

Commissioners, I am a member of the Mudgee action group of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. Every week we write letters, or send emails around the world, usually to representatives of foreign governments, calling for the protection of individuals, or groups of people, who are being mis treated, in many cases imprisoned and tortured for no other reason than speaking out in defence of their human rights. Amnesty International's role is the defence of human rights. Occasionally cases arise where an area, and its residents, are threatened by a mining project, usually with the backing of Government. These cases occur far away and have no impact here. The matter you are considering is happening right here, and will have severe impacts. Unfortunately neither New South Wales nor Australia as a whole have an enshrined Human Rights Act. The Department of Planning and Environment was not required to consider how its recommendation of this mine would violate the human rights of so many people. These include the residents of Lue, the children attending Lue Public school, and their teachers, other landowners and rural producers in the area, residents of Mudgee and others downstream on the Cudgegong River all of whom would be variously impacted by a shortage of water, 24 hour a day mining noise, toxic dust, increased heavy road traffic transporting dangerous chemicals and mine output. Then there is the threat from the unavoidable acid mine drainage that would render local water resources unusable and a final void that would pose a threat to the environment forever. You, Commissioners, have a duty to do what no-one else can do. That is to defend the human rights of the many people threatened by this project by rejecting it.

Thank You. Derek Finter.

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