

Saturday, Sinazongwe (24th June, 2023)



MWEETWA URGES MINES NOT TO SHUN STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES, GET USED TO SHARING INFORMATION

Southern Province Minister Cornelius Mweetwa has called for more transparency in the extractive industry.

Mr. Mweetwa said minerals are public assets of which decisions about their exploitation must be transparent, participatory and subject to informed scrutiny by civil society, communities and other stakeholders such traditional leadership.

He also stated that he was displeased that Sinazongwe mining companies shun the Sinazongwe Mining Indaba despite being invited to showcase the Corporate and Social Environment Responsibility - CSER and Environmental Mitigation efforts in the district.

He has since commended the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ) and other partners such as Centre for Trade Policy and Development - CTPD, Centre for Environment Justice - CEJ, Joint Country Programme - JCP, Diakonia, Zambia Land Alliance - ZLA, Family Development Initiatives- FDI and Publish What to Pay, for advocating for transparency and accountability in the management of mineral resources in Zambia especially in Sinazongwe and the Nation at large.

The Provincial Minister said Sinazongwe has more than four mining companies but that the district still faces issues of unemployment, increased poverty, pollutions, displacements, inequalities and low revenue collection by Government.

He said Zambia's energy and industrial activities have released enough carbon into the atmosphere to damage the climate.

"In view of the energy transition, appropriate technology should be found to ensure that communities in the mining areas can continue to thrive economically without damaging the environment," he said.

Mr. Mweetwa said Government wants to see an improved sharing of information between the mining companies and stakeholders, protection of citizens from any form of injustices resulting from mining.

"This platform should come up with resolutions that will support responsible mining and improve lives. As Government, we are committed in ensuring that the resolutions of this Indaba are implemented," he said.

Mr. Mweetwa said this in a speech delivered on his behalf by Southern Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Yolanta Mutyambe at the Fifth Sinazongwe District Mining Indaba held under the theme "Coal Mining amidst Energy Transition: What is the way forward for Sinazongwe."

Meanwhile, Council of Churches in Zambia - CCZ Board Vice President Rev. Juden Siachitema said current Governments world over are scared to move to environmentally friendly renewable energy because of the economic reasons.

And Centre for Environment Justice - CEJ Executive Director Maggie Mwape called for a balanced approach to the energy transition agenda and investments in the extractive sector.

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