



**KIMBERLEY  
PROCESS  
CIVIL SOCIETY  
COALITION**



## **WEST AFRICA KIMBERLEY PROCESS REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY**

# **THE GRANDBASSAM DECLARATION “FOR RESPONSIBLE MINING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”**

We, the member organizations of the Mano River Union Kimberley Process Civil Society Coalition, participating in a Regional Workshop held in Grand Bassam, Cote d’Ivoire, from 23 to 24 April 2024, deliberated on the impact of extractive activities on local communities in the region, analyzed the drivers of unacceptable consequences for communities, with a particular focus on the diamond sector. The meeting agreed on strong recommendations to ensure that mining takes a rights-based approach and that it is economically beneficial, socio-ecologically responsible, politically transparent and accountable, to ensure social justice and sustainable development. Specific attention was given to diamond mining.

These reflections and analysis align with the set objectives, which seek to:

- a) present and acknowledge the significant advances as well as the good practices achieved and promoted in diamond governance in the countries of the Mano River Union (MRU).
- b) address the persistent and various challenges faced by the various key players, especially local communities.
- c) Jointly consider remediation approaches for diamond governance with a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic, social, environmental and ecological impact.

Noting that at the end of the two-day workshop, the member organizations namely NMJD, WoME, GRPIE, CECIDE, ACTION MINES, GREEN ADVOCATES INT, and SCOOPS SEGUELA strongly reaffirmed the vision of “defending the rights of mining communities”.

### **In terms of PROGRESS**

Acknowledging and appreciating with great satisfaction the efforts of regional and national projects implemented by KP CSC members and their partners and the notable progress made in documenting the impact of extractives on communities;

**Recognizing** the effective and harmonious functioning of the Kimberley Process Civil Coalition (KP CSC), and welcoming the efforts to defend the rights of communities impacted by diamond mining;

**Acknowledging** the importance of governments, the Participants of the Kimberley Process, committed to the set of Principles to promote best practices, for the benefit of the global diamond industry: labour rights, human rights, environmental protection, development of local communities, anti-corruption, and responsible diamond mining as provided for in the Declaration on Principles for Responsible Sourcing as Best Practices (Frame 7) adopted on 12 November 2021, in Moscow.

## **Concerning CHALLENGES and CONSTRAINTS**

**Consciously** aware of the reported several chronic challenges associated with mining in the region, such as:

- 1) The complete exclusion of communities from the resource supply and value chains, leading to gross inequalities, impoverishment, deprivation and lack of development in mining communities.
- 2) Limited positive and transformative impacts of actions/projects with little room for addressing emerging issues that can add value to the extracted minerals to the benefit of communities.
- 3) Low capacity to mobilise financing / insufficient funds that can be ploughed to sustain engagement of civil society that defends the rights of diamond communities at various levels;
- 4) Restriction of civic space (with laws, certification, service level agreements at each administrative level, etc.).
- 5) Poor integration of gender and women into diamond mining and governance.
- 6) Institutional instability occasioned by frequent change or movement of political appointees and limited political will.
- 7) The extractive industry, including the diamond industry, operating with disregard for environmental and social standards.
- 8) Insecurity at mining sites through the use of security forces that brutalise citizens to 'protect' the companies and;
- 9) A weak, non-comprehensive and non-inclusive approach to coordination of the MRU Regional Approach.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Now** thereof, we, the member organizations of the Mano River Union Kimberley Process Civil Society Coalition, noting that it is imperative to continue to move the Coalition forward, recommend the following:

- 1) That governments of the ECOWAS countries recognise that communities own their land and, by extension, also own the minerals on and under their land or soil. There is therefore a need to reform all legislations in the ECOWAS region to give local communities co-ownership of minerals beneath or in the subsoil;
- 2) That governments of the ECOWAS countries establish as a guiding principle the full and active participation and involvement of communities in the management of diamonds and other minerals at all levels;
- 3) That civil society actors working on the natural resource sector in ECOWAS adopt a POLICY, STRATEGY and CAMPAIGN towards the recognition of the property rights AND MINERAL RIGHTS of communities in mining areas;
- 4) That the Coalition initiate a study to assess the degree of community involvement in the governance and management of diamonds and other minerals;
- 5) That the Coalition carry out a diagnostic study on the state of implementation of the principles and requirements of the MRU, the KP about mining governance and specifically diamond governance;
- 6) That the Coalition develop a **GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK** to define areas of reflection on a strategy and an advocacy plan to improve diamond governance at the level of the MRU Secretariat, ECOWAS and other relevant regional institutions; and
- 7) That for the purposes of implementing some of the recommendations above, an inclusive ad hoc Committee be established composed of ONE representative from each of the four (4) member countries of the MRU with the focus on:
  - a) Work towards strengthening the legal framework at the level of KP authorities with a view to improving the participation and involvement of local communities, integration of gender/women;
  - b) Strengthen community capacities through intensification of information, training and awareness campaigns; and
  - c) Use the Public Interest Lawyering mechanism, such as PILIWA (Public Interest Lawyering Initiative for West Africa) to defend the rights of communities and better take into account their aspirations.

**Done in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire on April 24, 2024**