

Statement - The Corporate Impunity Pandemic Strikes Again! This time in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Sunday 10 October 2021, by [Southern Africa Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power](#) (Date first published: 3 September 2021).

The Southern Africa Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power is outraged by Catoca Mine's toxic pollution of the Tshikapa River in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Angola's Catoca diamond mine, which is the fourth largest diamond mine in the world, is behind this environmental and impending food crisis.

A toxic reservoir leak in Angola turned the Tshikapa river in the DRC crimson, killing fish, hippos, and other animals. Many who live along the river banks of the Tshikapa rely on it for their livelihoods. This environmental catastrophe has thus far resulted in the deaths of 12 people while 4,500 were left sick; the health of an estimated one million people has been affected through interacting with the polluted river water. This is yet another tragic example of the devastation and destruction caused by extractivism corporate impunity. It has been reported by the BBC that the owners of Catoca mine have yet to issue a public response.

This is not the first time that communities are negatively impacted by extractivist activities and neither will it be the last. There are numerous recent examples of fracking along the Okavango Delta between Namibia and Botswana, the recent crisis in Cabo Del Gado, Mozambique around gas and oil extraction, and many cases of corporate abuses detailed at the Permanent People's Tribunals on the role of Transnational Corporations in Southern Africa from 2016 to 2018. The Tribunal highlighted that TNCs have cunningly carved out ways to continue their operations without fear of reprisal. Communities and people affected by extractivism have been coming together to resist and demand the Right to Say No to extractivism. It is also these same communities and people who continue to be at the forefront of charting just alternatives to the extractivist model of development.

The current example of corporate impunity by Catoca Mine proves to be yet another attestation for the demand for the Right to Say No based on the principle of Free Prior and Informed Consent and the development of the United Nations Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights. The Right to Say No is crucial for communities affected by or are threatened by extractivist projects to assert their consent rights. The binding treaty is a key international instrument to curb the careless and questionable activities of corporations.

While our continent is flung deeper into political, socio-economic, and ecological crises and TNCs continue to record record-high profits through extractivism, it is important for us to join hands to collectively tackle and resist corporate impunity. It is clear that TNCs have no regard for the impact their business has on people and nature. Thus, we must use our collective power and voices to hold TNCs and governments accountable.

As the Southern Africa Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power we denounce the extractivist

activities of transnational corporations (TNCs) and stand in solidarity with the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo in their quest for justice and accountability from Catoca mine. We are also calling for the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo who are affected by extractivism to have their Right to Say No heard and respected!

3 September 2021

The Southern Africa Campaign to Dismantle Corporate Power

P.S.

- AIDC. Posted on September 3, 2021 by Kea Seipato:
<https://aidc.org.za/corporate-impunity-pandemic-strikes-drc/>

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