

Brussels, 11<sup>th</sup> May

## **Joint Letter**

### **Conflict minerals in the DRC: Dr. Mukwege and a group of 34 NGOs call on the European Parliament to make a difference!**

On 20<sup>th</sup> May, the European Parliament will vote on a proposed regulation to tackle the trade in conflict minerals. This trade in tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold (3TG) is fuelling conflict which has had devastating consequences for people in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Colombia.

We are gravely concerned that the regulation proposed by the European Commission does not envision any real change. It makes it merely optional for importers to source these minerals responsibly. The proposed voluntary scheme would cover just 0.05% of companies using these minerals within the EU. No companies would be legally obliged to check whether they are complicit in financing conflict or human rights abuses.

We regret that the proposal in April 2015 by the European Parliament's committee on International Trade on recommending binding "due diligence" requirements for approximately only 20 smelters and refiners based in Europe will not solve the problem. There must be legal requirements governing *all* companies that place these minerals on the European market—in any form, not just 3TG imported by a handful of smelters.

Extending the binding requirement to tackle the entire trade effectively – not just one part of it - would put the European Union at the forefront of global efforts to create more transparent, responsible and sustainable business practices. It would also better align Europe with OECD standards on responsible sourcing and complement existing binding rules adopted by the US and several African countries, including DRC.

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have an historic opportunity to help break the links between the minerals trade, conflict and human rights abuses—such as the large-scale sexual violence in eastern DRC, which Panzi Hospital is dedicated to healing. We call on them to ensure that in line with its fundamental principles, the European Parliament demands additional binding rules that put respect for human rights above narrow economic interests.

Yours,

Dr. Denis Mukwege, Sakharov Price 2014, Founder and Medical Director of Panzi Hospital  
Nicolas Van Nuffel, President of the European Network for Central Africa (EurAc)  
Christine Allen, Director of Policy at Christian Aid  
Patrick Alley, Co-founder and Director of Global Witness  
Gesine Ames, Coordinator of the Ecumenical Network Central Africa (OENZ)  
Guido Barbera, President of the Coordination of Popular Initiatives of International Solidarity (CIPSI)  
Francesca Boniotti, Executive Director of Avocats Sans Frontières (ASF)  
Oliver Buston, Director of the Walk Free Movement  
Gérard Callé, President of Forum réfugiés-Cosi  
Jérôme Chaplier, Coordinator of the European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ)  
María del Mar Magallón, Director of the Alboan Foundation  
Brigitte Dufour, Director of the International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR)  
John Edmundson, President of Agir Ensemble pour les Droits de l'Homme (AEDH)

Luis Enrique Eguren, Executive Director of Protection International (PI)  
Axelle Fischer, Secretary General of the Justice and Peace Commission Belgium  
Santiago Fischer, Coordinator of the Belgian Network Natural Resources (BNNR-RBRN)  
Mathieu Flammarion, President of Info Birmanie  
Bo Forsberg, Secretary General of Diakonia  
Peter Fuchs, Executive Director of PowerShift  
José Ignacio Garcia SJ, Director of the Jesuit European Social Center (JESC)  
Jan Gruiters, Director of PAX  
José Henríquez, Secretary General of Pax Christi International  
Karim Lahidji, President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)  
Niclas Lindgren, Director of the Swedish Pentecostal Relief and Development Organisation (PMU InterLife)  
Matteo Marastoni, Member of Rete Pace per il Congo  
Philippe Mayol, Head of Africa Department at CCFD-Terre Solidaire  
Iverna McGowan, Acting Director and Director of Programmes of Amnesty International's European Institutions Office  
Eugenio Melandri, President of Ass. Chiama l'Africa  
Bernd Nilles, Secretary General of the International Alliance of Catholic Development Agencies (CIDSE)  
Martien Schotsmans, Director of RCN Justice & Démocratie  
Bernard Thibaud, Secretary General of Secours Catholique/Caritas France  
Bogdan Vanden Berghe, Director of the Coalition of the Flemish North-South Movement (11.11.11)  
Sebastiaan van der Zwaan, Director of Justice and Peace Netherlands  
Arnaud Zacharie, Secretary General of the Center of National Development Cooperation (CNCD-11.11.11)  
Marie-Bernadette Zubatse, Director of FONCABA

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