

# ETHIOPIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE LEGA DEMBI GOLD MINE

Coalition of NGOs for UPR – Ethiopia, In Support of Health-Focused,  
Effective Environmental Regulation of Mining (CHEERM)\*



\*CHEERM includes:

Development by Unity and Brotherly Action for the Future (DUBAAF), an Ethiopian NGO;

Girja Integrated Rural Development Association (GIRDA), an Ethiopian NGO;

Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) of Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law, an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC.

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THE LEGA DEMBI GOLD MINE IS LOCATED IN THE SHAKISO WOREDADA IN THE GUJI ZONE



# HUMAN COST

- Miscarriages
- Children born with physical and developmental disabilities

## REASONS FOR CONCERN

Lack of Transparency  
Lack of Independence  
Financial consideration

PRIOR UPR RECOMMENDATIONS  
SUPPORTED BY ETHIOPIA

NOT MET OR NOT SUFFICIENT

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**“Strengthen existing efforts to ensure a safe and healthy environment.”<sup>1</sup>**

*Recommended by Saudi Arabia, paragraph 155.157 (2014)*

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**“Address issues of environmental degradation and disaster management in order to ensure the protection of the environment.”<sup>2</sup>**

*Recommended by the Maldives, paragraph 155.158 (2014)*

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**“Strengthen the institutional framework . . . to respond adequately and efficiently to future challenges in areas of public health, education, culture, environment and state administration.”<sup>3</sup>**

*Recommended by Nicaragua<sup>3</sup>, paragraph 97.6 (2010)*

# **CEDAW'S CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS**

MARCH 2019

45. The Committee notes that the State party temporarily closed the Lega Dembi mine in the Oromia region, and is undertaking an assessment of its impacts. However, **it is concerned at the grave health, environmental and socio-economic impacts of the operation of the Lega Dembi mine on Guji rural women and their families.**

46. **The Committee recommends** that the State party **ensure full transparency and independence in the assessment process, publish and share the results with the Guji people; address the environmental and health damages; and provide adequate reparations and compensation to the victims.**

*CEDAW, Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Ethiopia, ¶¶ 45-46, 5 March 2019, UN Doc. CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8, (Advance unedited version) (emphasis added).*

## CHEERM RECOMMENDATIONS (Nos.1-3)

- 1. Conduct the environmental assessment** of the Lega Dembi mine in an **independent, impartial, and thorough** manner, following best practices for such studies.
- 2. Commit to complete transparency;** promptly make public the Lega Dembi assessment results, the data collected, the methodology, and all information as to the independence, impartiality and expertise of the assessment team.
- 3. Comply with the obligation of free, prior and informed consent,** so that the indigenous Guji people have a voice in deciding whether and under what conditions the Lega Dembi mine should be allowed to reopen.



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## CHEERM RECOMMENDATIONS (No. 4)

### 4. Allow resumption of mining at the Lega Dembi mine only if:

- a) the State can **ensure that the mine will operate safely**, without further harm to the environment or people's health;
- b) the State or the mining company **first remedies the existing environmental damage** caused by the mine, so that the water, soil and air are no longer contaminated; and
- c) the **victims are paid adequate reparations**, including compensation, health care, and, for the disabled children, access to school.

