
[The truth about Rio Tinto](#)

At a meeting held last February in Johannesburg, South Africa, a group of trade unionists from 14 countries announced the launch of an international campaign against the international mining company Rio Tinto. During the meeting Bob Hawke, former Australian Prime Minister, accused the company of “monumental hypocrisy”. Meanwhile, 51 Members of the House of Commons, in London, supported a motion that “condemns the activities of Rio Tinto Corporation . . . probably the most uncaring and ruthless company in the world judged by its appalling record of human rights violations, community destruction, environmental damage and disregard for the lives of indigenous peoples.”

A report titled “Undermined”, prepared by OXFAM-Australia, documents the loss of land and income, forced evictions by the military, arbitrary arrests, pollution and social upheaval suffered by the Indonesian communities affected by PT KEM, in East Kalimantan, and PT Freeport in West Papua. Both companies are owned -90% and 11,8% respectively- by Rio Tinto (see WRM Bulletins 5 and 8).

As informed in WRM Bulletin nr. 10, a group of Dayaks recently toured Australia seeking support for their struggle for land rights and compensation for the social and environmental damage caused by Australian-based mining companies, among which Rio Tinto.

Source: Down to Earth 37, May 1998