

Press release

Possible failure of Tenke Fungurume Mining's tailings storage facility: communities must not be asked to flee a danger created by the company

Kolwezi, October 14, 2026

We, national and international civil society organizations, are issuing a public alert over the announced risk of failure of one of Tenke Fungurume Mining's (TFM) tailings storage facilities, TSF 5 or TSF 3, located in Kibalasani. **We demand that TFM secure its facility immediately, with a public schedule of works, instead of asking communities to flee once it sees the polluted water coming, and that the Government compel it to do so through an independent inspection and sanctions in the event of non-compliance.**

The facts

On September 23, 2026, at the local church of the 30ème Communauté Pentecôtiste au Congo in Manomapia, and again on September 29, 2026, at a public meeting, TFM staff informed the communities of Manomapia that its facility could give way at any moment at the start of the rainy season. They asked them to flee if that happened. A failure would cause lasting contamination of the soils, rivers, groundwater, and farmland on which thousands of people depend, with serious risks to health, crops, and livelihoods.

The latest episode of a failing environmental policy

Several NGO reports have already documented air, water, and soil pollution in the areas surrounding TFM's mining operations, as well as deep flaws in risk management, impact mitigation, and the remediation of damage. The most recent are the report by the [Environmental Investigation Agency and PremiCongo](#), and that of the Consortium Mazingira Pour Tous on [air pollution in Fungurume](#). A company that has not demonstrated its capacity to manage and remediate its past impacts cannot simply ask communities to flee the next one.

An unacceptable response

The facility is TFM infrastructure: its stability, monitoring, and maintenance are the company's sole responsibility. Fleeing protects neither the soil nor the water, causes families to lose their homes and fields, and is beyond the reach of children, the sick, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Evacuation is the last resort of a prevention system, not a strategy. This position contradicts the operator's obligation to prevent, mitigate, and remedy its impacts, as set out in

the Mining Code and Mining Regulations, the impact assessment, and the environmental and social management plan.

The State's responsibility

The Ministries of Mines and of the Environment, the DPEM, and provincial authorities have a duty to monitor, inspect, and sanction, in accordance with Article 53 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to a healthy environment. Why have the failures already documented not led to effective corrective action, sanctions, and remediation?

In light of this alarming information, we call on:

TFM to:

1. Withdraw the instruction to flee as its main response, and publish the technical report on the condition of the facility and the emergency plan;
2. Begin, without delay and with a public schedule, securing the facility or draining it in a controlled manner;
3. Install, at its own expense and together with communities, an early warning system, evacuation sites, and an alternative supply of drinking water and other means of subsistence;
4. Guarantee care for displaced people and full reparation in the event of damage;
5. Respond publicly to NGO reports and account for the measures taken to remedy past pollution, including the installation of sensors to put an end to SO₂ pollution.

The Government to:

1. Send an independent inspection mission without delay and commission an environmental audit covering the facility and past pollution;
2. Publish the findings, impose corrective measures, and sanction any breach;
3. Involve civil society and communities in monitoring risk management.

Civil society remains mobilized and will use all legal means, including legal action, to defend communities' right to health, water, land, and a healthy environment.

It is not for communities to flee the danger created by the company. It is for the company to eliminate it, and for the State to compel it to do so.

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Signatory organizations

- Action pour la Défense des Droits Humains (ADDH)
- Action pour le développement intégral et durable (ADID)
- Centre d'Aide Juridico-Judiciaire (CAJJ)
- Initiative Bonne Gouvernance des Ressources Naturelles au Kivu (IBGRN/K)
- Initiative pour la Bonne Gouvernance et les Droits Humains (IBGDH)
- Protection des Ecorégions des Miombo au Congo (PremiCongo)
- Sentinelle des Ressources Naturelles (Sentinelle)
- Rights & Accountability in Development (RAID)
- Observatoire Africain des Ressources Naturelles (Afrewatch)
- Consortium Mazingira Pour Tous
- Ligue pour la Transparence dans le Secteur Extractif (LITRASE)
- Centre Congolais pour le Droit du Développement Durable (CODED)
- Justice pour tous (JPT)
- Resource Matters
- Collectif Simama Congo
- Observatoire d'Études et d'Appui à la Responsabilité Sociale et Environnementale (OEARSE)