

January 13, 2016

Henrik Slotte
United Nations Environment Programme
Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch
International Environment House
11-15 Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva
Switzerland

Dear Mr. Slotte,

Last year, we wrote an email to UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner about the need for UNEP to take the lead in calling for global review and regulations of mining tailings dams' safety.

We understand from his office's response on October 29, 2015 that you are conducting a review of current guidance and best practices on this topic.

While we are pleased to see that the agency is responding to these preventable tragedies, given the extent of damage from these multiple tailing breaches, it must do far more. As such, **we urge UNEP to convene a transparent, multi-stakeholder process for a global review of existing tailings dams and standards**; a process that collects input from representatives from industry, civil society, and representatives of impacted communities, as well as in-person meetings, forums or conferences.

With thousands of mine dams posing a risk to the environment and communities in over a hundred countries across the planet, tailings dam safety is truly a global problem that demands leadership from UNEP. The Samarco mine disaster, which flooded a town in Brazil with toxic waste and reportedly led to 13 fatalities, highlights the urgent need for substantive action.

We would most welcome an opportunity to discuss this idea further with you.

In the meantime, are there any updates of your internal review that you can share with us?

We hope we can continue this dialogue early in the new year.

Sincerely,

Shreema Mehta
International Program Coordinator, Earthworks
smehta@earthworksaction.org

Ugo Lapointe
Canadian Program Coordinator, MiningWatch Canada
ugo@miningwatch.ca

Al Gedicks
Center for Alternative Mining Development Policy

Carla García Zendejas
Center for International Environmental Law

Christian Wimberger
Christian Initiative Romero (CIR)

Ximena Waarners
Earthrights International

Richard Kamp
E-tech International

Hannibal Rhoades
Gaia Foundation

Andrew Whitmore
London Mining Network

Carolyn Shafer
Patagonia Area Resource Alliance

Mary Costello
Rock Creek Alliance

Lori Andresen
Save our Skys Blue Waters

Gabriel Patron
Sociedad de Historia Natural Niparajá A.C.