



July 23, 2008

The Honourable David Emerson  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Africa-Canada Forum, a working group of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, we would like clarification on meetings between Canadian High Commission staff and Tanzanian legislators on the report of the Presidential Mining Sector Review Committee and the Canadian government's position on the Committee's report. The Committee's report is set to be debated in the Tanzanian National Assembly. Canadian and Tanzanian civil society organizations are concerned that Canada may be pressuring Tanzanian legislators not to endorse the report.

As a way to ensure democratic governance and ownership, the Review, chaired by retired judge Mark Bomani, was a significant effort by the Government of Tanzania to re-examine mining investment in the country. This review follows a recent initiative by the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which looks poised to nullify or renegotiate a number of unfair contracts. The recommendations of the Presidential Mining Sector Review Committee include the establishment of a national Mining Authority charged with supervising all mining activity in the country. The Committee also proposes changes to taxation and royalties paid by the mining sector to reflect more appropriately what is owed to the Tanzanian government.

Both parliamentarians and the multi-stakeholder Advisory Group to the National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility and the Canadian Extractive Industries in Developing Countries have issued recommendations to the Canadian government on Canadian extractive activity abroad.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT) called for the Canadian government to adopt measures that "mak[e] Canadian government support – such as export and project financing and services offered by Canadian missions abroad – conditional on companies meeting clearly defined corporate social responsibility and human rights standards, particularly through the mechanism of human rights impact assessments."

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The consensus-based Final Report from the National Roundtables echoes this recommendation. It states that “[i]n those developing countries that seek to promote economic and social development through investment in the extractive sector, it is recommended that the Government of Canada, while respecting the national sovereignty of these countries, work with their governments to develop strategies consistent with optimizing benefits of extractive projects.”

More than 15 months after the release of the report from the National Roundtables, the Canadian government has yet to respond to and implement the recommendations. The report called for the establishment of Canadian corporate social responsibility standards, and the appointment of an independent ombudsperson to monitor compliance with these standards.

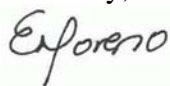
We urge the Canadian High Commission in Tanzania to follow the SCFAIT and Roundtables recommendations in its dealings with Tanzanian legislators.

A recent Statement from the Africa Initiative on Mining, Environment and Society, adopted by 39 African members including representatives from Tanzania, calls for “[a]ll pressures and policy prescriptions for Africa and African governments [to] cease forth with so as to allow African governments and people to enjoy the right to policy choices, review their laws and mining contracts without any limitation.” The Statement ends with a call to “Promote and ensure that Africa optimises the benefits of its mineral potentials in ways that guarantee national economic development, human rights, environmental sustainability and promote community interest.”

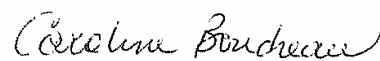
With Tanzania, Canada has the opportunity to show leadership in corporate social responsibility in the extractive industries. We are convinced that Canada can demonstrate its commitment to promote the kind of development that Africans envision for themselves and that so many Canadians support.

We look forward to your response and would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,



Esperanza Moreno  
Deputy Director  
Canadian Council for International Co-operation



Caroline Boudreau  
Chair  
Africa-Canada Forum

cc. Honourable Michael Fortier, Minister of International Trade  
Janet Siddall, High Commissioner, Canadian High Commission in Tanzania  
Mh. Peter A. Kallaghe, High Commissioner, Tanzanian High Commission in Canada  
Hon. Bob Rae, Liberal Party, Foreign Affairs Critic  
Paul Crête, Bloc Québécois, Foreign Affairs Critic  
Paul Dewar, NDP, Foreign Affairs Critic