



## **PAMOJA CRITICAL MINERALS ALLIANCE LAUNCH CONFERENCE**

**Harare, Zimbabwe  
26 February 2026**

### **DECLARATION**

#### **A DEFINING MOMENT FOR AFRICA**

We, grassroots activists, Indigenous and community leaders, disability rights advocates, trade unionists, and representatives of faith-based, women's, youth, and civil society organisations from across Africa, gather at a decisive moment in history. Africa stands at the centre of the global energy transition. The continent holds a significant share of the world's cobalt, lithium, manganese, graphite, platinum-group metals, rare-earth elements, copper, and bauxite - minerals essential for modern technologies, clean energy solutions, and national security, and central to industries such as electronics, defence, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure.

Africa, despite ongoing efforts, continues to primarily export raw ores and confronts significant challenges in value addition. Its exports predominantly consist of unprocessed minerals, which have historically constrained employment growth, impeded industrial development, and increased vulnerability to global commodity price fluctuations. Issues such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment remain persistent, with over 600 million Africans lacking access to electricity.

#### **THE CRISIS OF GREEN EXTRACTIVISM**

Across the continent, expanded mining operations are driving forced removals, unplanned resettlement, and the destruction of biodiversity and water systems. Agricultural livelihoods are disrupted. Cultural heritage is eroded. Environmental safeguards are weakened. Labour protections are undermined.

Corporations operating in mining value chains often benefit from nondisclosure agreements and fiscal incentives tied to mineral resources. Corruption, including illicit trade and illicit financial flows, remains prevalent. Governments frequently prioritise investor interests over citizens' rights, neglecting social and environmental safeguards. Women, youth, and persons with disabilities disproportionately bear the burdens of extraction activities while being marginalised from decision-making processes and from access to benefits.

Across our countries, we are concerned about the shrinking of civic space and the barriers faced by civil society organisations and human and environmental rights defenders, particularly in the context of extractive governance and the energy transition.

This model entrenches the structural inequalities created by decades of extractivism and deepens Africa's resource paradox - allowing immense mineral wealth to be extracted. At the same time, communities remain impoverished and national development aspirations are systematically undermined.

#### **OUR PRINCIPLES AND DEMANDS**

We therefore demand:

1. *Equitable Resource-Based Industrialisation:* African governments must decisively break from the enclave extractive model and commit to transformative, resource-based industrialisation anchored in the African Union's African Mining Vision and the Africa Green Minerals Strategy. Africa's minerals must no longer leave the continent in raw form while jobs, technology, and profits accrue elsewhere. Instead, mineral wealth must drive large-scale beneficiation, value addition, technology transfer, decent work, and genuine structural transformation - from extraction to processing, advanced manufacturing, innovation, and green industrial ecosystems. This requires coordinated regional processing hubs, expanded smelting and refining capacity, battery storage manufacturing, renewable energy technologies, and electronics production that position Africa not merely as a supplier of raw materials, but as a competitive industrial power in the global energy transition.



2. *Self-Determination and the Right to Say No:* In line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, mineral extraction must be unequivocally grounded in international human rights law and the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Communities are not passive stakeholders in projects imposed upon them — they are rights-holders with inherent sovereignty over their lands, resources, and futures. The Right to Say No is not symbolic or negotiable; it is an inalienable expression of self-determination. Any mining activity undertaken without genuine consent, full transparency, and meaningful participation constitutes a violation of human rights and must not proceed. Governments and corporations alike must be held accountable to uphold this standard without exception.
3. *Protection of Indigenous Peoples and Communities:* Forced displacement must end immediately. Ancestral lands, cultural heritage, and livelihoods must be protected without compromise, and benefit-sharing arrangements must be transparent, enforceable, and truly equitable.
4. *Universal Access to Clean, Affordable and Accessible Energy:* Electrification must be rapidly scaled up, placing frontline and underserved communities first. Clean cooking and renewable energy solutions must eliminate preventable health harms and dismantle gendered energy burdens - because universal access to safe, affordable energy is a fundamental human right.
5. *Labour Justice and Social Protection:* Workers must be guaranteed safe and dignified working conditions, full collective bargaining rights, robust disaster risk protection, and comprehensive social security. Labour exploitation, unsafe workplaces, and the erosion of workers' rights have no place in Africa's development or energy transition.
6. *Inclusion and Equality:* Inclusion and Equality should be prioritised, ensuring that women, young people, and persons with disabilities are central to mineral and energy governance, employment, and benefit-sharing. Exclusion constitutes injustice, and substantive participation, equal opportunities, and equitable access to benefits are indispensable principles for a just transition.
7. *Tax Justice, Accountability and Transparency:* Africa's mineral wealth must translate into public revenue that drives development - not profit shifting, tax holidays, or weakened fiscal regimes that drain national resources.
8. *Environmental Stewardship and Climate Justice:* Climate action must protect biodiversity and water systems, safeguard food security, and ensure that climate finance strengthens local processing capacity and delivers direct benefits to affected communities.
9. *Continental Policy Alignment, Coordination and Geopolitics:* Aligned with continental integration, regional cooperation, and the evolving geopolitics of critical minerals, we call for harmonised mining codes and fiscal regimes, coordinated royalty systems, common environmental and social standards, joint negotiation platforms for strategic minerals, and cross-border infrastructure planning. We further urge strengthened diplomatic coordination to prevent fragmented national approaches to the value addition of critical minerals, which weaken the collective bargaining power of producer countries in an increasingly competitive global landscape.
10. *Intergenerational Equity and Sovereign Wealth:* We emphatically call for a clear intergenerational compact. Africa's mineral wealth must not be depleted for short-term gain but safeguarded and invested as sovereign wealth to secure lasting prosperity for future generations.
11. *Shrinking Civic Space:* In the face of rapidly shrinking civic space, we firmly assert that the rights to organise, assemble, and associate are non-negotiable foundations of democratic governance, accountability, and inclusive development. Just, inclusive, and human rights-based energy transitions - consistent with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights - cannot exist without these freedoms. We demand that governments uphold and corporations fully respect these rights in accordance with national laws, international and regional human rights laws, standards and mechanisms.

## **AFRICA FIRST: A CALL FOR UNITY AND SOLIDARITY**

In uncompromising solidarity, we pledge to build and mobilise a powerful, people-driven movement for social justice - one that decisively reclaims Africa's minerals for the public good and ensures they serve, first and foremost, the collective interests, dignity, sovereignty, and future of our continent.

**Together, We Stand United: Pamoja!**



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