

1 February 2016- CIDSE press release

**As final EU negotiations begin on conflict minerals ,  
a new video reveals what a clean mine could look like under a more comprehensive responsible sourcing  
requirement**

*A new video filmed at the Fungamwaka mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) reveals the working conditions of artisanal miners who extract the minerals that enter many daily life products such as laptops, smartphones and other electronic devices. The Fungamwaka mine is an example of a "clean mine", where no rebel groups are present to illegally tax the miners, and child labor is banned. In a sector too often dominated by exploitations and human rights violations, this example demonstrates how the sector could be cleaned up under effective regulation.*

On Monday 1st of February the Triologue negotiations between the EP, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission are starting. It is an historic opportunity for EU political leaders to secure the key achievement voted by the European Parliament in May 2015. "The EU Triologue is an opportunity for the negotiators to remember the When Pope Francis spoke to the EU Parliament in November 2014, he called for human rights to take primacy over privatized economic interests. EU governments must also heed this message and to show that it is possible to clean up the mining sector" said Bernd Nilles, CIDSE's Secretary General.

This [video](#) (In German, soon available in English), made by CIDSE's German member Misereor includes exclusive footage from the Fungamwaka mine. It was filmed by journalist Roland Brockmann who just returned from his investigative trip in the RDC. It shows how minerals sourced responsibly from clean mines can be distinguished from "dirty" minerals from illegal mines by their geological footprint. Revenues from the clean mine are shared between entrepreneurs and workers, instead of fueling armed groups. And yet mine workers still have to struggle to make a decent living, as the costs of cleaning up the trade have been passed on to them rather than being covered by the companies sourcing these minerals.

In December, EU governments in the Council agreed their initial negotiating position, supporting a voluntary sourcing scheme covering only part of the mineral supply chain: this is a clear backtrack on the EP vote. Stefan Reinhold, CIDSE's conflict minerals campaign coordinator affirmed that "the regulation as proposed by the EU Council would not change the situation on the ground as it would only apply to 19 European smelters and refiners whereas the great majority of the concerned minerals are smelted and processed in Southeast Asia before being imported into the EU. European citizens can only be guaranteed that their mobile phones and computers do not contain conflict minerals if the EU requires that all minerals imported into the EU be sourced responsibly".

**CIDSE recommends that Member States revisit their positions and:**

1. **Show leadership** on this issue by supporting **mandatory due diligence requirements along the entire supply chain.**
2. **Support** a Regulation that **aligns with** the OECD Due Diligence Guidance on Conflict Minerals, by:
  - **Ensuring** that all due diligence obligations are consistent with the OECD standards
  - **Engaging** companies downstream of metal importers, in particular companies that place products containing covered minerals on the EU market
  - **Including** language that reflects the flexible and progressive nature of due diligence.

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Contact details:

Stefan Reinhold, CIDSE Advocacy coordinator on conflict minerals  
+32 (0)2 233 37 51, reinhold(at)cidse.org

Valentina Pavarotti, CIDSE Media and Communication Officer

+32 (0)2 2824073, pavarotti(at)cidse.org

#### **Notes to the editors:**

##### **Background on the conflict minerals regulation:**

In the absence of a strong regulatory system, European citizens cannot be sure that the products they buy and use daily didn't involve human rights violations. To tackle this issue, the European Commission proposed the "conflict minerals" regulation in March 2014. The proposal was disappointing in many ways: it consisted in a self-certification system that companies could voluntarily join, and it only applied to 19 smelters and refiners based in the EU (while not covering all products entering the EU market that contain the targeted minerals). In May 2015, the European Parliament (EP) strengthened the proposal by requiring all European companies manufacturing or importing components and final products containing the targeted minerals to check their supply chains to make sure they don't fuel conflicts or participate in human rights violations. Even if some gaps still remain, CIDSE welcomed this vote as a great evolution.

##### **Pope Francis' position:**

In a public [message](#) sent to leaders of communities affected by mining in July 2015, Pope Francis highlights the shared responsibility of governments, citizens and businessmen and men to act in order to bring the needed change: "The entire mining sector is decisively called to effect a radical paradigm shift to improve the situation in many countries. To this change a contribution can be made by the governments of the home countries of multinational companies and of those in which they operate, by businesses and investors, by the local authorities who oversee mining operations, by workers and their representatives, by international supply chains with their various intermediaries and those who operate in the markets of these materials, and by the consumers of goods for whose production the minerals are required. All these people are called upon to adopt conduct inspired by the fact that we constitute a single human family, "that everything is interconnected, and that genuine care for our own lives and our relationships with nature is inseparable from fraternity, justice and faithfulness to others".

**The footage**, as well as these pictures which were taken in the same trip, can be used, posted and broadcast to illustrate stories on conflict minerals and the reality on the ground.

**CIDSE** is an international family of Catholic social justice organizations, working together to promote justice, harness the power of global solidarity and create transformational change to end poverty and inequalities. We do this by challenging systemic injustice and inequity as well as destruction of nature. We believe in a world where every human being has the right to live in dignity [www.cidse.org](http://www.cidse.org)

CIDSE members: Broederlijk Delen (Belgium), CAFOD (England and Wales), CCFD - Terre Solidaire (France), Center of Concern (USA), Cordaid (the Netherlands), Development & Peace (Canada), Entraide et Fraternité (Belgium), eRko (Slovakia), Fastenopfer (Switzerland), FEC (Portugal), FOCSIV (Italy), Fondation Bridderlech Deelen (Luxembourg), KOO (Austria), Manos Unidas (Spain), MISEREOR (Germany), Progressio (United Kingdom), SCIAF (Scotland), Trócaire (Ireland)

CIDSE has coordinated a [statement](#) signed by nearly 150 Church leaders from 38 countries on 5 continents, asking for strong regulation to achieve the objective of breaking the link between natural resources and conflicts.

Other CIDSE's resources on conflict minerals are available [here](#).