

PRESS RELEASE / GROUPE FORREST INTERNATIONALS.A. (GFI)

Wavre, Lubumbashi, the 5th February 2013

Groupe Forrest International has become aware of a press release published by the NGOs FIDH, RAID and ACIDH on the 5th February 2013. This press release concerns the proceedings that the NGOs brought before the National Contact Point (NCP) of the OECD on the 5th April 2012 concerning the incidents that took place in the village of Kawama on the 24th November 2009. Groupe Forrest International is surprised that the NGOs react before even discovering the final position of the NCP, proceedings that they had submitted to the NCP themselves. It also regrets the tone of this press release and the outright attacks of the NGOs.

Groupe Forrest International deplores any situation or act of violence. Nevertheless, the Group was not at all responsible for the violence committed in November 2009. The event concerns operations to evacuate clandestine miners, decided by the Congolese authorities and driven by the DRC police forces in 2009. This type of operations is a policy that has been applied by the competent political authorities for many years on all the Katangese mining sites. The village of Kawama, invaded by several thousand miners in 2009, is located near the mine of Luiswishi. At the time, the mine was exploited by the company CMSK (Compagnie Minière du Sud Katanga), a joint venture between Entreprise Générale Malta Forrest and Gécamines.

Despite the fact that the company CMSK was resold to Gécamines in October 2012 and that it was no longer active at the Luiswishi mine, Groupe Forrest International took part actively and constructively in the work of the NCP, communicating to it all the data used and expressing its social commitment to the populations living there or conducting their activities there.

Based on the elements provided by the NGOs, the NCP did not wish to follow their requests and enunciate the responsibility of Groupe Forrest International in this case.

Groupe Forrest International was the first group of companies active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to adopt the principles of the EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) launched by Tony Blair and applies the principles decreed by the OECD, notably the social ones.

Groupe Forrest International pursues social actions carried out at Kawama, as it has done for over fifteen years. In 2013, it plans to follow on the activities concerning the maternity clinic that it has created in the village and the reconditioning of the drinking water supply, as well as the creation of a dispensary. These diverse activities fall within the social tradition of the company.

Groupe Forrest International and its subsidiaries will pursue their activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, providing employment to several thousand people and carrying out social and cultural actions, the quality and appropriateness of which is acknowledged by all the stakeholders in the field.

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