# JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

**Call for the Government of Zimbabwe to Take Immediate Action Against the Startling Rise in Mining Workplace Deaths and the Impunity Thereof.**

**Harare – 07 December 2023** – The Centre for Natural Resource Governance **(CNRG)**, Zimbabwe Diamond Allied Mine Workers Union **(ZDAMWU)** and the Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (**ACTSA)** are deeply concerned by the government's lack of action in addressing the increasing number of employees dying and getting injured on duty and are urgently calling upon the Government of Zimbabwe and its line ministries and regulatory authorities to attend to the matter without fear, favor and prejudice.

The rising number of employee fatalities and injuries occurring in mining areas is alarming. These incidents not only result in the loss of valuable human lives but also inflict immeasurable pain and suffering on affected workers, their families, friends, and communities.

According to the **State of Mining Industry, Survey 2023** report recently released by the Chamber of Mines, 110 fatalities were reported during the period between January and September 2023, adding that 92 percent of the accidents under review occurred underground, with large-scale operations contributing 18 percent to the total accidents.

We observe that, more often than not, mine workers who get injured at work get fired without compensating them for their injuries which sometimes constitute permanent disabilities.

More disturbing are allegations that the line ministries and other regulatory authorities give a blind eye to these accidents, and the lack of enforcement leads to an escalation since those responsible enjoy impunity.

In keeping with the above, urgent action must be taken to address this growing crisis and ensure that every worker enjoys the right to a safe and healthy working environment. It is crucial to recognize that the safety and well-being of employees should be a top priority for both employers and government. While some progress has been made in improving workplace safety standards, it is evident that more needs to be done to prevent these avoidable tragedies.

Therefore, CNRG, ZDAMWU, and ACT-SA urge the relevant line Ministries—the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) and mining companies—to:

- **Strengthen regulatory frameworks and enforce stringent safety standards across the mining sector.** This includes conducting regular inspections, providing comprehensive training programs, and ensuring that companies adhere to the necessary safety protocols. Efforts should also be made to enhance the capacity of labor unions and worker representatives to effectively advocate for the rights and safety of employees.
- **Furthermore**, we urge **employers** to prioritize the implementation of robust safety measures within their organizations. This includes conducting thorough risk assessments, providing adequate safety equipment, fostering a culture of safety awareness, and empowering employees to report any concerns or hazards they encounter.
- Conduct thorough investigations into each employee fatality and / or injury to determine the root causes and hold accountable those responsible for negligence or non-compliance with

safety regulations. Highlight the importance of transparency, accountability and disclosure for preventing future incidents. Collaboration between governments, employers, workers, and relevant stakeholders is paramount to addressing this alarming trend. We encourage the formation of partnerships and information-sharing platforms to expedite the implementation of effective safety strategies and best practices.

- Facilitate the compensation of all those injured at work as well as compensating the families of all those who would have died during the course and scope of executing their mining duties and responsibilities.
- Deal without fear or favour acts of corruption involving some line ministries, regulatory authorities and mining companies that compromise the enforcement of existing legal and policy frameworks against mining activities that put workers at risk.

To support these efforts, **ZDAMWU**, **CNRG** and **ACT-SA** remain committed to promoting workplace safety, anti-corruption and advocating for the rights of employees in Zimbabwe. We will continue to actively engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure a safer working environment for all. We believe that by collectively addressing this issue, we can bring about meaningful change and prevent further loss of life. The time for action is now, and we stand ready to collaborate with the government, mining companies and workers to safeguard the lives and well-being of mine employees in Zimbabwe.

## For more details, please contact.

**Zimbabwe Diamond Allied Mine Workers Union (ZDAMWU)**
J. CHINHEMA
ZDAMWU GENERAL SECRETARY
**Cell:** 0772976261/0717803553
**Email:** jchinhema@gmail.com/gs@zdamwu.co,zw

**Centre for Natural Resource Governance**
CNRG Information Department,
**Email** info@cnrgzim.org
**Cell** +263 779 078 873
**Twitter:** @CNRG_ZIM
**Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/cnrg
**Website:** https://cnrgzim.org/

**Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (ACT-SA)**
ACT-SA Communications Department
**Email**: actsouthernafrica@gmail.com
**Cell** +263717152535/0783011963