

Press release of ZCCM-IH Minority Shareholders

GRZ must revoke gold licences of ungrateful Rufunsa blackmailers

1. Background

1.1 Government Policy on Gold

In a statement on 24 May 2020, Mines Permanent Secretary Barnaby Mulenga explained that the GRZ has given a mandate to ZCCM-IH to coordinate efforts to purchase the gold from artisanal miners and to also coordinate the gold trading business in Zambia.

The PS Mines also said GRZ stance is that all gold from Artisanal miners is bought through ZCCM-IH to Bank of Zambia to build strategic reserves for the country. The GRZ has declared gold as a Strategic Mineral meant to allow all citizens to benefit from its exploitation.

1.2 Development of small-Scale mining through cooperatives

GRZ has handed-over gold mining equipment worth 1.3 million Kwacha to three cooperatives aimed at scaling up gold production levels in Rufunsa, Vubwi and Lundazi.

ZCCM-IH CEO Mabvuto Chipata said the acquisition of equipment with support of the SADC Trade Related Facility reflects government's commitment in supporting growth of artisanal miners.

PS Commerce Mushuma Mulenga said government had assigned ZCCM-IH to secure the equipment and maintain it. GRZ has also mandated ZCCM-IH to establish gold trading centres, which allow the Artisanal Gold Miners **an opportunity to sale their gold at a competitive price.**

2. Blackmailers' outrageous comments and criminal behaviour

Gold miners in Rufunsa have boycotted trading with GRZ over its decision that ZCCM-IH will be the sole owner of the gold-mining equipment which was recently procured.

The miners have refused to sign a supply agreement with ZCCM-IH after raising concern over ownership of the equipment. Chimwetu Gold Mining Cooperative chairman, Emmanuel Tembo said "We are selling the alluvial gold to private buyers who include Tanzanian nationals among others and this is a loss of revenue on the part of Government" and added that "Government is losing out on revenue because we are trading our gold with private buyers and we will continue to do so as long as ZCCM-IH remains mute on our concerns."

3. An appropriate response to these unspeakable actions

It is only logical that ZCCM-IH, commissioned by GRZ, monitors and controls the operating equipment. It is strange that the miners of Rufunsa are reluctant to have the equipment controlled by ZCCM-IH in the general interest and bite the hand that feeds them. Why do they want to recover ownership and management of the mining equipment that has been made available for free to them? Would ZCCM-IH surveillance prevent illegal exploitation with the provided equipment ? One can assume so, given the reactions...

The blackmailers have absolutely no recognition of the efforts undertaken by GRZ and ZCCM-IH to develop small-scale mining. **While ZCCM-IH faces other challenges, our company provides serious and competent teams to structure the gold sector and bring technical skills to these ingrates while wasting time and money.** Worse, these blackmailers defy the GRZ and openly announce with impudence and without shame that they are acting illegally and defrauding the Zambian State. They threaten to continue their criminal activities ! **Not paying a tax to GRZ robs all Zambians of the benefits of the country's gold. Therefore, profiteers who plunder all Zambians as such Emmanuel Tembo and his gang should be punished as severely as possible.** Moreover the granting of gold licenses has generated much enthusiasm throughout the country. **The licenses of these infamous blackmailers must be revoked and attributed to other Zambians or honest cooperatives who wish to act not only for themselves but also in the general interest, particularly to strengthen Zambia's strategic reserves in the current financial context.**

Issued by :

Thierry CHARLES

on behalf of Euronext Minority Shareholders of ZCCM-IH

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zccm.ih.shareholders@gmail.com