Centre for Natural Resource Governance

The Weekly

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Unified Force: Parliamentarians, police, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission, and civil society representatives at the capacity-building workshop on ending violence against women and girls in mining communities.

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Beyond the Law: Zimbabwe's Mining Women Confront the Institutions Meant to Protect Them

In mining communities such as Marange and Hwange, violence against women is not simply a question of individual abuse. It is shaped by economic exclusion, unequal power, insecure environments and institutional failures. A two-day engagement in Harare brought Parliament, government agencies, police and communities together to confront an uncomfortable question: who protects women when the machinery of extraction leaves them vulnerable?

The law is not necessarily Zimbabwe's biggest problem. Its implementation is.

Between 11 and 12 November 2026, the Centre for Natural Resource Governance (CNRG) brought together the Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC), the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Parliamentary representatives, the Zimbabwe Republic Police's Victim Friendly Unit, civil society organisations and representatives from mining-affected communities for a two-day capacity-building engagement in Harare.

The meeting, supported by Amplify Change under the project Community-Led Resistance to Violence Against Women in Regions Affected by Extractive Industries in Zimbabwe, sought to strengthen the ability of public institutions to respond to gender-based violence (GBV) and violations of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR).

The urgency is evident in the national statistics. Zimbabwe's 2023–24 Demographic and Health Survey found that 27 per cent of women aged 15–49 had experienced physical violence since the age of 15, while at least 9 per cent had experienced sexual violence, but fewer than half of survivors sought help.

In mining communities, the risks take on additional dimensions. CNRG research in Marange has documented concerns about militarisation and sexualised violence, while communities in Hwange have raised concerns about poverty-driven sexual exploitation and unequal power relations.

Displacement, economic dependence and exclusion from mining benefits further complicate women's ability to challenge abuse.

These concerns were echoed by CNRG Director Farai Maguwu, speaking at the engagement where he called for collective action and institutional accountability to confront the challenges facing women in mining communities.

"We have observed things like sexual exploitation and abuse at work. Getting job offers in exchange for offering sexual services and having been employed also to continue being exploited by the bosses at work," Maguwu said.

He also highlighted the dangers posed by machete gangs, warning that insecurity in mining areas disproportionately affects women. "They would make the community very unsafe but the women would be more affected than their male counterparts," he said.

One of the meeting's central contributions was to examine how institutions can work together without confusing their mandates. Parliament provides legislative and oversight mechanisms; the Gender Commission investigates gender-related violations and promotes equality; the Ministry coordinates gender policy implementation; while the police provide critical entry points into the criminal justice system.

COP31: Beyond the Negotiating Rooms — Organising to Adapt and Survive

By Brian Ashley

(This)Next week the Climate Conference of the Parties (COP) moves to Antalya. From 9 to 20 November, delegates to COP31 gather on Türkiye's Mediterranean coast, with Australia's Chris Bowen acting as "president of negotiations" and the Turkish hosts branding it the "implementation COP". Climate and social justice activists are entitled to ask a blunt question: implementation of what, and for whom?

A year ago, writing after the Belém COP, we argued that COP30 had entrenched the crisis of climate politics. Nevertheless, it has to be recognised that the COP remains the only global forum in which the most vulnerable countries sit at the same table as the biggest polluters. Its commitments, however weak, give movements something to hold governments to. But the mid-year negotiations in Bonn showed how far the UN climate process has been constrained, fitted with a straitjacket tailored by the petrostates and stitched by the fossil fuel corporations. Activists who travel to Antalya should be clear-eyed: a breakthrough on emissions is unlikely. Those who go need to use the time to build alliances across the Global South and to plot an independent path.

In this article we want to make the case for climate and social justice activists and especially trade unionists to stop primarily organising their hopes around a mitigation agenda the COP has so far failed to deliver. To rebuild a climate justice movement and win poor and working people to an eco-socialist agenda it is necessary to place the protection of poor and working-class communities from a crisis that is already here at the centre of our demands.

Adaptation, the building of resilience to withstand the impact of the climate crisis, is not surrender, as some might accuse us. Organised properly, it is the most direct route to jobs, to public investment and to the kind of mass movement that can eventually break the power of fossil capital.

A process in a straitjacket

Belém ended without a fossil fuel phase-out. Oil-producing states blocked binding language, and the proposal for a formal roadmap to "transition away from fossil fuels," the modest promise made at COP28 in Dubai, was dropped from the final text. What survived was a voluntary roadmap sitting outside the negotiations, to which only a handful of countries have sent submissions.

The Bonn intersessional in June this year (2026) showed how tight the straitjacket has become. Fossil fuels were not even a formal agenda item. Colombia had to point out that the words "transitioning away from fossil fuels" had quietly vanished from the summary of the Global Stocktake dialogue. Speaking for the Like-Minded Developing Countries, Saudi Arabia described that dialogue as a "non-prescriptive space with a focus on finance", warned others against "cherry-picking" the Stocktake and pushed carbon capture as the answer. Fiji's negotiator publicly accused Saudi Arabia and India of "undermining" climate science in light of their opposition to references to 1.5°C, to misinformation and even to tipping points.

The result was paralysis. The mitigation work programme failed and was pushed to Antalya under "rule 16" — the procedural rule that simply carries an unresolved item over to the next session, with no agreed text to build on. The global goal on adaptation suffered the same fate. The final draft was entirely in square brackets. Five consecutive IPCC meetings have now failed even to agree a timetable for the next assessment report.

The petrostates do not act alone. The United States formally left the Paris Agreement on 27 January 2026 and has announced its withdrawal from the UN climate convention itself. The Trump administration has reversed modest climate related initiatives aimed at reducing the US high level of emissions. Like the war in Ukraine, the war on Iran has been disastrous for efforts to reduce the profitability of oil and gas. Since the US and Israeli strikes of 28 February and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Brent crude has traded above $100 a barrel. BP's profits more than doubled on the back of the war, reaching $5.7bn in the second quarter, its best in four years, while the company announced it would "move further away from renewables". War, it turns out, is excellent for the fossil fuel business.

Militarisation and the growth of the armaments industry is booming and yet its contribution to global emissions is not calculated and attempts to put this on the COP agenda have so far failed.

This is the context in which the Türkiye presidency offers an "action agenda" built on voluntary targets, such as raising electricity's share of final energy from about 20% to 35% by 2035. Bowen himself concedes that the action agenda and the negotiations are "separate things". The danger is that pledges are made in one room while the real business of blocking is done in the other.

This is a short version of an article by Brian Ashley. He is a member of Zabalaza for Socialism, serves on the Amandla! editorial collective and is the co-ordinator of the Alternative Information and Development centre (AIDC). Read the full version here.

Dawn of a New Diamond Era as De Beers Scatters

Anglo American's decision to sell its 85 per cent stake in De Beers marks a turning point in the global diamond industry. For Namibia, which co-owns key diamond operations with the company, the impending ownership change presents both an economic opportunity and a test of government accountability.

By Donald Nyarota

The diamond industry is approaching a historic crossroads. Anglo American's decision to dispose of its 85 per cent stake in De Beers, one of the world's most influential diamond companies, signals the possible end of an era in which a handful of powerful corporate interests shaped the global diamond trade.

But as the corporate landscape shifts, a more consequential question emerges: who will control the future of the diamond economy, and who will benefit from it?

For Namibia, the implications are immediate. The country is not merely an observer in this unfolding corporate transition. Through its 50 per cent ownership of Namdeb Holdings, the Namibian state is De Beers' equal partner in Namdeb, which operates land-based mines, Debmarine Namibia, which extracts diamonds offshore, and the Namibia Diamond Trading Company. A change in De Beers' ownership therefore changes the identity of a critical partner in Namibia's diamond economy.

According to the opposition's Shadow Minister of International Relations and Trade, Rodney Cloete, the Namibian Government has offered little public explanation of its position. Forty days after he raised questions in Parliament and publicly called for ministerial clarification, key issues remain unanswered. These include whether Namibia intends to acquire a stake in De Beers, how such a transaction would be financed, and whether existing diamond sales agreements have been renewed or renegotiated.

The silence is particularly troubling because Namibia's diamond economy is already under considerable pressure. On 22 October 2026, the Finance Minister reportedly told Parliament that diamond taxes and royalties would decline from N$5.8 billion in 2023/24 to a projected N$414 million in the current financial year.

Further, rough diamond exports also fell from N$18.9 billion in 2023 to N$10.1 billion in 2025, according to Bank of Namibia figures.

The human consequences are equally significant.



Namdeb halted operations at its Sendelingsdrif mine in June 2025, affecting 144 workers, while Debmarine Namibia's permanent workforce declined from 1,092 in 2024 to 993 in 2025.

For communities such as Oranjemund, where livelihoods and local economic activity remain closely tied to diamond mining, these are not simply corporate statistics. They represent growing uncertainty about employment, investment and the future of entire communities.

Anglo American's divestment could nevertheless create an opening for Namibia to rethink its position in the diamond value chain.

Rather than remaining primarily a resource-owning partner, the country could pursue greater influence over marketing, pricing, beneficiation and the distribution of mineral revenues. However, this opportunity requires a coherent strategy, transparent negotiations and a clear assessment of the financial risks involved.

The departure of Anglo American does not automatically herald a new era of prosperity. It could simply replace one powerful corporate shareholder with another. The real test will be whether resource-rich countries can translate changing ownership structures into greater economic sovereignty.

As De Beers prepares for a new chapter, Namibia must decide whether it will help shape that future or watch it unfold from the sidelines. Its diamonds are a national asset. Their future should not be negotiated in silence.

COP31: Ambition Meets the Barrel!

By Ebson Munashe Munhumumwe

On Monday 9 November, the day COP31 opened in Antalya, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hailed the discovery of two new oil fields in Turkey's Gabar region as "good news." Speaking after a cabinet meeting in Ankara, he put estimated reserves at 135 million barrels. Nearly 200 countries gathered that day to discuss moving beyond fossil fuels, and the host nation's headline was a barrel of crude.

That contradiction says a lot about where the climate effort stands. The Paris Agreement of 2015 gave almost every country a shared goal of holding warming well below 2°C. On 27 January 2026, the United States, the largest historical emitter, formally completed its exit from it. When short-term capital is ranked above long-term conservation, gains built over a decade can unravel within a single political cycle.

Southern Africa has the most to lose. The FAO puts the likelihood of El Niño in Zimbabwe's 2026/27 rainy season at 88 to 94 percent, with a 65 percent probability of below-normal rainfall.

As the World Food Programme notes, El Niño can be predicted, so there is time to act before crops fail. So why is the money so often released only after the harvest has failed? Prediction without pre-financing is simply observation.

Africa also holds more leverage than it claims. The COP31 presidency wants electricity to rise from about 20 percent of global energy demand to 35 percent by 2035.

That transition runs on batteries, grids and turbines, which depend on critical and rare earth minerals found across our continent. Electrification cannot be delivered without Africa, so Africa is entitled to set terms.

Zimbabwe and its regional partners should carry three priorities into the rooms: adaptation finance that arrives before disaster; affordable, low-interest financing for grids and transmission; and value retention, so minerals feeding the transition are processed and benefited from at home, with community and environmental safeguards. Young people, who will live longest with these decisions, should help shape them.

COP31 runs until 20 November, and its outcome will show whether opening day was an aberration or a signal. There is something almost comic about hosting a climate summit while celebrating new oil, yet the droughts and hunger that follow are entirely real.

The task for Africa's young people is to engage constructively and keep asking whether the room is serious about the future or only about the barrel.

The mining operation is reportedly not yet using municipal water. Instead, it is drawing water from three boreholes sunk at the site, which are being used for construction activities and dust suppression.

The immediate query may not be whether the mine is receiving municipal water today, but why major water infrastructure is being installed towards a project whose environmental and legal status remains contested.

The same questions are now being raised about electricity.

Beyond the Law: Zimbabwe's Mining Women Confront the Institutions Meant to Protect Them

Participants received practical guidance on petitioning Parliament under Section 149 of the Constitution, submitting motions, asking parliamentary questions and participating in public hearings. With the Mines and Minerals Bill presenting an important legislative opportunity, communities were encouraged to use parliamentary processes to demand stronger protections for women.

The Gender Commission outlined its complaints-handling procedures, while the police Victim Friendly Unit explained how survivors report cases, obtain medical examinations and navigate criminal justice processes. These engagements exposed persistent barriers, including inadequate resources, geographical distance, limited institutional visibility and difficulties securing medical evidence.

But the discussions went beyond reporting abuse. Participants called for better lighting and sanitation facilities in mining areas, accessible one-stop centres, stronger community awareness programmes and greater economic participation by women. Access to mining claims, agricultural land, affordable finance and mineral beneficiation was identified as essential to reducing economic dependence and vulnerability.

Perhaps the most important lesson was that protecting women cannot be reduced to encouraging survivors to report violence. Institutions must be accessible, adequately resourced and capable of following cases through to meaningful outcomes. The challenge now is to turn dialogue into accountability. For women living in Zimbabwe's mining communities, institutional promises mean little if justice remains distant and the conditions that enable exploitation remain untouched.

Imbeza Valley Under Siege: Residents Petition Government Over Suspected Illegal Alluvial Mining

By Staff Reporter

Residents of Imbeza Valley, near Penhalonga in Mutare, have petitioned the government to suspend suspected illegal alluvial mining operations along the Imbeza River, warning that the activities are threatening their water security, livelihoods, property and the surrounding environment.

In a report shared by Crime Watch on the microblogging platform X, residents allege that Chinese mining operators, working with Zimbabwean nationals, have invaded the area and are conducting alluvial mining under the guise of river rehabilitation.

In a petition dated 23 October 2026, addressed to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Water Resources Development and copied to the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Riverine Ecosystems Rehabilitation through the Environmental Management Agency (EMA), the Imbeza Valley Residents and Property Owners raised concerns over operations by Batanidza Nexus (Private) Limited at the Larochelle Hotel property.

The petition states: "The community is deeply concerned that what is being presented as an environmental restoration initiative has instead assumed the characteristics of a gold extraction and mineral-processing operation, threatening the river, public health, agricultural livelihoods and property values in Imbeza Valley."

The residents say the Imbeza River is their primary source of water, as the community has no access to ZINWA piped supplies. The petition notes: "Residents have no ZINWA piped-water supply and depend on the river for drinking water, domestic use and agricultural activities."

Since the disputed operations commenced, residents have reportedly observed deteriorating water quality and increased sedimentation, raising concerns about contamination and the suitability of the water for human consumption and irrigation.

The construction of slime dams, establishment of what appears to be a mineral-processing plant and interference with the river's natural flow have heightened these concerns.



An excavator clears out a mining area in gold rich Imbeza (Pic credit Crime Watch)

Questioning the justification for the operations, residents state: "To our knowledge, the affected stretch of the river had not previously experienced the kind of alluvial mining now suspected, raising legitimate questions about the necessity, scope and actual purpose of the purported rehabilitation exercise."

Residents further allege extensive excavation of former grazing lands and National Trust of Zimbabwe property previously leased to Organiks, a herb-exporting company. They also claim property owners are being offered up to US$50,000 to grant mining access, while three additional groups have reportedly established operations along the river.

The community has also approached EMA, the Ministry of Mines and the CID Minerals, Fauna and Flora Unit, seeking intervention. However, residents say their complaints have not yielded meaningful action.

The petition calls for urgent suspension of the disputed operations and protection of the Imbeza River.

The case raises serious questions about regulatory oversight and the potential misuse of river rehabilitation permits to facilitate extractive activities. River rehabilitation must restore ecosystems, not provide cover for mineral extraction. No mining company should be above the law, and communities must not sacrifice their water, land and livelihoods for mineral wealth.

IN PICTURES: Multistakeholder Indaba, ending Violence Against Women and Girls



























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Immigration Raid at Bikita Minerals Raises Questions Over Foreign Labour Oversight

By Staff Reporter

Reports of the alleged arrest of hundreds of Chinese workers at Bikita Minerals have exposed potential weaknesses in Zimbabwe's immigration enforcement system, raising questions about work permit compliance and regulatory accountability.

TellZim News reports that hundreds of Chinese workers at Bikita Minerals were allegedly arrested on Friday, 6 November 2026, during a joint operation involving the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), police, army, prison services and immigration officials.

According to sources cited by the publication, workers were rounded up at the lithium mine and transported to immigration offices in Masvingo for verification of their work permits. Some were reportedly loaded into lorries before management intervened and arranged company buses to ferry them to town.

However, Bikita Minerals Public Relations Officer Tinomuda Chakanyuka dismissed reports of arrests, describing the operation as a routine permit verification exercise.

He maintained that all employees were vetted, cleared and returned to work, with none detained. More troubling are allegations that some Chinese workers were performing duties different from those specified in their work permits.

TellZim sources claimed that individuals whose permits identified them as engineers were found performing unrelated tasks, including working in kitchens.

If substantiated, these allegations point to serious weaknesses in immigration oversight and the administration of foreign employment permits. They raise questions about whether authorities adequately verify professional qualifications and actual job responsibilities before granting work authorisation.

Zimbabwe's pursuit of foreign investment, particularly in the strategic lithium sector, must not come at the expense of regulatory integrity and local employment opportunities.

Authorities must establish the facts, investigate possible permit irregularities and determine whether immigration officials or company management breached established procedures.

Ultimately, the credibility of Zimbabwe's mining governance will be measured not by the number of foreign investors it attracts, but by whether it can consistently enforce its laws, protect local employment and ensure that investment serves the national interest.