

The Prime Minister Brnabic stated that the development of the "Jadar" project is of exceptional importance for Serbia and Loznica, and that more than 2,100 workers will be hired only in the phase of construction of mines and processing plants.

Representatives of the associations "Coalition for Sustainable Mining in Serbia" and "Let's Protect Jadar and Radjevina" Zvezdan Kalmar and Marija Alimpic assessed that in the project "Jadar" there is "corruption" and disrespect of the public interest.

- We have people here who talk about things about which practically nothing is known. Everything you try to find out has been declared a trade secret. We hear that the "Jadar" project and the "Rio Tinto" investments are the project of the century. I don't know why. They announce that they will employ 2,100 workers, and in fact there are over 19,000 people whose lives and existence are endangered in that area. These people are engaged in agriculture, whose land, according to their plan, will be converted into construction land - says Kalmar.

He states that it is especially disputable that Serbia has an ore rent of four percent, while in most European countries it is between 20 and 30 percent.

Marija Alimpic states that in the case of Rio Tinto, the preservation of the environment is a special problem.

"There is no exact information. The only thing available is allegedly a spatial plan that was done before the completion of the feasibility study. How can you make a spatial plan before completing the feasibility study? If everything is so good, what is the secret, why is it not transparent? At the last meeting with the representatives of Rio Tinto, professors from our Faculty of Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Mining and Geology were sitting across from us, doing research for the needs of Rio Tinto. Can we really believe that they were independent experts when they took money from Rio Tinto for those tests? One of them convinced me that there would be no pollution and floods at all, and when I asked him if he knew what it looked like when the Jadar River overflowed, he replied that he did not know and that he had never seen it - says Alimpic.

-It is also not known how many tons of sulfuric acid will be used and what else from the chemicals for decomposing Jadrolite, and she talks about how the water will be clean. It is not known exactly how many years the mine has been planned to operate. It is mentioned between 30 and 50 years. All you ask in "Rio Tinto" is that the answer is a business secret. We asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Mining and we did not receive any answer - says Alimpic.

Alimpic and Kalmar believe that "in this case, the state represents the interests of a foreign company, and not its citizens." Asked how it is, if the Prime Minister of Serbia says that it is

a "project of the century", Alimpic answers:

- The public interest is what is in the interest of the citizens of this country, and not what is in the interest of a foreign company. Nobody asked us anything. Rio Tinto buys the land from the farmers, and when they do not want to sell it, it threatens expropriation. How can a private foreign company threaten expropriation if it is known that this procedure can be carried out only by the state due to the general interest and with compensation - says Alimpic.

- This is not about the life of one or two people, but about 20,000 of us who live in that area. When we heard that "Rio Tinto" was coming, I started researching who they were talking about and came across startling data on what was left behind in the places where they did business. They had a mine in Papua New Guinea, they destroyed the whole rainforest where the people there ate, there people are literally dying of hunger. They polluted the rivers with the mine and they have no more drinking water. In Australia, they destroyed the indigenous population and the caves of Aboriginal people, thousands of years old, in which there were cave drawings, evidence of when people have been in that area. They tried to open a mine in the Indian Reservation in Arizona, so there was a riot. Where they appear, there is nothing left for them. If they come to Loznica, there are many cultural and historical monuments in that area and 50 sites, of which nothing will remain - warns Alimpic.

Kalmar states that "Serbia has bad mining laws" and warns that "lithium mining has a catastrophic impact on the environment."

- Not only the territory where the mine is located will be polluted there, but also 200 square kilometers around. Macva region is at great risk. We have an incredible frivolity of the state, which leads us to have a well-founded suspicion that there is great state corruption - says Kalmar.

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