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“Should the Provincial Government wait for cases of collapse in the Bel-Air 1 and 2 cells, in Kolwezi, before taking action?”

The Initiative for the Protection of Human Rights and Social Reintegration (IPDHOR) expresses its deep concern over alerts reporting a permanent risk of collapse of several homes in the Bel-Air 1 and 2 cells, in Kolwezi, in Lualaba Province. It calls on the provincial authorities as well as the Musonoie project of Rwashi Mining to act urgently.

For several days, alerts and testimonies from local communities have reported major cracks observed in several houses in the Bel-Air 1 and 2 cells. These signs are causing growing concern regarding the safety of residents and the integrity of the homes.

At the end of its investigation, the information collected from the communities indicates that these phenomena may be linked to the mining activities of the Musonoie project of Rwashi Mining. The communities notably warn of the need for urgent consideration of the risks to which they may be exposed:

- damaged household appliances;
- **cracks turning into erosion;**
- water coming from the Rwashi plant that could further affect the communities.

IPDHOR demands a prompt verification, within a very short time, of the conditions under which the Environmental and Social Impact Studies (ESIS) and the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) were developed, as well as the existence of a resettlement plan.

Léonard ZAMA, Executive Director of IPDHOR, believes that “Mining activities must be conducted in respect of the fundamental rights of communities, their safety, and their environment. Risk prevention, the mitigation of negative impacts, and the remediation of possible harm must constitute major priorities for companies and authorities.”

However, we are concerned about the slowness of the authorities in the Musonoie project case of Rwashi Mining: several people seem to accuse the Government of complicity, sacrificing its own citizens.

❖ TO THE PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES AND THE COMPETENT TECHNICAL SERVICES

- Without delay, commission an independent technical assessment of the homes in Bel-Air 1 and 2, in order to determine the origin of the cracks, the actual level of danger, and the necessary protection measures;
- **Assess the cases on the ground, while establishing responsibilities;**
- **Take urgent measures to shelter local communities, in conditions that respect their dignity and their rights.**

❖ TO THE MUSONOIE PROJECT OF RWASHI MINING

- Communicate transparently on the measures taken to prevent and manage the reported risks;
- **Engage in dialogue with the affected communities and civil society organizations;**
- **Analyze the methods used to assess the discharges from its plant into the “large trench,” which presents a health risk.**

PRESS CONTACT

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