



CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENDERS

POSITION PAPER

**CRD CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION
TO PROTECT KONO FROM
ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
(EARTHQUAKE/ LANDSLIDE) BY
KOIDU LIMITED AND OTHER
MINING COMPANIES**

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CRD Calls for Urgent Action to Protect Kono from environmental degradation (earthquake/ landslide) by Koidu limited and other mining companies

Environmental degradation remains an urgent issue for Kono, particularly in all the chiefdoms, and other critical landscapes through mining activities.

The **Civil Rights** Defenders (CRD) in collaboration with Executive of Kono organisations continuously pay close attention to the underground mining operations carried in the heavily populated capital city of Koidu and its Environs in Kono district, Eastern Province of Sierra Leone. We have made tremendous effort to acquaint ourselves with international treaties such as EITI, KPCS, AMV and others, to determine whether mining companies are complying with the stipulated international standards and recognising the environmental issues affecting the Sierra Leone. It is apparent that challenges of deforestation, artisanal and industrial mining adversely affect the country.

Through our volunteers field visits and collaborative discussions, we have been able to delve into the causes, effects, and urgent need for solutions to the rampant environmental destruction currently witnessed in the Kono district.

Mining environmental degradation remains an urgent issue in the Kono district of Sierra Leone; particularly in the Tankoro, Gbense and Kamara Chiefdoms. These biodiverse areas are suffering from significant unregulated artisanal mining, and unchecked large-scale mining operations. These activities threaten Sierra Leone's natural assets, repercussions on the ecosystem, local livelihoods, and future generational developments. CRD is therefore calling attention to these pressing environmental concerns, emphasising the risks posed by the uncontrolled exploitation of the land and natural resources.

The Chairman of CRD, **Allan S Tuboku-Metzger**, visited the mining areas in Kono district, and remarked: *"CRD is appalled by the level of environmental degradation witnessed firsthand at Tankoro, Nimikoro etc and lack of supervision by the relevant state actors to curtail the wanton destruction of the country's environment, robbing future generations of their inalienable rights to their natural capital."*

In light of our findings, CRD is urging the **Government of Sierra Leone** to take decisive and immediate action to halt the attack against the people of Kono district by Koidu limited and other mining companies present. The mining companies are using state security personnel to harass and intimidate the local residents. CRD would like to call on the Government to review and implement underground mining laws promptly to prohibit all illegal mining in the Kono district.

The CRD as a member of the ILO tripartite plus arrangements, would also like to call the Government through the ministry of Employment Labour and Social Security to thoroughly investigate and inspect the welfare and condition of service of all employees in these mining companies exploiting the Kono district.

The CRD further calls upon the Government through the ministry of Water Resources and SALWACO to investigate the latest report from residents in Kono district raising alarm to Koidu Limited's activities that caused a shutdown the sources of water supply. This is a serious human rights breach that must not go unnoticed.

The CRD reiterates the following United Nation Convention on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Signed: 

Allan S. Tuboku-Metzger

Chairman

Civil Rights Defenders

Arthur Metzger

Executive Secretary

Civil Rights Defenders