



5 October 2023

Dear Ventora Development Communications Team,

We acknowledge receipt of your letters of 13 and 15 September 2023.

Thank you for accepting our proposal of a preliminary call between representatives of both parties to determine the modalities of a meeting between us and Mr Gertler. Since we are a large coalition of civil society groups, we believe we should have two representatives from our side at this virtual discussion, and are happy for you to have the same number. We agree that the meeting should allow for a free exchange, be confidential and on a without prejudice basis. We would be happy to receive an outline from you on brief terms of reference and look forward to receiving this. As previously agreed in our correspondence, once the meeting details have been agreed, this should be publicly communicated. How and when can be agreed as part of our preliminary discussions.

Like you, we are also concerned about the lack of resolution on the defamation proceedings brought by Mr. Gertler in the DRC against our colleague Jean-Claude Mputu and his employer, Resource Matters. It remains our view that, working with the Congolese judicial system, these proceedings should be brought to a swift end without conditions. All communication relating to steps that could be taken towards achieving this goal is being managed through lawyers representing Mr. Mputu and Resource Matters. We urge you to respond to the lawyers about the steps Mr. Gertler intends to take to seek to end the proceedings.

We note the ending of the legal proceedings in France, which we welcome. We would also be grateful for an update on actions being taken by Mr. Gertler to end legal proceedings against Haaretz in Israel for its reporting on his business dealings.

As you acknowledge in your letter the ultimate decision to dismiss the DRC defamation case resides with the Congolese judge. As a result, we believe it is pragmatic to begin the discussion about the modalities of our meeting so that we can avoid unnecessary delays.

In order to move matters forward, could you please indicate possible dates in October from your side for our preliminary meeting?

Finally, please note that we have published all of our correspondence in chronological order as agreed. For example, [here](#) is one link and [here](#) is another.

We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

- The Congo is Not for Sale Coalition (CNPAV)
- Human Rights Watch
- Resource Matters (also a member of CNPAV)
- Rights and Accountability in Development – RAID (also a member of CNPAV)
- The Sentry