



THE WEEKLY



The Official Newsletter of the Centre for Natural Resource Governance

Global Movements Demand an End to Corporate Capture

By Staff Reporter

PEOPLES' SUMMIT IN BELÉM DELIVERS FIERCE REBUKE TO GLOBAL POWER AT COP30

In the sweltering Amazonian city of Belém do Pará, more than 70,000 people from every corner of the globe gathered – not to plead, but to declare. Over five days, Indigenous nations, landless workers, fisherfolk, Afro-descendant communities, women's movements, trade unions, and youth formations forged a single, uncompromising message: the climate crisis is not an accident – it is the product of a global system built on exploitation, dispossession, and profit.

In a declaration dripping with urgency, the Peoples' Summit accused the global North, transnational corporations, and ruling elites of driving both environmental collapse and geopolitical violence. Delegates condemned the rise of the far right, the militarisation of the Caribbean, the repression of social movements, and what they describe as the ongoing genocide of Palestinians.

From the Sahel to the Congo, from Haiti to Mozambique, the Summit voiced solidarity with peoples resisting imperialism and resource plunder. But the document is not just a diagnosis, it is a counter-proposal.

The Summit rejected “false solutions” like carbon markets and financialised climate schemes, which it says only deepen inequality and create new avenues for profit. Instead, it calls for land to be returned to Indigenous peoples, zero deforestation, public control of energy, and a global shift to agroecology to ensure food sovereignty. The message is clear: there can be no climate justice without dismantling corporate power.

The declaration demands an end to wars, redirection of military budgets to climate recovery, punishment for socio-environmental crimes, and protection for frontline defenders being persecuted and killed worldwide. **The advance of the extreme right, fascism, and wars around the world exacerbate the climate crisis and the exploitation of nature and of peoples.**

It also insists that countries of the global North begin repaying their “historic socio-environmental debt” accumulated through centuries of colonisation and extraction.

Above all, the Belém gathering issued a rallying cry for global mobilisation. “If the organisation is strong, the struggle is strong,” the declaration warns. As COP30 draws nearer, the Peoples' Summit has staked its ground: real climate solutions will not come from palaces, parliaments or boardrooms – but from organised peoples ready to defend their territories and reclaim their future.



Global solidarity: People's Dialogue, delegates at a the Thematic Social Forum on the sidelines of COP 30 in Brazil.

RioZim's Moment of Reckoning: Why Corporate Rescue Still Matters

By Donald Nyarota

A quiet but consequential legal battle is unfolding around one of Zimbabwe's oldest mining houses, RioZim Limited. What began as a routine insolvency application has now evolved into a broader test of corporate governance, worker protection, and the future of distressed strategic assets.

At the heart of the storm is the Zimbabwe Diamond & Allied Minerals Workers' Union (ZDAMWU), which has petitioned the High Court to place RioZim under corporate rescue in terms of section 124 of the Insolvency Act.

Their argument is precise, data-driven, and, crucially, largely uncontested: the company is financially distressed, has failed for years to meet its most basic obligations to employees, and requires an independent hand to pull it back from the brink.

RioZim's financial troubles are not speculative. Auditors, creditors and even the Master of the High Court paint a picture of a business trading on increasingly precarious ground. Numerous writs of execution hang over its assets. Salaries remain unpaid, some workers are owed as much as US\$5,400 each and essential statutory payments have long been neglected. Successive audited reports from 2021, 2023, and 2024 raise sobering questions about the group's ability to continue as a going concern.

The union, which is itself a creditor through unpaid membership subscriptions, argues that corporate rescue is not a hostile act but a lifeline. Their position is steeped in global insolvency logic: a distressed company is worth far more as a going concern than stripped for parts in liquidation.

Rescue proceedings offer a breathing space, a temporary moratorium on legal actions, while a skilled practitioner works to restore solvency, restructure debts and stabilise operations.

The Master of the High Court agrees, noting that the criteria for corporate rescue have been "clearly established" and that RioZim has provided no evidence of a sustained turnaround. In a letter signed by Vusumuzi Gapara, Master of The High Court (Additional Master) under the Insolvency and Minors Division the court sided with the argument presented by the workers' union.

RioZim's response has been strikingly thin on substance. Instead of submitting recent financials or a concrete recovery plan, its opposition has leaned heavily on procedural objections. Its claims of revival hinge on the reopening of Renco Mine and the production of 20kg of gold over a short period—a welcome development, certainly, but hardly proof of group-wide financial health. A rebooted asset does not erase years of losses, nor does it guarantee the ability to settle longstanding debts.



Face of resistance: ZDAMWU general secretary Justice Chinhema

More curious has been the narrative that "workers" oppose corporate rescue. A letter circulated from a section of employees at Cam & Motor Mine accuses the union of acting without consultation. Yet such claims overlook a simple legal fact: under the Insolvency Act, any creditor, not just many workers, has standing to initiate rescue proceedings. And fears of union overreach ignore the realities of labour dynamics in struggling companies, where workers can be vulnerable to pressure, misinformation, or promises of imminent revival.

ZDAMWU's position is, in fact, aligned with the broader interests of labour. Corporate rescue offers a structured path to the payment of wages, imposes transparency on management, and shields the workforce from the chaos of uncoordinated creditor actions. It is a mechanism designed not to harm jobs but to preserve them.

The union's secretary-general, Justice Chinhema, captured the tension succinctly: **"If propaganda brings peace to some people, then let them enjoy it; however, the game is now being played in the court of law."** His remark speaks to a growing gap between corporate storytelling and the hard reckoning of insolvency.

As the High Court prepares to hear the matter, RioZim stands at a crossroads. One path leads to a supervised restructuring that could steady the ship, restore liquidity and rebuild trust among workers and creditors.

The other relies on short-term optimism and selective disclosures—an approach that has rarely served distressed companies well.

Whichever path the court endorses, the implications extend beyond RioZim. This case will signal how Zimbabwe intends to handle failing but strategically important companies: with transparency and modern rescue mechanisms, or with ad-hoc narratives and hope-driven management.

For the workers who have endured years of unpaid salaries, the choice could determine not only the company's future but their own economic survival.

Kimberley Process Faces Renewed Scrutiny as Civil Society Warns of “Illusions of Progress”

By Staff Reporter

As delegates convene for the Kimberley Process (KP) plenary this week, civil society is issuing a sharp reminder of the scheme's original purpose: to sever the link between diamonds and conflict. More than two decades after its creation, the KP is again under pressure to prove it can meet that mandate. Despite this year being branded the “Year of Best Practice,” its structural weaknesses and political fault lines remain stubbornly intact.

The Civil Society Coalition (CSC), a key participant in the KP's tripartite structure, argues that member states are glossing over the uncomfortable reality that diamonds continue to fuel violence. Whether through Russia or Israel's use of diamond revenues to sustain military operations, or the persistent brutality in artisanal mining zones, from police crackdowns to the grip of mercenary groups in the Central African Republic (CAR), the CSC warns that such abuses strike at the core of the KP's credibility.

Field findings from Lesotho's Letseng mine underscore a different dimension of insecurity. Communities living in the shadow of a massive tailings dam describe constant fear of collapse, alongside anxieties over water safety. “Peace is not merely the absence of conflict,” the CSC notes. “It is the protection of people's well-being.” Overlooking these concerns, it argues, risks further eroding confidence in the KP at a moment when synthetic diamonds are gaining market share by presenting themselves as ethical alternatives. At the centre of the debate lies the KP's narrow definition of “conflict



Members of the KPCSC at the Kimberly Process Plenary

The CSC insists the definition must be updated to cover diamonds linked to widespread or systematic violence, a proposal diplomatically resisted by states wary of scrutiny.

The coalition also points to governance shortcomings: a structure that vests power solely in governments, strict confidentiality rules that limit transparency, and reports of civil society members facing intimidation for raising concerns.

With sanctions on CAR lifted despite persistent reporting gaps and rising competition from lab-grown diamonds, civil society's warning is clear: without stronger oversight, the Kimberley Process risks becoming an elaborate illusion, and dragging the natural diamond trade down with it.

The minerals rush: a green transition must break free from colonialism and capitalism

A new book by Thea Riofrancos called, **Extraction: The Frontiers of Green Capitalism**, shows how the push for critical minerals like lithium and cobalt is creating a new wave of mining while perpetuating old patterns of exploitation and environmental destruction. She writes:

The energy transition is not a peaceful bridge, but a crucible where past, present, and possible futures collide. She traces the story to the immediate aftermath of World War II. During the post-war years Western oil giants, namely Standard Oil and the Seven Sisters, controlled nearly all Middle Eastern and Venezuelan crude and in doing so established a global system of dependency. The “Seven Sisters” group includes Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard Oil of New York, Royal Dutch Shell, Anglo Persian Oil Company Standard Oil of California.

Capitalism, colonialism, and the race for lithium

Riofrancos places lithium at the centre of the green energy transition. The lightweight metal is crucial in modern society, powering rechargeable batteries for electric vehicles, smartphones, and countless other electronic devices used today.

Commercial lithium extraction in the US, she contends, is enabled by the 1872 General Mining Law. The legislation still governs lithium mining throughout America, and yet the supposed landmark law lacks environmental safeguards and water protection.

Read full article: <https://www.thecanary.co/global/world-analysis/2025/11/10/green-transition-beyond-capitalism-and-colonialism/>

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IN PICTURES: THEMATIC SOCIAL FORUM MARCH (COP 30)**Shaping Zimbabwe's civic future: Insights from DARIRO 1.0***By Ndaizivei Garura*

The DARIRO 1.0 meeting, convened by the Southern Africa Trust, was a transformative moment for its partners, including the Centre for Natural Resource Governance. Zimbabwe's civic space and the broader human rights agenda across Southern Africa have a brighter outlook when one puts on their systems future lens. Youth activists, feminist organizers, researchers, journalists, and activists joined in the dialogue to reimagine the shrinking democratic space. DARIRO 1.0 aimed not just at dialogue but at a strategic shift, embracing a stronger, collective, and adaptive approach to protecting civic freedoms.

One of the core challenges highlighted was the necessity for a shift in strategy. The conventional top-down methods are increasingly inadequate in addressing the complex realities of the current socio-political landscape. Participants emphasized that a more robust approach is essential for safeguarding civic freedoms.

This perspective focused on understanding the systemic drivers of repression, restrictive legislation, donor fatigue, and pervasive surveillance that create an intricate web of challenges.

The discussions revealed that strict laws can make people afraid to speak out, leading them to censor themselves. When individuals feel they can't express their opinions freely, it creates a ripple effect. This fear can decrease trust among the public and prevent people from coming together for a common cause. As a result, many might choose to stay silent rather than risk negative consequences, which makes it hard to build any meaningful movement for change.

When people disengage from civic activities, like community meetings, the momentum is needed for movement-building stalls. This cycle of fear and silence undermines efforts to promote human rights and democratic freedoms. Without active participation and open dialogue, it becomes increasingly difficult to address the pressing challenges facing society.

As part of breaking this cycle, CNRG has been creating safe spaces where individuals feel supported to express their views and act. Encouraging open communication and promoting trust among community members has revitalized civic engagement in Hwange, Marange, Bikita, Chiredzi and Penhalonga. These communities have ultimately built strong movements through courage and unity. CNRG continuously amplifies these communities' voices, and this enables them to influence systems and processes.

Looking ahead, the Centre for Natural Resource Governance will continue to collaborate with the Southern Africa Trust in building resilience within movement building. By utilizing systems thinking, it can develop strategies that are both nuanced and collaborative, fundamentally transforming the civic engagements in Zimbabwe. Ultimately, the future of human rights hinges on the ability to adapt and respond to these interconnected challenges, ensuring that advocacy efforts are sustainable and impactful.

**CNRG senior programs officer Ndaizivei Garura**

A Warning Shot on the Mines and Minerals Bill

A Constitution Under Siege: What the PLC's Adverse Report Really Means

By Kudzanai Chimombe

The Parliamentary Legal Committee's adverse report on the Mines and Minerals Bill is a stark warning: Zimbabwe's flagship mining reform risks collapsing under the weight of its own unconstitutional design. The Committee flags 21 separate violations, revealing a Bill that centralises power, undermines rights, and weakens accountability.

Key sections, Clauses 4, 25, 31, 37, 38, 40, 46, and 61, expose the most troubling flaws. Clause 4's failure to recognise artisanal miners amounts to economic discrimination. Clauses 25 and 31 grant sweeping, arbitrary powers to Provincial Mining Directors, rendering them judge and gatekeeper, and eroding the right to administrative justice. Clauses 37 and 38 trample on landholder rights by enabling

constructive deprivation of property and forcing disputes to be "resolved" by officials with built-in conflicts of interest. Clauses 40 and 46 further collapse the separation of powers, allowing mining to continue even when disputes are before the courts.

The Bill also threatens transparency. Clause 185 places the Environmental Protection Fund under the Minister's sole control, while Clause 192 allows payments to be suspended without clear safeguards, an open invitation to abuse.

Mining reform is necessary, but reform without constitutionalism is a shortcut to chaos. Parliament must fix this Bill; the mining sector desperately needs a robust legislative framework.

Manhize Families Left Stranded as Thunderstorm Destroys Homes

By Tanaka Ndongera

The Manhize community faces mounting crises as a severe thunderstorm earlier this month destroyed homes and exposed the substandard quality of relocation housing, leaving families in dire circumstances.

On Sunday, 9 November, a powerful thunderstorm with heavy rainfall hit the area, causing widespread property destruction. Even the perimeter wall at Dinson Iron and Steel Company (DISCO) sustained damage during the storm.

When the Centre For Natural Resource Governance (CNRG) visited Mushenjere Village, Manhize on 12 November, they discovered that DISCO has intensified efforts to forcibly relocate remaining families. This is proceeding despite the onset of heavy rains and the site's unpreparedness to receive residents.

In addition, during site visits, CNRG observed that several houses at the relocation site had already started showing cracks, raising serious concerns about the structural integrity of the buildings. The houses constructed by the mining company are substandard, with roofs that leak and walls that cannot withstand severe weather.

The rushed relocations are occurring without adequate provision of water, farmland, or social services, exposing villagers to hunger and extreme vulnerability. Living conditions in Mushenjere village itself have deteriorated dramatically. Families remain stranded on land already taken over by mining developments, with roads cutting through their village. Livelihoods have collapsed entirely. Recent heavy rains have compounded the crisis. Several traditional huts have collapsed or suffered severe damage from storms.

The Centre for Natural Resource Governance is calling on DISCO and the Government to take immediate action by providing emergency food, water, and health support to affected families. CNRG emphasizes that relocations must not proceed until proper infrastructure and support systems are in place to protect the dignity and wellbeing of affected families.

There is an urgent need to suspend all forced relocations from Mushenjere until the houses at the relocation site are fully serviced with water, adequate housing, farmland, and essential social amenities.