

Memorial addressing conflict free metals and genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Whereas, armed militia conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has claimed nearly 6 million civilian lives since 1994; and

Whereas, the DRC is one of the leading producers of tantalum which is found in 60% of computers and other electronics worldwide, and up to 30% of the global supply of tantalum is mined in the DRC; and

Whereas, 50% of the DRC mines are controlled by militias who fund their conflict by selling illicitly obtained minerals to world suppliers, exploiting the land and devastating local populations; and

Whereas, the conflict mineral funds contribute directly to the approximately 45,000 deaths per month due to violence inflicted by armed militias in order to maintain control of the mines and resources; and

Whereas, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act of 2010 mandates that, if companies use minerals from the DRC, they must file a report with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) describing what they have done to ensure the source of the minerals; and

Whereas, *Enough Project*, a campaign to end genocide, has reviewed the major electronics companies' SEC reports and rated them based on their proactive steps to trace and audit their supply chains, leadership in industry-wide efforts, and actions to help the DNC develop a clean minerals trade; and

Whereas, since the Minneapolis Area Synod and the ELCA purchase computers, printers, copiers, and phones made with tantalum, they can reduce the funding of DNC militias by encouraging companies to implement responsible supply-chain policies and practices; and

Whereas, to help resolve the conflict in the DRC, resolution and action by the Minneapolis Area Synod and the ELCA will add to the voices of concerned people for conflict-free products and further the social responsibility of electronics vendors; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly in 2021 memorialize the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to mandate that the Churchwide Office purchase any new electronics from companies only at 70 points or higher on the most current *Enough Project* Conflict Minerals Company Rankings and by making this action known throughout the ELCA and to the public at large.

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Adopted by: Central Conference in Assembly, February 13, 2021

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Background information on the “Conflict-Free Initiative”

More information is available at
https://enoughproject.org/demandthesupply?utm_source=PR&utm_campaign=Rankings2017



The people of Africa have been victims of human rights abuse by unscrupulous profiteers for centuries – from pirating of humans as slaves in the 1600s to pirating of valuable minerals used to produce modern devices in the 2000s. Almost one third of the world’s supply of a mineral needed to make capacitors for electronics like cell phones and computers is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo (“DRC”). Many of those mines are controlled by militias who sell the illicitly obtained conflict minerals to fund their civil war and to exploit the land and local people. Since the mid-1990’s over 6 million DRC civilians have been killed in this war, making it the deadliest conflict in the world since the Holocaust.

Here in U.S., we can ensure that our electronics purchases are not financing this genocide. The Dodd-Frank Act requires U.S. electronics companies to conduct supply-chain due diligence, identify the mines where their conflict minerals are mined, and publish a report of their supply chain. Non-profit organizations have experts review the reports and rate the companies based on their supply chain transparency, leadership in industry efforts, and actions to help DRC create a clean minerals trade.

This Resolution calls the Minneapolis Area Synod to purchase any new electronics from companies with good ratings on the Conflict Minerals Company Rankings and to encourage congregations and the ELCA to do the same. Through this Resolution, our Synod can join many companies, campuses and municipalities in supporting the conflict-free initiative and help bring peace and stability to DRC.

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