



Raising the Community Voice in the Extractive Sector

Press Statement: Centre for Research and Development and Zimbabwe Natural Resource Dialogue Forum.

Civic Society Respond to Chidhakwa's update on mining mergers in Marange.

We stand here deeply concerned about the arbitrary decision taken by government to direct mineral companies to merge as a way for the state to centralise its over-site on the exploitation of the diamond rich Marange area. We believe that diamonds are a finite resource and the structure of ownership and control in Chiadzwa in its present and envisioned state demands speedy and wise reform. This is not only a prudent decision in giving closure to this perennial problem but it is overriding human rights imperative.

It is our desire as citizens to have constructive engagement with the government because we realise the opportunities that such platform presents. We also know that the fair, transparent management and distribution of natural resources is key to the realisation of the achievable ...so called low hanging fruits of ZIMASSET. Reform in the diamond sector cannot be an event, but should be a well thought-out process, especially in this country and for this community to whom land is central to economic security. Sadly, the people of Zimbabwe have been increasingly denied of this opportunity.

We are saddened by the Minister's failure to institute a consultative forum for all stakeholders in which the legitimate submission of the forcibly removed and uncompensated peoples of Marange would have been tabled and considered in the proposed new structures. The companies have not honored their pledges and government is complicit in disregarding the legitimate expectations of the people of Chiadzwa. Nothing in the ongoing reforms spells out progress in addressing the needs of the displaced.

The Chiadzwa share ownership trust has been a sham, with very little to nothing of note getting into the hands of the said beneficiaries.

We are deeply concerned that prior to the merger, government has not instituted independent audits on all mining operations in Marange where government is a major shareholder. Audited reports on Marange diamonds were critical to provide direction to the mergers if the issue of transparency and accountability was to be of priority to government. It is in the public domain that an audit was carried out at Marange Resources but sadly the minister of mines has not disclosed the findings.

According to Minister Chidhakwa mining companies will merge next month yet there are no concrete measures pronounced on how the development will address:

- Accountability and Transparency gaps in resource management across the value chain.
- Secretive shareholding structures of beneficiaries.
- Security and human rights violations that remains prevalent in Marange.
- Exclusionary mining practises violating socio-economic and environmental rights of communities.
- Unfulfilled commitments to displaced villagers at Arda Transau