



RSADO FOREIGN MISSION

Advocating for the Rights and Dignity of the Red Sea Afar in the Horn of Africa

Human Rights Watch alleges Canadian mining company used forced labour at mine in African ‘pariah state’

Report raises serious concern about the current and future state of mining inside Eritrea

Ottawa, ON – Jan 17, 2013 - Vancouver-based NevSun Resources is facing serious allegations that it exploited forced labour at its gold-copper mine in Bisha, a small town inside the African pariah state of Eritrea.

A new report by the non-profit Human Rights Watch (HRW) accuses NevSun of turning a blind eye to the actions of one of its local contractors, Segen Construction, who hired employees from within Eritrea’s National Service; a conscription program that young Eritreans are required to serve in for years at a time with little or no pay.

The damning accusations are contained in [Hear No Evil: Forced Labour and Corporate Responsibility in Eritrea’s Mining Sector](#), a HRW report that details the story of how a Canadian mining company came to willfully ignore abuses to the basic human rights of local residents it claims to help.

According to interviews HRW conducted with former Bisha mine employees, the conscripts were: **forced to work 12-hour days, six days a week (for as little as \$30 US a day); poorly fed; under-nourished; and lived in sub-standard housing with no access to toilets.** One interviewee said that he was imprisoned for four months after he left to attend a funeral of a grandparent, which Segen had denied him permission to attend.

Another told HRW that the workers at the Bisha mine lived **“a dehumanized, neglected and diminished way of life.”**

“This report offers a crack in the door, allowing the world a disturbing yet valuable peek at the kind of oppressive practices that Eritrea regularly inflicts on its citizens” says Ahmed Mohammed, Head of the RSADO Foreign Mission in Canada. “We applaud Human Rights Watch and its efforts to shine a much-needed light on the practices of this brutal, unyielding dictatorship.”



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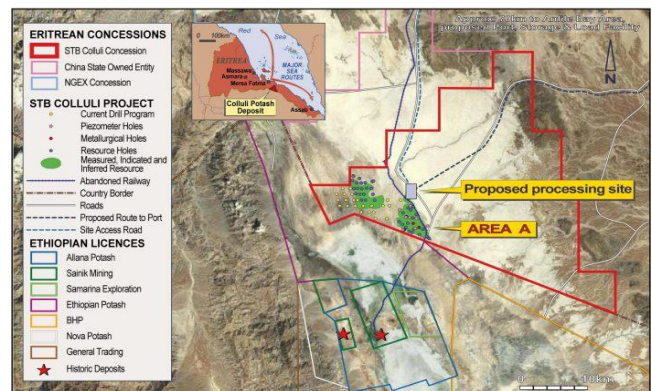
As the international advocate for the Red Sea Afar people in the Horn of Africa, the RSADO Foreign Mission condemns the deplorable practices of NevSun inside Eritrea, and urges it to do the right thing and halt its Bisha operation until it can be assured that it is respecting international accords on human rights.

Mohammed says he is also concerned over a new potash mining operation planned by an Australian company in the Culluli region of Eritrea, traditional home to the historic Red Sea Afar people. This mining operation, planned to begin production in 2016, is expected to extract in excess of 4 million tones of potash a year – and is estimated to have a life span of 50 years.

The HRW report raised concern about the potential use of forced labour at the Culluli operation. The RSADO Foreign Mission shares these concerns, and is also concerned about the impact the massive operation will have on the nomadic Afar, who have lived on this land for more than 2,000 years.

“The Eritrean government under President Isais Afwerki, is responsible for grave human rights crimes against Ethnic Afar citizens which include mass killings, rapes, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, torture and forced labor. By partnering with this regime, Canada’s NevSun and Australia’s South Boulder are complicit in these crimes and will be made to account for their conduct inside Eritrea on an international level.”

South Boulder Mines Limited of AUSTRALIA In Collulli ,Dankalia



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRorNspk9hY&feature=player_embedded#!

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