



Greetings, esteemed ambassadors and colleagues. I represent the Mining Working Group at the United Nations - a coalition of NGOs with majority faith-based constituencies, in a total of 27 mining countries; our full paper has been submitted to the PGA office.

Our work concerns both water and energy. A sustainable energy agenda must clearly acknowledge that policies related to extractive industries are necessarily decisions on water. And let us be clear: unlike agricultural use, water “used” by extractive industries is removed from the ecological water cycle - it often requires risky permanent containment whether due to intense chemical pollution or radioactive contamination.

We insist on the need and right for people to participate - as rights-holders, as solution holders, and as stewards over corporate interests in deliberations and implementations on water and energy.

Our members report extractive industry takeovers of freshwater lakes and vital ecosystems; rivers sold to the highest bidder for profit rather than public good; government agreements with international companies for hydraulic fracturing without consultation with the people; adverse impacts on indigenous peoples that violate rights and increase poverty; and local communities in constant resistance to corporate takeover of the community’s scarce water sources.

When Water is a commodity industry, controlled by a corporate elite, it leaves many people and communities around the globe with little information about, public control over, or access to clean water for life and livelihood.

Will the new development agenda address the root causes of these problems, or entrench them? Our answer is a rights-based litmus test for a transformative development agenda.

- Shift from commodification and privatization of water to a human rights-based approach, promoting the global commons, inter-generational equity and the sustainability of our planet.
- Measure Resource allocation in terms of economic, social and cultural rights and ecological sustainability criteria.

- Prioritize water for human consumption, food production, protection of watersheds, care of vital ecosystems – rather than for industrial consumption or unsustainable energy production.
- Focus on root causes of global energy and water issues, including inequitable use, overconsumption, and contamination.

Thank you.

Delivered by

Grove Harris, Representative to the United Nations for the Temple of Understanding

For the Mining Working Group at the UN

The NGO Mining Working Group (MWG) at the United Nations is a coalition of NGOs with constituencies in a total of 27 mining countries. In partnership with our members and affected local communities, we advocate at and through the UN for human and environmental rights related to extractive industries. The MWG addresses unjust and unsustainable extractive practices and policies through the lens of the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples and Earth's carrying capacity.

Member Organizations Submitting this Position

Congregation of the Mission

Franciscans International

General Board of Global Ministries, the United Methodist Church

International Presentation Association

Loretto Community

Medical Mission Sisters

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

Sisters of Mercy, Mercy International Association

Temple of Understanding

UNANIMA International

VIVAT International