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UPDATE: Seven Communities Protest Against the Failure by Harmony Target Mine to Address Ongoing Community Concerns

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The Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA) Nyakallong Branch, along with several communities from the surrounding area, will be protesting against Harmony Target Mine. Having previously been denied opportunities to engage with the mine after the mine called the police to attack protesting community members, this time, we have mobilised neighbouring communities to join forces and demand accountability.

The communities of Virginia and Meloding will be marching to the Joel Shaft; Bronville, Hanipark, Thabong and Heinemann will be protesting at Masimong Harmony and Nyakallong community will continue their protest at Harmony Target Mine. This mobilisation follows Harmony Target Mine's use of violence against the Nyakallong community last week when they tried to silence the community's voices. The communities have come enmasse to demand accountability from the mine, which has consistently displayed arrogance towards the community.

Early 2021 due to the heavy rainfall, water from the mine, mixed with the sewage spillages that find their way into the dam, flooded people's houses. This water began flooding the houses of the residents who live in close proximity to the mine. So far, four senior citizens in Nyakallong have lost their lives because of respiratory illnesses and arthritis due to the environmental and health problems caused by the flooding Voelpan Tailings Dam. Harmony Target Mine has ignored this issue for too long and the community is suffering.

Those that are not dead are slowly but surely dying. Riverside Nyakallong is the home of asthma pipes, the young and the old are sick. This is in violation of Section 24 of the Constitution which states that everyone has a right to a non-harmful environment, and Harmony Target is clearly showing no remorse about the plight of the community.

A report produced by the Nyakallong branch in collaboration with the Benchmarks Foundation, observed that there were dissolved solids inside the water from Harmony Target Mine. The dissolved solids were getting into the pan from the rock waste facility and a canal from the mine operation. The samples in the lab results indicated a total dissolve solid to be 147 00 parts per million. This is extraordinarily higher than the 500 parts per million acceptable safe levels recommended by the World Health Organisation. The damage that Voelpan has caused within the community of Nyakallong is expandable.

The community's grievances have not changed; stop flooding homes and streets with the Voelpan Tailings Dam, repair the damaged houses and streets, and fair employment opportunities for the community.

Details of the protest:

Date: 03-05 July 2024

Locations: Joel Shaft, Masimong Harmony, and Harmony Target Mine.

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