ETHIOPIA’S HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE LEGA DEMBI GOLD MINE

Coalition of NGOs for UPR – Ethiopia, In Support of Health-Focused, Effective Environmental Regulation of Mining (CHEERM)*

*CHEERM includes:

Development by Unity and Brotherly Action for the Future (DUBAF), an Ethiopian NGO;

Girja Integrated Rural Development Association (GIRDA), an Ethiopian NGO;

Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) of Northwestern University’s Pritzker School of Law, an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC.
THE LEGA DEMBI GOLD MINE IS LOCATED IN THE SHAKISO WOREDA IN THE GUJI ZONE
HUMAN COST

- Miscarriages
- Children born with physical and developmental disabilities
REASONS FOR CONCERN

- Lack of Transparency
- Lack of Independence
- Financial consideration
“Strengthen existing efforts to ensure a safe and healthy environment.”¹
Recommended by Saudi Arabia, paragraph 155.157 (2014)

“Address issues of environmental degradation and disaster management in order to ensure the protection of the environment.”²
Recommended by the Maldives, paragraph 155.158 (2014)

“Strengthen the institutional framework . . . to respond adequately and efficiently to future challenges in areas of public health, education, culture, environment and state administration.”³
Recommended by Nicaragua³, paragraph 97.6 (2010)
45. The Committee notes that the State party temporarily closed the Lega Dembi mine in the Oromia region, and is undertaking an assessment of its impacts. However, it is concerned at the grave health, environmental and socio-economic impacts of the operation of the Lega Dembi mine on Guji rural women and their families.

46. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure full transparency and independence in the assessment process, publish and share the results with the Guji people; address the environmental and health damages; and provide adequate reparations and compensation to the victims.

CEDAW, Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Ethiopia, ¶¶ 45-46, 5 March 2019, UN Doc. CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8, (Advance unedited version) (emphasis added).
CHEERM RECOMMENDATIONS (Nos.1-3)

1. Conduct the environmental assessment of the Lega Dembi mine in an independent, impartial, and thorough manner, following best practices for such studies.

2. Commit to complete transparency: promptly make public the Lega Dembi assessment results, the data collected, the methodology, and all information as to the independence, impartiality and expertise of the assessment team.

3. Comply with the obligation of free, prior and informed consent, so that the indigenous Guji people have a voice in deciding whether and under what conditions the Lega Dembi mine should be allowed to reopen.
CHEERM RECOMMENDATIONS (No. 4)

4. Allow resumption of mining at the Lega Dembi mine only if:

a) the State can ensure that the mine will operate safely, without further harm to the environment or people’s health;

b) the State or the mining company first remedies the existing environmental damage caused by the mine, so that the water, soil and air are no longer contaminated; and

c) the victims are paid adequate reparations, including compensation, health care, and, for the disabled children, access to school.