



Invitation to roundtable discussion:

Diamond mining in Zimbabwe—
Do human rights abuses constitute a reason for exclusion
from the Kimberley Process?

In the Marange diamond fields of Zimbabwe, the exploration and smuggling of diamonds is accompanied by massive human rights violations. The Human Rights Watch report "Diamonds in the Rough" of June 2009 reveals how Zimbabwean soldiers in that area have brutalized miners, violated the rights of the local population and how high-ranking officers and party officials of Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF have enriched themselves.

The so-called "Kimberley Process" was initiated in 2003 against the background of the bloody wars in Angola, Sierra Leone and Liberia. This joint initiative of governments, diamond industry and civil society representatives seeks to exclude illegally produced diamonds from the world market. Zimbabwe is a member of the Kimberley Process. In July 2009, a KP review mission team assessed the implementation of the Kimberley Process in Zimbabwe. While the report of the mission has not been published yet, leading civil society organizations have already demanded that Zimbabwe's membership be temporarily suspended. This would result in a de facto ban on the international trade of Zimbabwean diamonds. The decision will be taken at the plenary meeting of the Kimberley Process in November 2009.

This pending decision raises far-ranging questions with regard to the political consequences for the situation in Zimbabwe and the future of the Kimberley Process. BICC (Bonn International Center for Conversion) / Fatal Transactions, Human Rights Watch and the Zimbabwe Europe Network (ZEN) would like to address these questions with experts in a roundtable discussion.

Date and Time: 24 September 2009, 10.00-12.00 a.m., snacks are offered afterwards

Venue: Landesvertretung Niedersachsen (Niedersachsen's federal state office), In den Ministergärten 10, 10117 Berlin

Address of welcome:

Marianne Heuwagen, Director Human Rights Watch Germany

Lena Guesnet, Coordinator of Fatal Transactions in Germany and Researcher at BICC

Discussants:

Alfred Brownell, Director of Green Advocates, NGO observer of the Kimberley Process

Dewa Mavhinga, Zimbabwean Researcher, Human Rights Watch

Farai Maguwu, Executive Director of the Center for Research and Development (CRD) in Mutare/Zimbabwe

Moderator: Susanne Baumann, Director Crisis Action Germany

The event takes place in English. Please confirm participation with berlin1@crisisaction.org, further questions and contacts to the organizers: guesnet@bicc.de