



INFORMATION FOR MEDIA

European raw material policies are undermining human rights

The campaign “Stop Mad Mining – For Ethical Mining and Resource Consumption” carried out by thirteen environmental and human rights NGOs from Europe and Central America advocate against inhuman and environmentally destructive extraction of raw materials in the Global South.

Bratislava, 30th March 2015 – The Slovak Centre for Communication and Development (SCCD) has launched a campaign, which advocates that the EU regulation on conflict minerals contain binding agreements on human rights. The Berlin press conference drew attention to the fact that their extraction is associated with the financing of civil wars, human rights violations, environmental destruction, land grabbing, impoverishment of communities and catastrophic labour conditions.

These same problems can also be observed in the extraction of other minerals, such as copper and fossil fuels as coal, gas and oil. The purpose of the EU regulation is to curtail the trade of conflict minerals. However, according to Michael Reckordt of PowerShift, it is a “toothless tiger”, as it focuses on voluntary principles for the affected companies, instead of implementing binding regulations throughout the supply chain, as is already the case in the USA and other African countries. The current proposal may even undermine existing standards.

The campaign “Stop Mad Mining” is also aiming to make European citizens more aware of their impact through the consumption of raw materials. Those citizens can then use their better understanding, as consumers and activists, to support Southern countries and sustainable development through their choices. Another campaign demand is around the right of mining-affected communities to give or withhold their consent to proposed mining projects.

“The campaign ”Stop Mad Mining” is aiming to enhance rights of the communities and the protection of the environment,” says Danica Víznerová, senior project coordinator on raw materials at SCCD, „this goes hand in hand with the reduction of raw material use in Europe.”

The campaign is happening within the European Year of Development 2015 and is funded under the EuropeAid programme.

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