



GOVERNMENT MUST RESPOND TO THE SENTRY REPORT

By Simiso Mlevu Posted July 3, 2021 In Front, News

THE Centre for Natural Resource Governance is appalled by the silence of the Government of Zimbabwe on the report, *Uncovering an Offshore Business Empire in Zimbabwe* which was released by an American organisation, The Sentry. The Sentry is an investigative and policy team that follows the dirty money connected to African war criminals and transnational war profiteers and seeks to shut those benefiting from violence out of the international financial system. The report implicated local businessman, Kudakwashe Regmond Tagwirei as a leader of an organised criminal syndicate colluding with government officials and the military to pillage Zimbabwe's natural resources. The Sentry report comes barely 5 months after The Daily Maverick published a report titled *Cartel Power Dynamics in Zimbabwe* which exposed a web of cartels and criminal networks looting Zimbabwe's natural and financial resources enabled by key figures in the government. CNRG holds these criminal relationships responsible for the failure of the Zimbabwe government to meet its service delivery and development obligations to its citizens.

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While Tagwirei's interests in mining were hidden in plain sight, The Sentry report exposes the state as an active player in mortgaging Zimbabwe's mineral resources to politically connected individuals at the expense of the general citizens. According to the report, since President Emmerson Mnangagwa ascended to power, Tagwirei has "bought 100% of mines formerly owned by the parastatal Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation (ZMDC): Jena Mines, Elvington Mine, Sabi, Golden Kopje, and Sandawana." The same mines are still reported to be owned by the Government of Zimbabwe through Kuvimba Mining House. It defies logic why the government would sell ZMDC mines to itself.

The report also exposes the extent of involvement of these organised criminal syndicates in policy changes to aid money laundering and mineral resources plunder. The Sentry report links the dubious tax holiday awarded to the Great Dyke Investments (GDI) to Tagwirei's influence over the country's political leadership and the executive. CNRG calls on the Executive and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe to come clean on the issues that have been raised in this report.

CNRG, has for a long time, been advocating for natural resources governance reform so that Zimbabweans benefit from their natural wealth. However, the situation is getting worse as Government is increasingly getting paralyzed by organized crime syndicates that have captured the State. The resistance to reform and silence of government in light of numerous reports from credible local and international institutions pointing to State-linked criminal networks gives credence to The Sentry report which implicates government officials and government institutions in Kudakwashe Tagwirei's business empire.

CNRG urges the government of Zimbabwe to uphold the founding values and principles of the Constitution of Zimbabwe. According to Section 3(2) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the principles of good governance, which bind the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level, include:

- (g) Transparency, justice, accountability and responsiveness;
- (j) The equitable sharing of national resources, including land

In line with our mandate of promoting just governance of natural resources and protection of the socio-economic rights of the marginalized and vulnerable groups in society we call for the following:

- Setting up of an independent commission of inquiry to investigate Kudakwashe Tagwirei's business empire
- A forensic audit of how Kudakwashe Tagwirei and his shadow companies acquired his mineral assets

- The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission to investigate all deals involving Kudakwashe Tagwirei and his companies
- President Mnangagwa to declare his position on reports of cartels within and around his government, which are blamed for undermining the economic interests of Zimbabwe.
- Parliament of Zimbabwe to play its oversight role by investigating and holding the executive accountable to its relationship with Tagwirei and several other cartels cited in both the Daily Maverick and Sentry reports.



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