



EXPLORATION OF HEAVY SANDS IN CHIBUTO

After environmental crimes, the Chinese mining company is accused of violating workers' human rights

- Chinese mining company Dingsheng Minerals, which mines heavy sands in Chibuto, Gaza province, is accused of flagrant human rights abuses. Company workers accuse management of ill-treatment and of not assisting in cases of accidents at work. According to a report by TV Midia Lab, shown on the 27th of May¹, a worker said he was abandoned by the company when he suffered an accident at the heavy sand extraction mine. "The company didn't help me at all," said the victim, who worked at Dingsheng Minerals for seven years.



¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBZ_05G9I58



O Another worker complains that he was unfairly dismissed after contracting a disease (measles), and claims that he did not receive any compensation for terminating his contract. There is also the case of a worker dissatisfied with the lack of medical care and salary payment since he had an accident at the workplace that made it impossible for him to return to his duties. The company's silence in the face of workers' grievances further underscores its lack of commitment to addressing human rights concerns.



The District Administrator of Chibuto, Sérgio Muiane, acknowledges the layoffs of workers but defends Dingsheng Minerals, stating that the majority were dismissed due to their involvement in theft from the company. However, the representative of the workers' union in Gaza, Francisco Cossa, says that the union's action is limited and there is no government involvement in holding the mining company accountable².

The situation in Chibuto exemplifies how an extractive industry company can worsen the living conditions of workers and local communities. Instead of contributing to the realization of the right to development, mining company Dingsheng Minerals is abusing workers' rights. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, a set of guidelines that establish the responsibilities of companies in respecting human rights³, have reparations as one of the fundamental pillars. This pillar maintains that all workers who have been victims of human rights abuses must have access to an effective mechanism of reparation for the harm suffered. This implies that companies must take responsibility for human rights abuses that occur in their operations, ensuring that affected workers receive adequate reparations.

Likewise, the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights state that the State has a crucial role in protecting its pop-

ulation against human rights abuses committed by companies that exploit natural resources. Regrettably, the Mozambican state has neglected this responsibility, allowing companies to operate without adequate supervision and regulation. The State must fulfill its role in supervising the activities of mining companies. Companies operating in this sector must also recognize their obligation to respect the human rights of affected communities and ensure that their operations have a positive impact on workers and local development.

In 2021 Dingsheng Minerals was also accused of violating environmental rights. The Government, through the Gaza Provincial Infrastructure Service, embargoed the illegal works carried out by the mining company⁴. These works included the construction of a road, a dock and warehouses for the disposal and storage of minerals from the heavy sands extracted in Chibuto. The embargo occurred due to the lack of a license, namely the DUAT (Right to Use and Benefit from Land), and the lack of an approved project. Furthermore, the extractive sector company was committing an environmental crime by destroying a primary dune on Chongoene Beach.

Dingsheng Minerals started its heavy sands extraction operations in 2020, in the Chibuto district, in an area of 10,000 hectares. In the future, the area should be expanded to 15,000 hectares, depending on the development's growth⁵.

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBZ_05G9I58

³ https://site-antigo.socioambiental.org/sites/blog.socioambiental.org/files/nsa/arquivos/conectas_principiosorientadoresuggie_mar20121.pdf

⁴ <https://evidencias.co.mz/2021/08/05/depois-de-cometer-crime-ambiental-dingsheng-minerals-continua-impune-e-tenta-viciar-processos-para-construir-uma-doca-no-lugar-onde-esta-previsto-um-porto/>


⁵ <https://opais.co.mz/dingsheng-minerals-inicia-exploracao-de-areias-pesadas-do-chibuto/>



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