



sowing the seeds of human rights peace and sustainable development

ZCDC Joint Venture Partnerships (JVPs): Are political elites rewarding themselves again in Marange?

The CRD raises alarm on the demarcation of Marange diamonds fields to numerous players by the government of Zimbabwe. It has come to the attention of CRD that 12 mining entities have since been granted mining concessions in Marange diamond fields. These entities have signed non-disclosure agreements with Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC). ZCDC is a government vehicle for diamond mining in Zimbabwe. The CRD has also heard that political elites, securocrats and war veterans are some of the owners of the new companies. These entities have no capacity to mine and will have to look for investors to partner them before signing JVPs with ZCDC who are the mining title holders. Of the 12 concessions, 2 were awarded to local based organisations through a skewed process that has deeply polarised the Marange community.

On 18 May 2018 President Mnangagwa announced his plans to unbundle ZCDC to allow more players in the diamond industry because ZCDC had no capacity to mine diamonds on its own. He pointed out that his government was going to legislate a new diamond policy that will regulate the diamond industry and ensure that local communities benefit from exploitation of diamonds.

Mnangagwa's plans came at the backdrop of what ZCDC claimed to have discovered 200 000 tonnes of high value conglomerate diamond ore which have a potential to produce 100 million carats of rough diamonds over a period of 30 years. Indeed the diamond industry was set for exponential growth if ZCDC had found a reliable partner to exploit diamonds in Marange.

As it stands, the unbundling of ZCDC is geared towards accommodating self-serving interests of the Mnangagwa political administration. The diamond industry in Zimbabwe is operating at the whims of the executive because there is no legislation on diamond mining. At the same time, there is no political will by the administration to enact amendments to the mines and minerals act in order to promote accountability in the mining sector. Thus ZCDC has become another vehicle to camouflage executive plunder of Marange diamonds in a similar manner the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC) was used by the deposed Robert Mugabe political administration.