



EXTREME HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS CONTINUE IN MARANGE

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It's now sixteen years since diamond producing and trading countries, industry and civil society came together to curb the flow of blood diamonds through the formation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. In its Core Document, the KP bemoaned 'systematic and gross human rights violations that have been perpetrated' in diamond mining conflicts.

However, in Zimbabwe the government is silently brutalising artisanal miners through torture and cold blooded killings by security guards of the State owned Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) under the guise of protecting the gemstones. Ironically, Zimbabwe is a member of the Kimberley Process Working Group on Alluvial Artisanal Production (WGAAP) which is championing the call for formalization of artisanal diamond mining.

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On 6 August 2019, three men from Muchena village were seriously injured after ZCDC guards set dogs on them. The three, Tichaona Mapanga, Jaja and another one only identified as T1 were apprehended by the guards whilst panning for diamonds near Mbada Hills in Marange.

The guards ordered them to sit down at gunpoint, handcuffed them and set vicious dogs on them leading to serious injuries. The ZCDC guards were identified as Matanda, Gwidiba and Gumbo and according to a CNRG-trained human rights monitor, after inflicting injuries on the impoverished villagers, they took them to [formerly] DMC premises where they were subjected to further inhuman treatment. At DMC, the three were denied food and access to ablution facilities. After several hours of torture, T1 and Jaja were driven to Devure Range, a wildlife sanctuary about 30 miles south of Marange while the bleeding Tichaona Mapanga was taken to Muchena business centre by a ZCDC security guard only identified as Gumbo.



On Saturday 10 August, an artisanal miner identified as Pablo was caught panning in the company of his colleagues by ZCDC guards. Whilst others managed to escape Pablo was caught by ZCDC guards who first tied his hands and set dogs on him whilst they assaulted him till he lost consciousness. He woke up in a pool of blood. Thereafter, one of the torturers Erisha Masungu, called Plabo's friends to come and carry him away as he could not walk.

On the 11th of August another artisanal miner, nearly lost his eye when ZCDC security guards set dogs on him. The use of torture and cold blooded killings are meant to act as a deterrent to keep artisanal miners away from Marange. However despite the torture and killings, thousands of artisanal miners continue to flock Marange diamond fields daily as they try to escape from the debilitating economic crisis engulfing Zimbabwe.

Artisanal diamond mining is also aided and fuelled by ZCDC security guards and members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) stationed in Marange who form syndicates with artisanal miners. Soldiers have sometimes teamed up with artisanal miners and broken into the ZCDC premises where they steal diamond ore. ZCDC guards charge anything between \$500 and \$2000 to facilitate entry of artisanal mining syndicates into the diamond fields. Violence only takes place when artisanal miners enter the diamond fields without bribing the security guards.

Impunity

Torture and killings in Marange are sanctioned by the Zimbabwe government. Although the guards torture scores of artisanal miners daily, with some eventually dying from their injuries, Zimbabwe Republic Police officials stationed in Marange have been ordered not to arrest the guards. Not a single guard has been arrested for the killings. Police, tasked with ferrying bodies of artisanal miners to Mutare Provincial Hospital Mortuary, often falsify the causes of death to cover up for the killings.

The sad truth is that diamonds tainted by human rights abuses from Marange or elsewhere can still reach the global diamond market easily.

CNRG Position

Centre for Natural Resource Governance is appalled by the continued use of torture and killings as punishment against artisanal miners by state security agents and the State owned ZCDC guards.

To the Government of Zimbabwe

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CNRG calls on the government to uphold the Constitution by immediately halting the torture and killings of artisanal miners. Section 53 of the Zimbabwe Constitution states that no person may be subjected to physical or psychological torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

To Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission

Investigate cases of torture and extrajudicial killings in Marange and hold perpetrators accountable

To Zimbabwe Human Rights Lawyers

Investigate and prosecute perpetrators of human rights violations in Marange to bring to an end the impunity they enjoy.

To the Kimberley Process

We call upon the Kimberley Process to be bold enough and assist Zimbabwe address the human rights situation in Marange. The appalling human rights situation in Marange is a stain on the entire diamond industry. These tainted diamonds from Marange fields continue to find their way to global markets because Zimbabwe is deemed KP compliant.

To ZCDC

CNRG implores ZCDC to ensure immediately stop the horrific human rights abuses by its security. We further call on ZCDC to make good its 2018 promise to carry out a human rights audit as reported here <https://www.herald.co.zw/zcdc-tenders-for-voluntary-audit/>



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