

Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement – Côte d'Ivoire

Subject: Petersen paper insults Africans & chooses dentist monopoly over care for rural children
Date: Wed, 22 Dec 2010 02:34:33 +00004

Dear Assistant Director-General Alwan:

With all due respect, the Petersen Paper is about profits for Western amalgam countries and contempt for the people of my continent. He actually says that Africans will choose fillings based on the color of the fillings, not on issues like the content of the mercury! He says that about no other ethnic group. Dr. Petersen owes us an apology. If he won't give it, then we ask you to give it in his place.

In another paper, W.H.O. says ART is the “perfect” solution for rural developing areas. It is inexpensive, it requires very little technology; it can be done by trained non-dentists. Yet Petersen and his dentist colleagues, all from rich nations, says Africans should use amalgam. The reason is transparent: these dentists are protecting the monopoly of dentists and trying to keep out the non-dentists. But the dentists are not treating people in rural Africa, so Petersen would rather the children get no care than get ART!

Illegal gold sales are a horrible problem in my continent. The mercury is often obtained from the amalgam manufacturers. If we eliminate amalgam, we eliminate a major source of illegal mercury. Petersen and his western colleagues have no interest in stopping illegal mercury sales, which cause harm to rural children.

For the above three reasons, then, we ask you to condemn the Petersen Paper: it is contemptuous of Africans; it seeks to protect the dentist monopoly such that rural children will receive no dental care; and it is so protective of the amalgam makers that it will not challenge the profiteering in gold mining.

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