

"Fear Not, Let Us Unite"

UCCP Statement on Large-Scale Mining

God's creation is good and beautiful (Gen. 1). All creatures, no matter how diverse and complex exist in interdependence and co-existence to sustain life for all in all its goodness and beauty. It is only through God's creation that we human beings receive and experience the abundant blessings of God.

We mourn however the present state of God's creation and our actual environmental situation:

1. We are saddened by the destruction wrought by large-scale mining operations all over the Philippines mostly by giant foreign mining corporations. Undeniably, these have caused serious problems to our people - disunity, Human Rights Violations, disasters, destruction of the environment, violent death among the few who oppose. Truly, the wanton and irresponsible destruction of God's good and beautiful creation is destroying our people's life and dignity.
2. We are so dismayed by the media advertisements of the giant mining corporations and the claims of our government that large-scale mining is good for the people. This destructive act is being imposed on us in the guise of development. Foreign mining corporations are plundering our minerals through the doctrine of globalization primarily because of their desire for unlimited profit. In fact, large-scale mining is a clear manifestation of corporate greed.
3. We are so burdened by the fact that our state's laws and policies on mining are catering to and facilitating the greed of the giant foreign mining corporations. For instance, Republic Act 7942 (Philippine Mining Act of 1995) which mandates the liberalization of the mining industry in the Philippines allows a single foreign mining corporation with an approved Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) to mine a maximum of 81, 000 hectares of land (Sec. 3b, sec.34) for a period of 25 years, renewable for another 25 years (Sec. 38). Said law further provides to a FTAA holder the right to cut and use trees within its area of operation (Sec. 72), to use water (Sec. 73), to possess explosives (Sec. 74) and to eject communities if they hamper mining operations (Sec. 75). Moreover, said law also grants the same the right to enter in private lands and concession areas for mining (Sec. 76); and gives many incentives such as 5 years tax holiday, the right to bring home 100% profit, 100% control of minerals, and confidentiality of mining documents including financial statements.

Indeed, transnational mining corporations are so powerful that they can even compel one country like the Philippines to promote their greed. It is therefore not surprising that in the Philippines, state apparatuses are being used to promote and protect corporate interests.

Since large scale mining's ultimate goal is profit, we see this as one form of idolatry. It is all about worship of Mammon god. For this reason, we declare our faith-based stand on large-scale mining:

1. Promoting large-scale mining is total submission to the power of Mammon, a god of destruction, selfishness and greed. This god molds its worshippers to be self-centered and teaches them to

destroy the environment and communities in exchange for profit. This god makes greed a virtue. This would explain why its worshippers have always been a glutton for material possessions and find no satisfaction. For Mammon god, to be a poor is sin. Further, this god is also a god of deception and destruction. It is in the name of this god that the foreign mining companies and their local collaborators are deceiving and destroying mining communities. Insisting that large-scale mining will bring development and progress is a concrete example of their lies.

2. Protecting large-scale mining is act of obedience to Mammon god, a god of death and injustice. This god is bringing death to our people while its worshippers- the giant mining corporations and their local allies are getting richer. Said god ensures them of their legal protections and security as they continue raking profits through the minerals of the land. In fact, it is through the power of this god that our people are divided. This god provokes conflicts and even killings within the families, tribes, churches, organizations and people in the wider communities.

It is true that Mammon is a very dangerous god. Worshipping this god would show the evil of idolatry. Indeed, loving Mammon god makes loving the real God impossible (*Matthew 6: 19-21, 24*).

While we advocate and support mining activities that is in tune with the laws of nature and which would provide genuine economic development of our people, we declare our resistance to all forms of large scale destructive mining. We call our constituencies to join us in this battle of faith:

1. Fear not, let us unite! Resisting large-scale mining is an act of refusing the power of Mammon god — a dead god that could not see the people's suffering and could not hear the people's cry; a god that could not be touched and moved to compassion by the people's affliction.
2. Fear not, let us unite! Rejecting large-scale mining is an act of denying the god of death, a god that causes the death of people; a god that demolishes homes and drives away tribal people from their ancestral lands; a god that destroys the mountains and pollutes the rivers and seas; a god that destroys God's good and beautiful creation.
3. Fear not, let us unite! Opposing large-scale mining is an act of reaffirming our loyalty to the most powerful, righteous, liberating and loving God - the God who created the earth with purpose and order; the God who commissioned us to be His faithful stewards.
4. Fear not, let us unite! Supporting and advocating alternative mining activities that are not destructive and which would truly support