



**global witness**

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Mr. Alan Doss  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General  
U.N. Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo  
Kinshasa, DRC

5 February 2009

Dear Mr. Doss,

Thank you for your letter of 12 January 2009. We very much appreciate your support for Global Witness's work on natural resources and conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and are keen to work with MONUC on this issue.

We also recognise the challenges of peacekeeping in eastern DRC, particularly at a time when the joint military operations by Congolese and Rwandan troops have thrown the region into a renewed state of political flux. Whatever the impact of this development, however, DRC's recent history suggests that natural resource exploitation and security will continue to be intermeshed for many years to come. This link therefore needs to be addressed in the search for long-term solutions to the conflict.

As you point out, Security Council resolution 1856 establishes protection of civilians as MONUC's priority. We believe that this is entirely appropriate and necessary. We believe, moreover, that this underscores the need for MONUC to take action to suppress the trade in minerals that finance the armed groups. As the December 2008 Group of Experts report makes clear and resolution 1856 acknowledges, the finances derived from the mineral trade are what sustain the armed groups and their capacity to commit abuses against the civilian population.

Indeed, this is why the Security Council has called on MONUC to "use its monitoring and inspection capacities to curtail the provision of support to illegal armed groups derived from illicit trade in natural resources." The resolution makes it clear that the monitoring and inspection – which you mentioned in your letter – are a precursor to action, rather than ends in themselves. The resolution "authorizes MONUC to use all necessary means" to carry out this task. By invoking Chapter VII powers to break the links between support for illegal armed groups and illicit trade in natural resources, the Security Council has made this an urgent priority.

We would be very grateful for any details you can share on how MONUC intends to execute this aspect of its mandate. We remain willing to contribute information and ideas on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Alley  
Director