

in the midst of a series of violent attacks on its property, and the outbreak of a more-generalized rebellion.

A second pathway is conflict stemming from a rapid influx of workers – including with it competing ethnic groups, new diseases, and prostitution. The Panguna project, for example, employed 4,300 workers, largely not from Bougainville²⁴. This benefiting of ‘foreigners’ at the expense of locals may have exacerbated secessionist tensions on the island, geographically part of the Solomon Islands though governed by New Guinea.

A third is the unanticipated consequences of new infrastructure – roads and electricity, for example – on the environmental sources of livelihoods. In the Maya Biosphere Reserve in northern Guatemala, it was reported that the expansion of an oilfield and construction of a pipeline has contributed to an influx of colonists and an increase in slash and burn agriculture in the region²⁵. According to the World Wildlife Fund, building roads into an intact forest can usher behind it an influx of alien plants and animals²⁶.

Mining can cause conflict as a result of the means used to secure mining assets and personnel in the face of an unstable social environment. For example, it was alleged that Planning Alliance, a private security firm, was hired by the South African company Goldfields Ghana to relocate more than 20,000 people in western Ghana. Goldfields was accused of levelling houses and schools, and forbidding the cultivation of fields, even where communities refused to accept the relocation terms proposed. One source reports that as a result, violent confrontations broke out, and people were killed²⁷.

Natural resource extraction can finance – whether directly or indirectly – the repressive efforts of one group against another.

In 1999, it was alleged that South African "mining tycoon" Billy Rautenbach was bankrolling the Kabila government's side in the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rautenbach was accused by the South African government of siphoning profits from exploitation of Congolese cobalt and copper mining to reimburse the Mugabe government for Zimbabwe's involvement in the Congo war²⁸.

Though not a mining case, the example of allegations against Talisman Energy in the Sudan are illustrative. It is alleged that the oil company is directly complicit in the conflict, by letting government forces use the company's airstrip from which to launch

²⁴ Ross. Ibid.

²⁵ Rosenfeld-Sweeting, A. and A. Clarke. p. 24

²⁶ Mineral Policy Institute. Foreign Investment in the Asia-Pacific Mining Sector. Draft Report. (Gland: WWF International, 1999) p.40.

²⁷ See "Memorandum Submitted To The Special Rapporteur On The Use Of Mercenaries Of The Human Rights Commission Of The United Nations", 2000.

<http://www.miningwatch.ca/documents/Memorandum-final.pdf>

²⁸ Powell, I. 'Rautenbach's Congo War Role behind Fraud Squad Raid'. Daily Mail and Guardian. Johannesburg: November 26, 1999. <http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/99nov2/26nov-rautenbach.html>.