



Monitoring News

9 May 2017

Statement: Escalating violence in gold panning communities

The Zimbabwe Peace Project is alarmed at the escalating war for gold at Sabi Mine, which has resulted in the death of 15 people. Homemade explosives are used in the fight to ward off security guards at the mine by gold panners. Worsening economic conditions have resulted in the escalation of informal mining thereby increasing conflict in the competition for resources. This has seen some miners resorting to extreme violence. Such violence threatens the peace of the community.

Despite government setting up a parliamentary committee to look into increasing cases of informal mining violence more cases of violence in informal mining have been reported resulting in fatalities.

Minister of Mines Walter Chidhakwa told the media two months ago that cabinet received a report from State security concerning battles involving gold miners and a cabinet committee tasked to look into such violent clashes had been set up.

Violent battles over gold claims have been witnessed in gold mining communities in some parts of the country. Late last year Qulisani Moyo from Matebeleland South died after his right foot was chopped off in a fight over a mining claim in Filabusi.

A gold panner from Lower Gweru was killed after fellow miners allegedly stabbed him over gold while in July 2016, eight gold panners from Mberengwa were injured after they were assaulted with machetes by rival panners. In 2016 Redwing Mine security guards shot a suspected gold panner in Penhalonga, Manicaland.

The ZPP is worried that the tension, which sometimes takes a political identity will escalate conflict in mining communities and would like to urge the government through the Ministry of Mines to roll out the necessary interventions to arrest the situation. The cabinet committee set up for this purpose should immediately discharge its mandate and arrest the situation before more lives are lost.

ZPP is a Non Governmental Organization that was founded in 2000 by a group of faith based and human rights NGOs working and interested in human rights and peace-building initiatives. ZPP has become a vehicle for civic interventions in times of political crises. In particular, ZPP seeks to monitor and document incidents of human rights violations and breaches of peace.

If you are concerned about acts of violence in your community, ZPP encourages you to get in touch with us on Hotline and WhatsApp numbers

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**A Zimbabwe where there is Peace, Justice,
Dignity and Development for all.**

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Mission: To work for sustainable peace through monitoring, documentation, advocacy and community peace building interventions with our members and partners