

PRESS RELEASE

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS EXPOSE ZCDC HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, CALL FOR AN END TO TORTURE AND BRUTALITY AGAINST ARTISANAL MINERS

Harare, 14 February 2025

The undersigned Zimbabwean Civil Society Organizations are deeply concerned with the killings and use of torture as a method of punishment meted on artisanal diamond miners by the Zimbabwe Consolidated Diamond Company (ZCDC) in Marange. Ever since it started its operations in 2015 ZCDC security guards have killed scores of Zimbabwean citizens in cold blood on allegations of illegal mining in its concession areas..

Abel Mutindindi is the latest victim to die at the hands of ZCDC guards. Abel was allegedly captured on 28 January 2025 whilst panning in the company of three colleagues in Marange diamond fields. The four were chased by ZCDC guards and forced into a dam. They were assaulted heavily. One of them managed to flee but three were captured by ZCDC guards. Whilst under the custody of ZCDC security personnel, the three had dogs set on them whilst the guards assaulted them. Before he died, Abel told his colleagues that ZCDC security guards set 10 dogs on him whilst 10 guards were beating him all over the body.

The three were taken to a bush about 500 meters from ZCDC premises but the guards released the other two and returned with Abel. It is not known what they did to him during the night of the 28th of January. However, in the morning of January 29, Abel managed to crawl to a nearby homestead to seek help. He had no clothes on him as all clothes except his underwear had been torn to pieces by ZCDC dogs

Abel Mutindindi died on the 30th of January at 22 Miles toll gate as his colleagues were taking him to a private hospital in Mutare.

Ever since it started operations in 2015, ZCDC has killed scores of innocent Zimbabweans in cold blood. According to artisanal miners some bodies are dumped into the ZCDC dam whilst others are left to decompose in the forests. ZCDC is wholly owned by the Zimbabwean government and is expected to comply with the laws of Zimbabwe and our cultural norms and values, including the sanctity of life.

We therefore call on ZCDC and responsible authorities to do the following:

- Publicly acknowledge culpability in the cold-blooded murder of Abel Mutindindi
- Publish the names of the guards who carried out this heinous crime and ensure the criminals are handed over to the Police.
- Engage the Mutindindi family and agree on compensation for the loss of Abel
- Send all ZCDC security personnel for human rights training to prevent further acts of torture and senseless killings.
- Carry out a voluntary human rights audit to understand the extent and nature of human rights violations committed by ZCDC security details
- The Zimbabwe human Rights Commission (ZHRC) is urged to conduct comprehensive public consultations with the community to gather evidence and ascertain the extent of the problem of torture and brutality against artisanal miners.
- The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Sub Aqua Unit should scour and conduct a thorough search of the ZCDC dam for any possible remains of artisanal miners.

Failure to do the above, the undersigned civil society organizations will engage the Kimberley Process chair with further evidence of gross human rights abuses by ZCDC and demand appropriate action.

1. Crisis Coalition of Zimbabwe
2. The Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG)
3. National Mine Workers Union of Zimbabwe (NMWUZ)
4. Njuji Jose Trust
5. Zimbabwe Artisanal Miners Association (ZAMA)
6. Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Union (ZCTU)
7. Zimbabwe Diamond Workers Union (ZIDAWU)
8. Zimbabwe Diamond Allied Mineral Workers Union (ZDMWU)

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