

English

Statement of the Togolese Diaspora in Germany against the uncontrolled exploitation of the Togolese phosphate, limestone and clinker mines.

The CDDA (Committee for Democracy and Development in Africa), ANDA e.V. Association Nature and Development in Africa and Albatros (German-Togolese Organization for Medical Aid) join you today in condemning the irresponsible behavior of our political leaders that is damaging our environment, our ecosystem and ultimately our lives.

As in many African countries, the political course in Togo leaves no room for a new climatic, economic and democratic perspective. The ecological and social development is worrying. With the re-election of Faure Gnassingbé for a fourth term after the presidential elections of February 22, 2020, the hopes of Togolese youth have collapsed.

What does this support have to do with our demo?

No democracy is built with an autocratic, repressive and corrupt regime.

Speaking of corruption, mineral resource exploitation companies in Togo, including HeidelbergCement, benefit from the generosity of the Gnassingbé system to the detriment of the population and the degradation of the environment and the impoverishment of the population. HeidelbergCement has been present in Togo since 1984 with companies such as CIMTOGO and since 2014 with its SCANTOGO subsidiary in the south of Togo. Its main activity is the extraction of lime. HeidelbergCement is a major investor in Togo and has a big impact on the economy. The way it treats landowners and its close relationship with the president lead us to say that HeidelbergCement is a supporter of the dictatorship that has existed in Togo for 50 years. The role of an investor in its host country is to support the development of roads, schools, training centers, hospitals and businesses.

But what has HeidelbergCement been doing since its foundation with its subsidiary SCANTOGO? HeidelbergCement not only supports the presidency, but also pollutes the environment. SCANTOGO has invested \$250 million in clinker production and a cement plant. Activities such as lime and phosphate mining are harmful to people, animals and nature.

For the population, working conditions as well as low wages, partial unemployment, foreign labor, poverty, chronic diseases, deaths, rural exodus and loss of agriculture, etc.

For animals, the loss of endangered species and contamination by toxic products of other species such as B. fisheries and consequent loss of fisheries.

For nature, the disruption of the marine ecosystem, encroachment into the sea that swallows villages, lack of drinking water, air pollution, etc.

SCANTOGO and WACEM (West Africa Cement) agreed to spend \$543,000 to renovate a hospital. Renovation work officially began in early March, but no work has been seen to date.

Over time, agricultural land was taken from the owners without consulting them. Some of them were compensated by SCANTOGO for an insignificant amount. Others were not compensated at all.

Legal proceedings have been initiated by the owners. However, there is no hope because the administration of justice is corrupt. The landowners have even been threatened to withdraw their claims and not to demonstrate against SCANTOGO.

Talks with representatives of the owners are refused by SCANTOGO.

SCANTOGO is not based on a peaceful atmosphere, but on a divide and conquer strategy.

We want to promote climate justice by improving the use of Togolese minerals. We call on the international and national public to respond to the needs of the Togolese people and promote the creation of the Togolese city without the current 50-year-old government.

I cannot end this speech without recalling the recent cases of oil import scandals with allegations of embezzlement of 764 million euros by Francis Adjakli and his son Fabrice Adjakli, discovered in June 2020 by the newspaper of the bimonthly investigation The Alternative, whose publication has since been suspended

French billionaire Vincent Bolloré recently pleaded guilty to a serious corruption case in Guinea and Togo. His group paid Faure Gnassingbé, president of Togo, €370,000 in communications expenses to help him win the presidential election and give French billionaire contracts and tax breaks.

Examples of scandals in Togo are legion and freedom of expression is restricted.

We therefore call on HeidelbergCement to assume its responsibility by distancing itself from the prevailing system in Togo and taking a responsible approach to climate change, which is impoverishing and killing the already impoverished population.

Together for a better world

Heidelberg, 06.05.2021,

The Togolese Diaspora in Germany r

Thank you