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## **IndustriALL Global Union calls on Firestone Diamond plc to stop violations of trade union rights at Lihobong Mining Development Company in Lesotho**

Dear Mr Bosma,

I am writing this letter to you as the General Secretary of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industriall-union.org), which represents more than fifty million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors throughout the world, including Lesotho, to call on Firestone Diamonds plc to guarantee the full respect of fundamental labour rights at its operation, Lihobong Mining Development Company, in Lesotho. Please note that the Independent and Democratic Union of Lesotho is one of the affiliates of IndustriALL Global Union.

IndustriALL Global Union is appalled to learn about the violation of trade union and workers' rights at your Lihobong Mining Development Company in Lesotho, much against the country's labour laws and regulations. The actions by the company to actively deny access to a legitimately constituted trade union in Lesotho, in accordance with the country's labour laws and regulations, is in violation of Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, and Convention 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining of the International Labour Organization (ILO). The denial of these rights and freedoms, which the government of Lesotho has ratified, is a violation of the [ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work](http://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/iloorg/1998/0/1998001.pdf).

The insistence by your company on 50+1% membership before entering the company premises is a sign of contempt by your company to an order of compliance by the Labour Commissioner from 14th December 2018.

Additionally, the violation of these ILO conventions at your Lihobong Mining Development Company (LMDC) manifest in the daily lives of diamond mineworkers in Lesotho in the following ways, to mention but a few:

- Fixed term contracts employment of more than three years
- Late payments and underpayment of workers
- The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) not provided regularly
- The abuse of Exemption (section 119 of the Labour Code Order of 1992)

- Oral contracts that are terminable upon the discretion of the employer and the headman constituting unfair dismissals according to Lesotho's labour legislation regime
- Lay-off of workers without consultations
- Refusal by the company to grant annual leave to workers
- Non recognition of sick leave and refusal to pay sick leaves by employer in terms section 1, 2, 3 of the code

Therefore, I urge you to ensure that Liqhobong Mining Development Company respects and upholds the laws of the country, and that the company desists from its anti-union behaviour, allows access to the trade union and respects workers' rights.

Sincerely yours,



Valter Sanches  
General Secretary