



Press Release

Electronics, auto makers should commit now to due diligence standards to end trade in conflict minerals

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The organizations CENADEP – Kinshasa, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, Enough Project, Global Witness, Partnership Africa Canada, USAID – North Kivu, welcome the endorsement yesterday by the OECD ministerial council of the *Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-affected and High-Risk Areas*, and call on companies that use minerals from the Great Lakes Region of Africa to begin implementing these standards without delay.

Electronics, automotive jewellery, and other end-user companies should not wait for the SEC to undertake the due diligence – the time to act is now, to follow-up leading companies such as Intel and Apple.

Producers of cell phones, cars, and other products that contain conflict minerals should commit to the OECD due diligence process now. Their steps should include independent audits and transparent risk assessments. For companies further up in the supply chain, this must include risk assessments on the ground in DRC that are fully transparent.

The OECD Due Diligence Guidance is the set of standards developed last year through a working group of governments, industry and civil society for companies using minerals from eastern DRC and neighbouring countries. It aims to break the links between the trade in tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold, and the armed violence that has plagued eastern DRC for over a decade. A version of the same due diligence standards, adapted by the UN Group of Experts on Congo, has already been endorsed by the UN Security Council in November last year. The OECD standards have also been endorsed by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).

Our organizations believe that companies sourcing minerals originating from the Great Lakes Region have a responsibility to implement the OECD due diligence standards in full. This will enable them to ensure their purchases are not fuelling violence against the Congolese population. It will also help protect legitimate trade in minerals from areas of eastern DRC that are not controlled by rebels, militia or government army units.

We are therefore calling on companies and governments to take the following steps as a matter of urgency:

- Companies sourcing minerals from eastern DRC should implement the OECD Due Diligence Guidance now and begin sourcing materials from demilitarised mining areas.
- Governments, particularly OECD and ICGLR members, should incorporate the Due Diligence Guidance into their national legislation. They should make it a legal requirement that those businesses based in their jurisdictions that use minerals from conflict-affected and high-risk areas implement the Guidance.
- OECD and ICGLR member governments should immediately establish or support independent monitoring mechanisms (such as the planned ICGLR independent Mineral Chain Auditor function) to report publicly on companies' implementation of the Due Diligence Guidance. This is necessary to ensure that the Guidance is applied in full and is recognised publicly as a credible approach to tackling the conflict minerals trade.

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