

**Policy Statement on the QMM MINE, Fort Dauphin, Southern Madagascar**

The Andrew Lees Trust (ALT) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation registered as a charity in the UK. ALT is governed by a Board of Trustees and is subject to controls and inspections required by the Charity Commissioners. ALT has been working in Madagascar since 1995, providing social and environmental education, and implementing development projects with local people across the south.

As a charitable organisation ALT does not normally comment on the activities of other agencies or companies but the development of the QMM mine is the largest project currently undertaken in this region which will undoubtedly have major impacts on the lives of many of our beneficiaries and partners, and potentially on our own local activities. Therefore it is appropriate for ALT to issue a statement in this particular case.

One particular concern with the mine development as it is currently being undertaken is specifically focused on the issue of communication. We are concerned that there is insufficient open and balanced dialogue between the mining company and local stakeholders, and a lack of awareness of the risks to the social and environmental fabric of the region among the local population.

As yet, there are no effective for a for dialogue between stakeholders, no clear mechanisms for conflict resolution, compromise, or mitigating negative impacts. Consequently, it is hard to form a truly balanced view on the benefits or drawbacks of the mine to the people of the region, and to see real opportunities for developing the kind of cooperation required to minimise negative environmental and social impacts and maximise benefits.

We believe that QMM should be committed to the most scrupulously transparent engagement processes with the local people. In particular, we urge QMM to agree to an independent and open stakeholder programme, as outlined in the International Council on Mining and Minerals (ICMM) best practice guidelines where local people and others have an opportunity to identify problems and discuss areas of concern, without prejudice, and to engage the company in mechanisms to resolve those issues in a safe and secure environment which places a premium on open participation, empowerment, and dialogue.

ALT would expect that an internationally supported project of this magnitude and financial investment would have mechanisms in place to ensure that its intentions and operations are carried out with the utmost propriety and sensitivity towards the people of Madagascar, and towards a truly sustainable future for the people of the Anosy. In the current circumstances, where dialogue and communications remain inadequate, ALT takes the view that the project is failing a very fundamental test and is therefore currently unable to endorse or collaborate with the project.

***QMM SA is a joint venture between the Government of Madagascar with a 20% stake, and QIT-Fer et Titane Inc with a 80% stake.***

***The Andrew Lees Trust (ALT) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation registered as a charity in the UK. ALT has worked in Madagascar since 1995, providing social and environmental education, and implementing development projects with local people across the south. ALT aims to empower local populations through education, to reduce poverty and improve standards of living. It is also committed to building capacity for Malagasy professionals to undertake the challenge of designing and implementing social and environmental strategy and development projects in the region. ALT provides educational radio communications across the region, broadcasting public information programmes on food security, health, HIV/ AIDS and improving the lives of thousands of villagers whilst helping to protect the environment. It also works to improve natural resource management, and reduce the impacts of drought in the Androy region. In doing our work, we place the utmost priority on an ethical approach, honest and transparent dealings, equitable and fair outcomes, and enfranchisement of the most vulnerable populations***