

Time for Armenia to choose: Mining for Development or Systematic Plunder?

Many facts which bring us to conclude and affirm the following: "NO NEW MINES IN ARMENIA", until serious systematic and fundamental amendments are adopted.

YEREVAN, YEREVAN, ARMENIA, April 15, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It is indisputable that different aspects of the mountaintop mining industry, especially the production and processing of useful metal mining, cause irrevocable damage to nature and human health, thus differing essentially from other types of human economic activity. However, the

companies engaged in these activities have been insisting for a long time that so called "sustainable" mining operations cause almost no damage to the environment.



Now that such a statement is hard to substantiate they have begun using the term "responsible"

“

As a result, largest amount of the mining income flows into offshore companies, as well as to local officials and various international financial organizations hidden behind the offshore companies.

Armecofront

mining and the main idea of this is to disguise the real hazards and neutralize public criticism under the veil of economic growth, corporate profit and social programs. And all this is even more dangerous for countries like Armenia that have a small territory, population living under extremely difficult social conditions and corrupt government.

We all know very well that today the natural resources of the less developed countries are viewed as a "delicious slice" for more developed countries. The global mining "machine" and various international financial organizations using beautiful terms, promising words and in the name of international

standards continue to ruthlessly exploit the natural resources of the less developed countries, paying minimal taxes and fees, utilizing the useful minerals and then leaving the countries with many environmental and social issues. It is obvious that it would have been impossible to accomplish the above mentioned without the active participation and support of the high-ranking officials of the governing bodies in the less developed countries. The high-ranking officials do not waste any effort to rob the natural resources at a fast and unobstructed pace since a certain portion of profits reach them as well.

This is one of the main reasons for the continuous interest of different companies toward metal resources of Armenia, and continuously the discussions revolve around making the investments in this field more productive and attractive, and exploiting new metal mines and even outcroppings.

Once again we would like to remind the decision-makers at the governmental level in our country today that Armenia has a total area of 29.7 thousand square kilometers, where approximately 460 mines already have permission for exploitation, out of which 27 are metal mines, and additional 85 metal mines are currently in the study phase and waiting to be exploited. As a result, there are already about eight hundred million tons of tailings in 23 open and closed tailing dumps, which are saturated with heavy metals and other dangerous substances. At this rate, after 2-3 decades there will be hundreds of toxic and extremely dangerous tailing dumps in Armenia, which could be disastrous for the country and its people.

To all those “wise men” and executives of mining companies, who compare Armenia to Canada, Australia, USA, Sweden or Russia in order to prove the necessity of the development of the mining industry in Armenia, instead of engaging in demagoguery we advise you to open the world map and see the difference between Armenia and these countries in terms of area, density of population and biodiversity. In addition, we advise you to thoroughly research the laws, regulations, and taxation system of those countries, compare them to ours and only then speak about the necessity of exploiting new mines, make majestic announcements or try to appear as the saviors of the country ([see the “Mediamax.am’s” interview](#) with Howard Stevenson, President and CEO of Lydian International: “Success of Amulsar will eventually translate into the success of Armenia”).

Of course, the conditions for exploiting Armenia's metallic useful minerals are very attractive, as our so-called government has not only given 100% exploitation permission to foreign companies, mostly registered in offshore zones, to use the wealth that belongs to the people but have also created a legal and taxation system to make the mining companies feel at home. For the exploitation and production of the natural resources, granted by nature to us and the future generations, the taxation rates that have been set are no different than the taxation rates imposed in other areas of economy, when they should be much higher.

In Armenia, the mining companies are entirely exempt from paying fees for the tailings, waste dumps and minimal-ore bearing rocks. Even if these were taxed at the lowest rates, then each year a few 100 million euros will be collected in Armenia, which would make up a lot more money than all the current taxes and fees combined together paid by the mining companies annually. Also we have no special state fund set aside like in many other countries for accumulating very large sum of money from utilization of natural resources in order to compensate possible environmental damage and to protect the environment.

These are all undeniable facts which bring us to conclude and affirm the following: “NO NEW MINES IN ARMENIA”, until serious systematic and fundamental amendments are adopted and implemented

The announcements about creating job opportunities are also false and groundless. According to the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, in 2013 only 9,400 people worked in the fields of mining and open-mine operations, which makes up only 0.8% of the population employment in Armenia and accounts for only 4.5% of Armenia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It's worth mentioning that it is the largest 5-6 mining companies, operating for already quite a long time, that provide nearly 95% of the results mentioned above.

We urge the citizens of Armenia and our compatriots living abroad not to be indifferent towards this destructive process and realize that time has come for all of us to make a decision - either side with the exploitation of the mines for the sake of our country's “development” or systematic plunder of the natural resources belonging to us and the future generations.

The result depends on the position and action of every one of us.

P. S. We would like to bring everyone's attention to the following two documentaries:

Environmental documentary ["Armenia's breaking backbone"](#)

["Mining is a threat to Syunik"](#) ARTV clip

Levon Galstyan

Pan-Armenian Environmental Front (PAEF)

+37493534959

[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2015 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.