

LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Environmental Rights Programme
4th Floor Heerengracht Building
87 De Korte Street (corner Melle)
Braamfontein, 2001

Tel (011) 339 1960
Fax (011) 339 2665
Web www.lhr.org.za

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Delivered by email

ATTN: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

CC: Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne
Minister of Trade
Francois-Philippe.Champagne@parl.gc.ca

Dear Sirs:

RE: CANADIAN OMBUDSPERSON FOR THE EXTRACTIVE SECTOR

1. We write to express our support for the creation of an independent ombudsperson office in Canada to, *inter alia*, investigate complaints related to Canadian extractive companies operating in South Africa and facilitate mediation between parties where appropriate.
2. Lawyers for Human Rights ("LHR") is an independent human rights organisation with a 38-year track record of human rights activism and public interest litigation in South Africa. LHR provides free legal services to vulnerable and indigent individuals and communities, who are victims of rights violations. This work includes matters concerning the impact of the extractive industry on the environmental and socio-economic rights of affected communities.
3. South Africa is increasingly home to junior Canadian exploration and mining concerns, in particular. LHR believes that mining-affected communities would benefit from an independent oversight mechanism such as the proposed Canadian ombudsperson office, as well as the commitment to public transparency that the relevant proposed legislation reflects. In a jurisdiction like South Africa, where the Department of Minerals and Resources is charged with both regulating and promoting the interests of the mining industry, such an office could play a vital role in protecting the rights of mining-affected communities. Long term, this will help create more stable and predictable operating environments for Canadian mining companies doing business here, and encourage the recognition and reward of responsible business practices.

Yours faithfully,



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Per: Michael Clements

Liesl Muller LLB (UP), Marilyn Budow BA(Hons)(UCT) PGCE (London) LLB (WITS); Wayne Ncube LLB (NMMU) LLM (Wits); Kayan Leung LLB (UNISA)