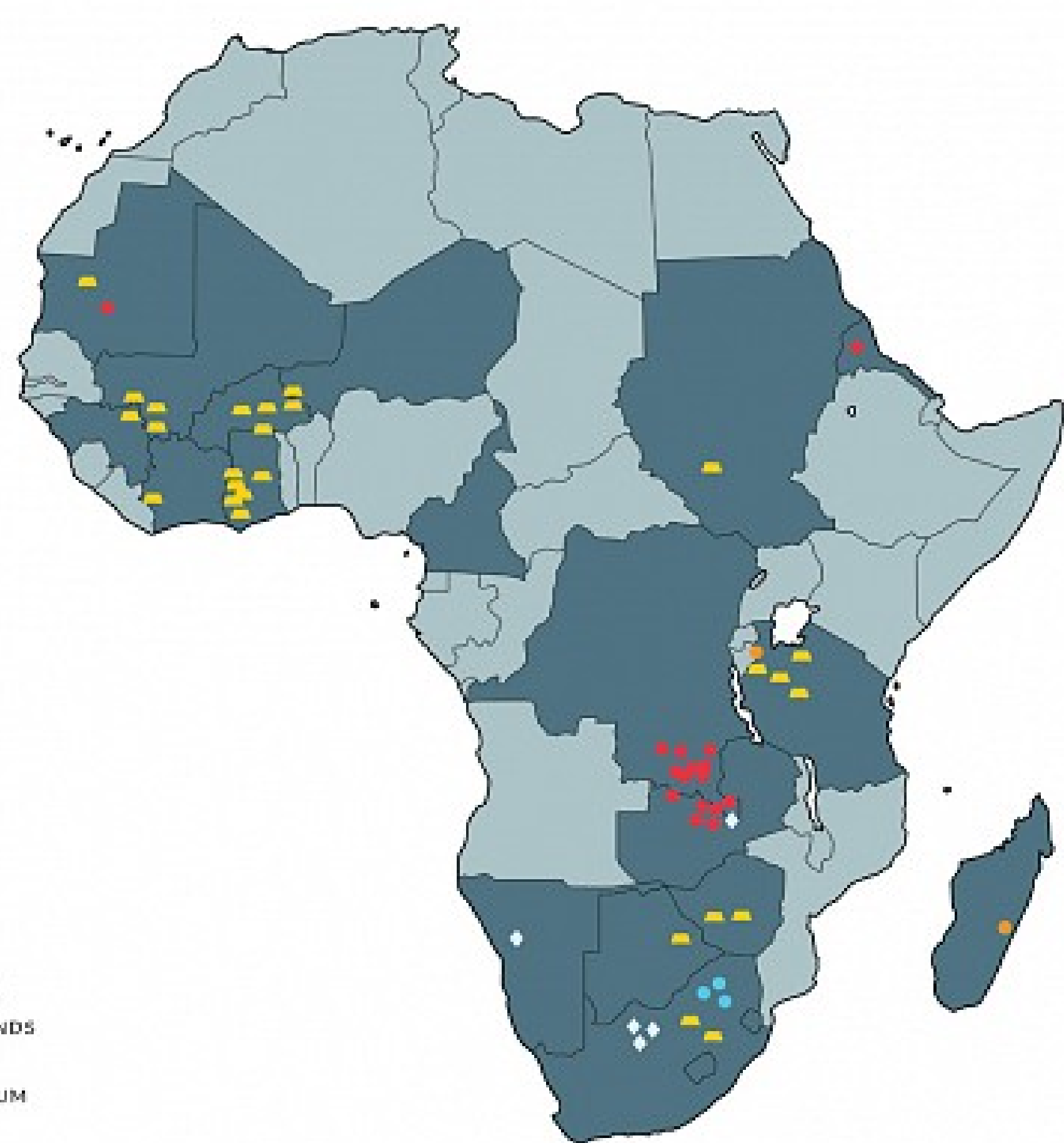


# Africa's Resource Curse: Canadian Mining Companies and Private Security Actors, who is the Authority?



The map above displays the location, type, and number of Canadian mining operations in Africa.

Africa has long been plagued by what has become known as the 'Resource Curse'. This explains a situation in which foreign investment in the country has resulted in further state and political corruption, environmental degradation, and instability, without any real benefit trickling down to the grass roots level of local communities. As shown by the map above, Canada has a huge stake in African mining, with 17% of Canadian mining assets abroad being located in Africa. More importantly, Canada is the second largest mining investment in Africa, falling only behind South Africa itself. Due to the size and number of Canadian companies operating in Africa, as well as their influence on state stability, investigation of this field has grown more than pertinent.

The research I conducted focused on what Canadian companies were operating in Africa, how big their operations were, and what type of relationship these companies had with both local government and local populations. While some companies have had a positive presence on the continent, working in tandem with communities to increase overall human security and build mutually prosperous relationships, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest in most cases, Canadian mining companies are not welcome in local communities due to the environmental damage, land redistribution, and societal harm they cause. The majority of Canadian resource companies operating in Africa have relationships that are tenuous at best with local populations. Most companies experienced several workers strikes, many violent (usually the result of poor working conditions and low wages), including companies such as First Quantum Limited, Lundin Mining Corporation, Eastern Platinum Limited, Great Basin Gold Limited, Golden Star Resources Ltd., Uranium One, SEMAFO, and Rockwell Diamonds Inc.

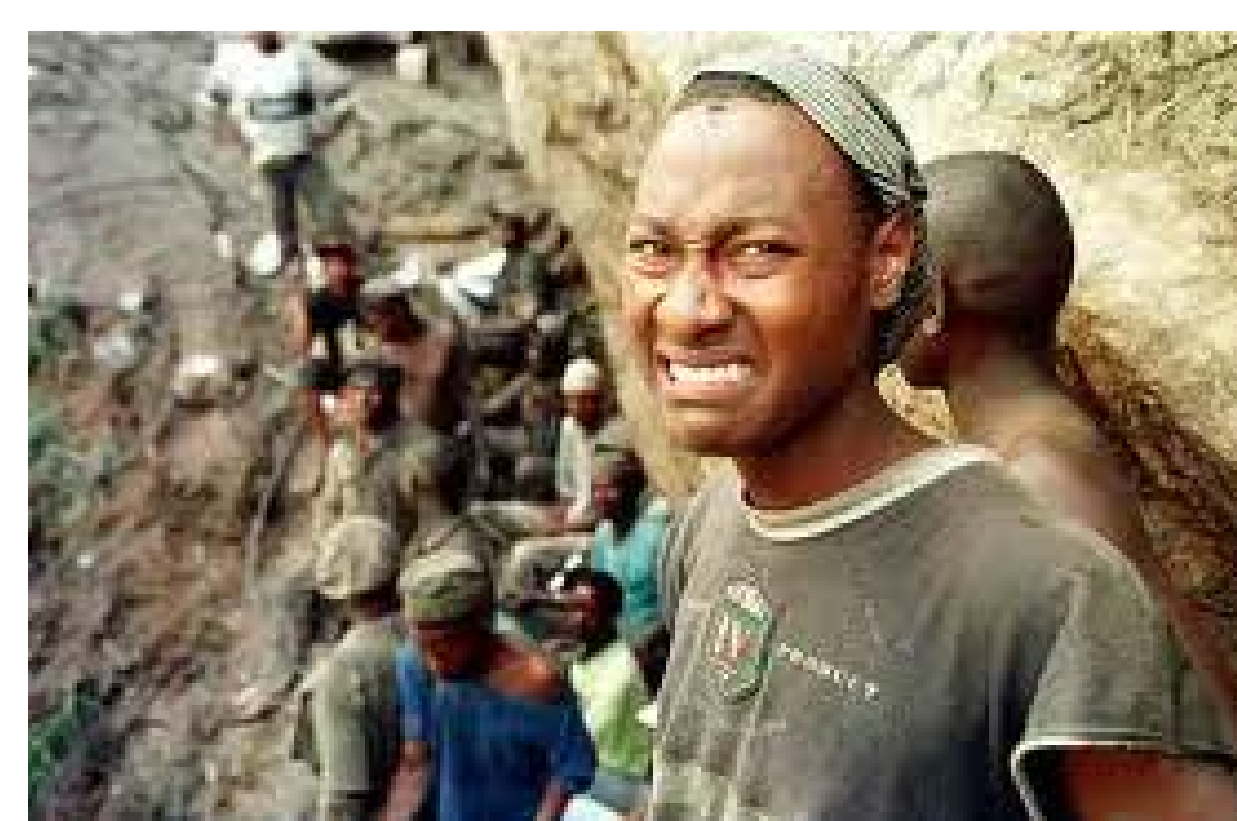


North Mara Mine, African Barrick Gold's expansive property, where 7 local residents were shot and killed by police and mine security staff, following a conflict between Artisanal Miners and African Barrick Gold. This example is illustrative of the overarching conflict emerging between Canadian mining companies operating in Africa, and local residents that live there. As tension continues to grow Canadian companies are feeling more and more pressure to increase mine security. These companies have largely adopted three strategies for security provision: the employment of private personnel, arrangements for security provision by local forces, and development programs that seek to quell some of the dissent of angry locals.



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## The New Source of African Security?



Above is a picture of Artisanal miners in Tanzania.

Many Canadian companies have experienced violent encounters with local populations angered at the negative social consequences that accompany these mines, or with Artisanal miners who have traditionally mined these areas and do not see the company's mining rights as legitimate. This most famously includes Anvil Mining's involvement with the Kilwa Massacre, which led to the death of 70-100 Congolese nationals, but other companies such as SEMAFO, Banro, Katanga Mining Limited, Lundin Mining Corporation, and African Barrick Gold have had similar negative encounters with local populations.

This research project also explored the relationship between the local government or state and Canadian mining companies, related to issues of corruption. For example, contracts in the DRC belonging to companies such as Barrick Gold, First Quantum Limited, Lundin Mining Corporation, and Banro which were signed during the war are now under review with suspicions of conflicts of interests, irregularities, lack of transparency, questionable payments, and questionable terms that are disadvantageous to the DRC government. Another Canadian company, Nevsun Resources, is partnered with the Eritrean Mining Corporation, and it is unclear whether these finances are being used by the Eritrean government to sponsor militant groups in Somalia and conduct violent actions against Ethiopia. Finally, the company SEMAFO benefited from a healthy relationship with the Prime Minister of Niger in 2006, Hama Amadou, who gave them legal assistance in solving labour disputes, allowing the company to fire miners who had gone on strike to demand better wages and working conditions by having labour strikes declared illegal. These examples display how Canadian companies have either exploited or remained lenient towards corrupted governments that offer favourable policies to companies at the expense of their broader population.



Above is a photograph of a private security guard at a mine owned by Barrick Gold.

However, the specifics of how these companies supply this security, and what impact this security provision has on local residents as well as the state is an area both of little knowledge and increasing concern. In cases where private security staff are hired by mining companies, questions of authority can begin to emerge, especially when the private security guards are more well equipped than the local forces. While these forces can sometimes provide increased security for mining companies and residents to areas where local police forces are limited, they are still plagued with problematic questions of; whose interests are they serving? And to what authority do they report?