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Press statement by Marange CBOs and CSOs on alleged divisions and planned community demonstrations.

We, the undersigned Community Based Organizations (CBOs) operating in Marange and Civil Society partners dismiss the recently published Zimdaily news article titled “Hands off Marange, community tells civic society organisations”. The report claims Marange CBOs are challenging CSOs to stay away from the community protests slated for the 8th of November. The alleged acrimony between CBOs and CSOs portrayed in the article are false and malicious. The allegations are intended on weakening the people of Marange living in diamond protected area resolve to protest against unsustainable diamond mining that has continued to rob the community of their constitutional rights and freedoms. The relationship between Marange diamonds community groups and their CSOs partners is unshaken. It is derived from a long winding struggle for economic emancipation of the people of Marange in the mining of their diamonds. The flagrant violation of human rights and looting of diamonds at the hands of mining entities and state security functionaries has made it impossible for government to invest in public goods in Marange let alone meet community benefit agreements. The dilapidated road infrastructure, poor service provision on education, health, water and power supply in Marange diamond protected area hold proof of government’s self-centeredness. It cannot therefore be over emphasized that the authors of the malicious article also intend to divert people’s attention to the challenges facing the community of Marange living in diamond protected area ahead of the planned World Diamond Council visit to Marange diamond fields.

Through this statement the community of Marange also want to categorically make it clear that the Nyamariya Dam Fish Projects and Chipundo solar schemes are projects that were initiated by individuals and CBOs partners to alleviate

poverty in the community. These projects were not supported by mining companies as indicated in the itinerary programme for World Diamond Council visit to ZCDC in Marange that is circulating on social media.

Against this background, on the 15th of November 2022, the Marange community will rise to hold a peaceful demonstration in Marange. The demands of the community are clear as follows;

1. A transparent community Development and Benefit Agreement that is legally binding by 31 December 2022. The Community has already drafted a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) and shared with both mining companies and the Ministry of Mines. If signed, the CBA will address some of the community grievances that include social service delivery issues such as infrastructure development, education, health, maintenance and construction of roads that heavy mining company vehicles have destroyed.

2. Review of General Notice 180 of 2007 placing Chiadzwa under Protected Places and Areas Act according to section 6(2) of the Protected Places and Areas Act. The conditions and compliance to it thereof is leading to:

- Violation of human rights.
- Unjustifiable or unreasonable limitation of Constitutional rights. Section 86 (3) provides that, “No law may limit the following rights enshrined in the bill of rights, and no person may violate them (a) the right to life (b) the right to dignity, (c) the right not to be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.. These rights are being violated daily in Marange by state security agents.
- Lagging in development for Marange community because Mutare Rural District Council is not at liberty to undertake development without permission from diamond concession holders. That process is arduous and unsustainable.
- We demand to be relocated if the PPAA conditions are not reviewed. We did not ask to be in a Protected Area where we are now being subjected to prison life. It is high time Chiadzwa is removed from being a Protected Area or military personnel removed just as other Diamond areas such as Murowa. Mining companies in Marange must strengthen their own security capabilities. Government committed to a phased withdrawal of military from Marange in November 2009, but Marange has remained heavily militarised but porous security practices. These state security agents are perpetrating human rights violations in Marange. The human rights violations have to STOP henceforth.

3. Immediate Release of 5% Funds by ZCDC and Anjin (from 2018 -2022) to the Community Share Ownership Trust and 20% of the Chiadzwa Community as per Cabinet Agreement of 2019 as well as the handover of the Community mining concession. There was a promise of a Community mining concession which is yet to come to fruition. We want this concession to be operationalized by December 30 2022.

4. Progressive rehabilitation of land by mining companies as open pits left are not only breeding malaria but are claiming our livestock and lives.

5. The fulfilment of commitments made for the Arda Transau relocated community by mining companies and government must be prioritized. Relocated families have gone for 12 months without safe, clean and portable water as envisaged in section 77 of the Constitution. The Anjin community needs their bills to be split to residential (households) from commercial billing. The allocation and completion of houses for Jinan 6, 7 & 8 communities of Arda Transau must be expedited.

Engagement Efforts by Community Stakeholders

This statement also informs the nation that the community decision to hold a peaceful demonstration is as a result of government failure to meet its commitments on Marange. This year alone, community stakeholders exhausted all the

internal remedies by engaging and consulting with mining companies, Ministry of Mines and Mining Development as well as Ministry of Home Affairs, Security and Defence and Parliamentary Portfolio Committees providing oversight to the responsible ministries. The community want to put it on record that it has engaged the Minister of Mines and Mining Development on 22 and 27 April, 10 October and 24 October this year on these demands but no action has been taken by the Minister to address these issues.

On unjustifiable implementation of the conditions of the Protected Places and Areas Act notice on Marange, the community drew these issues with the Parliamentary portfolio committee on Home Affairs, Security and Defense on 07 July. The community also held a meeting with State security agents led by Assistant Commissioner Masepa, grounds operation and Anjin and ZCDC diamond mining companies on 19 July 2022. The community also invited Ministry of Home Affairs legal department and ZRP Legal Services Police to a conference and presented the same community grievances on 24 September 2022. The same issues were also highlighted in the Zimbabwe alternative mining Indaba (AMI & ZAMI) that were held this year. All these engagements efforts have yielded nothing from government.

Organisations:

Marange Development Trust (MDT)

Bocha Community Development Trust (BCDT)

Young Entrepreneurs Trust Zimbabwe (YETZ)

Centre for Research and Development (CRD)

Zivai Community Empowerment Trust (ZICET)

Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG)

Chiadzwa Community Development Trust (CCDT)

Zimbabwe Diamond Allied Workers Union (ZIDAWU)

Amalgamated Chiadzwa Community Development Trust (ACDCT)