

Zimbabwe Weekly Update 45/2011 – 31 October–6 November 2011

Overview

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| 1. Natural Resources: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KPCS Plenary Allows Zimbabwe to Resume Rough Diamond Exports - Mines Minister: With World's Largest Diamond Reserves Zimbabwe Will Not Beg For Anything from Anybody Again - Prime Minister Calls For Transparency in Diamond Trade - Civil Society Coalition Believes KP Left Zimbabwe From the Hook - Again - EU Welcomes KP Decision Since it Protects KP's Integrity - US Explains KP Vote Abstention With Not Wanting To Deadlock KP |
| 2. Election Environment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister Believes "The Demons of Violence are Back" |
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1. Natural Resources:

- This week, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) plenary decided to allow Zimbabwe to resume rough diamond exports from two compliant mines in Marange "with immediate effect". Other companies can export after a KP verification team visits their operations in the next two weeks. The World Diamond Council (WDC) stated "transparency of operation is a key element of the agreement, with compliant mining operations in the Marange region being required to share mine level data with the KP Monitoring Team on an ongoing basis. As part of the agreement, the KP Civil Society Coalition representatives in Zimbabwe will have access to the Marange area so as to allow continued reporting on KPCS implementation.[] Zimbabwe has committed to uphold the KPCS minimum requirements and will report to the current KP Plenary and the KP Intersessional Meeting in 2012 []."

Commenting on the outcome, Mines and Mining Development Minister Obert Mpofu (ZANU-PF) is quoted: "This is a historical development we all had been waiting for. We want to shock and shake the world. We are going to unleash our worthiness to the world and Zimbabwe will not beg for anything from anybody again.[] It is not a secret that Zimbabwe has the largest diamond reserves in the world. Our sovereign rights to trade in our diamonds had been unjustifiably denied by participants with hostile foreign policies on Zimbabwe."

Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai highlighted the importance of transparency in diamond trade: "What we are of course concerned about is that once those diamonds have been disposed of, all the money must go through the fiscus. There must be transparency in the manner in which we mine and dispose of our diamonds. [] I am hoping that this green light by KP allows us as government to control the resources from Marange in a transparent and open manner."

The KP Civil Society Coalition believe the KP let “Zimbabwe off the hook - again”. The coalition believes the deal “dispenses with any meaningful link between Zimbabwe's compliance with the Joint Work Plan and the KP's authorisation of diamond exports. This comes in spite of the Zimbabwean military remaining deeply involved in diamond mining in Marange, persistent and widespread smuggling and no progress in enabling small scale miners to work legally. Regular reports of human rights abuses against miners by security forces continue.”

The EU welcomed the agreement calling it a way forward for the certification scheme and Zimbabwe. Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: "After months of intensive negotiations with all parties, an agreement has now been reached on the basis of this initiative, which protects the integrity of the Kimberley Process, respects the core concerns of Zimbabwe and the E.U., recognizes the concerns of civil society and meets the expectations of diamond producing and importing countries."

US State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland stated that the US had abstained from the KP vote. It chose not to block the measure since provisions for oversight and reporting by civil society groups had been included: "We think this compromise might have been stronger and that's why we abstained. So we judge that rather than having the entire Kimberley process deadlocked over Zimbabwe we would abstain, we would let this go forward." Ms. Nuland noted that the US would maintain its “specially designated nationals and blocked persons” List which includes Mines Minister Obert Mpofu, the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation and Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe.

3. Election Environment:

- In a press statement Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai highlighted “rising political tension in the country, increasing cases of violence, sabotage and total disrespect by the police and other government agencies of the Prime Minister, even as he executes government programmes. It appears the demons of violence are back, a siege mood seems to be slowly gripping the country. This is a reincarnation of the violence of 2008 and this country risks sliding back if immediate action is not taken to bring back order and peace in the country.” Amongst other Tsvangirai condemned the sealing off of the Central Headquarter of the MDC party this week during which riot police fired tear gas into the building and on bystanders in central Harare. “The State security agents have instituted a coup over the civilian authority and they are now above the law, to the extent of disrupting government programmes and assaulting civilians with impunity.”