and Ray:

RE: INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH LOCKED OUT ILWU MINERS

The Maritime Union of Australia and the CFMEU Mining and Energy division and unions internationally in the Mining and Maritime Initiative strongly express our outrage at the latest attempt by Rio Tinto to smash the rights of workers by locking out ILWU members at the Boron operations and bringing in scab labour.

On the eve of Mining and Maritime meeting in Palmdale, California on February 15, we call for worldwide solidarity actions in support of the locked out workers at Rio Tinto to be placed at the top of the agenda.

Our solidarity goes to ILWU Boron miners and their families in particular who have suffered these attacks on the morning of January 31 for defending workers' rights and refusing to capitulate to the bullying tactic of Rio whose agenda is to break the union in order to slash wages and conditions. This company posted profits of \$3.7 billion last year. Rio Tinto has hired vanloads of security guards to storm the mine while helicopters flew overhead only last October. It is a company that has been taken to task for abuses of human rights, indigenous land rights, workers' rights and damage to the environment and local communities in Australia, Africa, Bougainville,





Indonesia and Iceland over the years. In our country today, even under the more worker friendly laws of the Labor government, “pattern bargaining” is illegal, but multi national corporations like Rio Tinto, are at apparent liberty to pursue the same ideological demands from workers in any country in which they operate. The stumbling blocks to an agreement at Boron, are startlingly reminiscent of the demands pursued by Rio at coal and iron ore operations in Australia.

At the M&M seminar in Sydney Australia we developed an action plan to counter the impact of this type of worker abuses by corporations in the mining and maritime sector and to mobilise and take robust and decisive action where called upon and necessary. As a first step, we call on the company to immediately return to a process of good faith bargaining and desist from further labor rights abuses at the mine. We pledge our full support for the distressed workers and their families.

Yours in unity

Paddy Crumlin, MUA

Chair of the ITF International Dockworkers

Andrew Vickers

General Secretary

CFMEU Mining and Energy

