

Port-au-Prince, February 9, 2017

### **Statement Denouncing the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Commerce**

The *Kolektif Jistis Min* (Justice in Mining Collective or KJM) and several other organizations recently received invitations from the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Commerce to discuss the draft mining law that the World Bank and the Haitian Government are pushing to pass. Together, the undersigned organizations present their position and express their rejection of this problematic project.

First, we would like to take this opportunity to alert the public to several points, including the role that the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Commerce is playing in opening the heart of the country to mining companies. This Chamber is a private sector institution that oversees business affairs between Haitian businessmen and Canadian businessmen; it has no legitimacy, no authority, and no power to convene organizations and other actors for consultation about the draft mining law. The draft mining law is a poison that endangers all Haitians. We would also like to remind the public at large, here in Haiti and internationally, that this chamber of commerce, which seems to want to replace the State, is directed by two representatives of mining companies who hold many prospection permits and two exploitation permits across the entire country. In addition, one of the directors holds a near monopoly on mining permits.

We remind you that the draft law is in conflict with the Constitution—the mother law of our land. We reiterate our position once again: We are against mining in this country and we ask the Haitian people to stand up and demand the State to implement economic policies and programs that embrace the reality of Haiti today and help us create dignified lives for future generations. Considering the deteriorating living conditions of our country, considering experiences with multinational companies (like McDonalds, SHADA, Plantation Dauphine, Reynolds, etc.) that destroy life and the environment of the country, our position is NO TO MINING EXPLOITATION, particularly metal mining. We will not participate in legitimizing any colonial project, because the same dynamic continues from colonial times in this country, where international industries exploit raw materials to guarantee their own development while the countries that have the resources are left in poverty.

Parliament recently passed the law COP21, which means Haiti is unable to participate in activities that contribute to global warming. The Constitution prohibits all activities that may disrupt the environment, the foundation of our well-being, including activities that cause deforestation or could pollute the natural surroundings and disturb life. For this reason, we ask the Haitian government to take measures to stop all mining activities and others that can have a profound impact on the lives of people, animals, the land, water, food, or the environment and to define alternative projects that do not destroy the lives of people, animals and the environment, and that allow people to live in dignity.

We blow the conch shell to call people to rise across Haiti, including all grassroots organizations to block the path of all colonial projects proposed in this country.

**YES TO LIFE, NO TO THE PILLAGE OF THE COUNTRY'S NATURAL RESOURCES !!!**

**Signatory Organizations:**

Batay Ouvriye

MODEP

MOLEGHAF

TÈT KOLE TI PEYIZAN AYISYEN

CE/JILAP

GARR

Fowòm Politik Sosyo Pwofesyonèl Pwogresis Ayisyen

POHDH

PAPDA

GRAD

RNDDH

CTSP

KJM

Kay-La

MOLEGHAF

Chandel

Saj-veye yo