



**global witness**

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## **Global Witness responds to HAGL's claims over inaccuracy of Rubber Barons report**

Global Witness understands that Hoang Anh Gia Lai (HAGL) CEO Doan Nguyen Duc held a press conference during which the company contested evidence in Global Witness' report 'Rubber Barons'. This report highlights how the company's rubber plantations in Cambodia and Laos are violating laws and contributing to environmental and human rights abuses.

Global Witness stands by all of its assertions and evidence. The organisation has documented systemic legal violations by HAGL's rubber plantations in both Cambodia and Laos during 2012. The extensive evidence presented in 'Rubber Barons' exposes how HAGL has acquired vast amounts of land, almost five times the maximum legal size limit in Cambodia, and how the company has openly ignored legal environmental and social safeguards, devastating local livelihoods and intact forests in the process.

"Instead of addressing the evidence in the report and improving the situation for the hundreds of affected peoples on the ground, HAGL seems more concerned with protecting its public image. What is the company going to do to bring a stop to the destruction it is responsible for?" said Megan MacInnes, Head of the Land campaign at Global Witness.

Global Witness met with HAGL representatives on August 22 2012 in Pleiku, Vietnam, to present this evidence and recommend steps the company should take to remedy these problems. Mr. Duc now denies that this meeting ever took place, which is untrue. The meeting was followed by several email exchanges over a number of weeks, during which the company stated it was not willing to implement these recommendations. In March 2013 Global Witness wrote to HAGL asking for an update on what action the company had taken since August 2012, but the company declined to answer.

Global Witness is in dialogue with Mr. Duc and his colleagues about meeting again in Pleiku in June 2013. Whilst Global Witness welcomes the invitation from the company to visit their rubber plantations, we have already visited these projects a number of times during 2012. At this stage, we therefore believe it would be more productive to sit down with the company directly to discuss the findings of our research and what action can be taken to address the problems.

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Notes to editors:

- The full report and film can be found at [www.globalwitness.org/rubberbarons](http://www.globalwitness.org/rubberbarons)