

Access to the international market for the minerals from our mines is a matter of life or death

CDMC “The Congo Artisanal Mining Cooperative” and FECOMIMA “Maniema Mining Cooperatives Federation”

Since the signature of the Dodd-Frank Act by President Barak Obama, artisanal mining for 3Ts in the DRC has undergone highly significant developments in terms of due diligence for responsible supply chains of conflict-free minerals.

We, artisanal miners of the DRC, welcomed the Dodd-Frank Act because of its humanitarian character, but see in the de facto embargo on minerals from the DRC a negative impact on the lives of the diggers and their families (see <http://www.sec.gov/comments/s7-40-10/s74010-334.htm>).

Aware of the immense challenges involved in providing end-purchasers with conflict-free minerals, we have undertaken a process of due diligence and traceability and this has not been easy.

Efforts have been made by the first stakeholders in the supply chain, the diggers, to meet the requirements for the access of 3Ts to the international market.

The traceability of our minerals has had an immediate effect. The community of diggers and populations living in the mining areas have experienced a renewal of hope in the face of the improvements observed:

- *Safety in the mines*
- *An increase in the purchasing power of the diggers*
- *The social engagement of the companies buying our minerals: construction of health centres, schools, water standpipes, roads and bridges etc.*
- *The recovery of other related activities around mines*
- *The payment of State taxes*
- *The management of production statistics and non-dispersal of minerals*
- *The decrease in fraud*
- *The formalisation of artisanal mining etc.*

These changes, registered especially in the Province of Katanga, and then Maniema, represent a hope for a better future which requires the unconditional support of all stakeholders in the supply chain of the mine through to the end buyers in order not to jeopardise the life and the future of millions of people whose lives depend on these mining operations.

By our commitment to the OECD due-diligence guidance for responsible supply chains of minerals, we have been able to demonstrate that our mines can be validated and certified green thanks to the CTC scheme and our ores can be traceable due to the iTSCi project, and finally gain access to the international market.

This momentum has spread beyond the boundaries of the Province of Katanga. Moreover, in Maniema, Cooperatives have organised themselves into a Federation, namely FECOMIMA "Fédération des Coopératives Minières du Maniema" (the Maniema Mining Cooperatives Federation). This has been with the aim of formalising artisanal mining in the interests of the production of conflict-free minerals. It is already working well.

In Grand Kivu, there is the same dynamism with a closed-circuit mining operation which guarantees conflict-free minerals.

Now that United States SEC reports have to be submitted, it is important not to lose sight of all these persistent efforts by a community seeking only to survive.

We have worked so hard to meet international requirements and we do not want to feel abandoned by 3T processors downstream not supporting our products.

Buying minerals from the DRC amounts to saving human lives. Let us join in supporting the efforts undertaken by the diggers of the DRC to provide the international market with conflict-free minerals with all the combined initiatives working together to ensure the traceability of movements of materials in the DRC. Let us restore hope to the Congolese people.

Thank you

For the CDMC: Serge MULUMBA KALAMBAY
For FECOMIMA: David KARGBO Israel