

Memorandum

To: Members of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development

Cc: Observers and other participations at the Annual Meeting

From: Glenn Gemerts, Chair of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development

Subject: Objectives for the Forum's 2014 Meeting

As we approach the tenth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development (IGF), I would like to highlight certain developments of the past year, and underline the key objectives for the meeting this year.

In my view, the IGF has enjoyed success to date because of the calibre of government officials it continues to attract in order to exchange views on global trends, individual country challenges and lessons learned relating to the mining sector. With the addition of Congo-Brazzaville to the IGF family in September of this year, Membership now stands at 49 countries. Other important organizations such as international financial institutions, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, donor governments and other actors are also increasingly well represented at the IGF AGM, as they recognize the value of engagement with this important network. This year's AGM is no exception. The diversity of organizations taking part in this year's meeting numbers over 120 and a clear indication of the IGF's growing significance and relevance for sustainable development.

Since our last AGM the IGF has held several very successful regional events, including a Post-2015 Development Agenda discussion, an artisanal/small scale mining (ASM) workshop during Indaba, and a training session on Transfer Pricing at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada's annual convention. Through support from the Government of Canada to the International Institute for Sustainable Development, three IGF Members (Dominican Republic, Uganda and Madagascar) have begun assessments of their mineral regimes using the IGF Mining Policy Framework, and Suriname is piloting an integrated eco-system management approach for mining regions. The IGF Secretariat has also launched a monthly newsletter of relevant updates, events, reports and opportunities in the sector, which reaches over 1200 people worldwide.

For this year's AGM, the Secretariat has developed a focused agenda. The overarching aim of the meeting is to advance our objectives in implementing the Mining Policy Framework and in building a stronger IGF. The thematic focus this year will be on social benefits and engagement, including community engagement, local revenue management, operational security and human rights, education and the role of women in the mining sector.

Social benefits and community engagement in the minerals sector are the subject of increasing global attention. Meaningful engagement and tangible benefits for the population are crucial to the sustainable development and management of the mineral sector, for both governments and industry. A critical component of responsible resource development is ensuring effective sectoral governance and transparent and accountable local revenue management, as well as the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society that are traditionally excluded from decision-making spheres. How to effectively manage these challenges and maximize both social benefits and the opportunities that come with greater community engagement will be the focus of expert panel discussions throughout the AGM.



Significant attention will also be paid to the broader issue of sustainable development, the contribution the mining sector can make, and some of the challenges the sector itself faces with regards to its own sustainability. Global negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals will begin in January. This year's IGF AGM presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on key ways to advance sustainable development objectives connected with the minerals sector. The IGF is interested in ensuring appropriate recognition of the mineral sector and its contribution to sustainable development through this United Nations process, including the role of the IGF as the unique global forum for addressing these issues and our Mining Policy Framework as key guidance for advancing sustainability through mineral development.

At this year's meeting, the Executive Committee will be presenting a proposal for the consideration of Members, to establish an Industry Advisory Committee (IAC). The IAC would advise the IGF Executive Committee and Membership of key industry trends, challenges and opportunities that will have implications for good governance of the mineral sector, and provide a mechanism through which the IGF Executive Committee and Membership can interact with key industry representatives to inform them of their concerns, interests or initiatives. As an additional piece of business, the Secretariat will present a proposed protocol for Official Observers for the consideration of the Membership.

It is with great anticipation that I look forward to the in-depth presentations and dynamic discussions we will share in during this year's AGM. This rich dialogue – the hallmark of the IGF – is invaluable to all participants, and I encourage your active engagement during these sessions.

New to this year's AGM is the launch of the IGF Networking Fair, which will take place during the morning registration period (09:00–10:00) and during the lunch break (13:00–15:00). The Fair will provide ample opportunity to connect with participants, and learn about the work of a variety of organizations present at the meeting. The Fair will feature additional presentations by civil society organizations, consultancy firms, industry, academia and international organizations. As a new initiative, its success depends on your active participation, maximizing its value to members by linking them to new initiatives, approaches and information.

The IGF is a growing and evolving platform for country governments to engage with industry and civil society experts, and with each other, on best practices for sustainable development in leveraging their natural resource wealth. Looking ahead, it is important that we seek ways to strengthen and ensure the ongoing relevance of the IGF, and how it can complement existing initiatives relating to mineral governance and policy at the regional and international levels.

The Secretariat will be providing all delegates with additional information on participating organizations, their work and services, and will be seeking your feedback through a survey, which I urge you to complete, to enhance our understanding of the needs of IGF members and the opportunities we can collectively advance.

Please find the agenda for the meeting included. I look forward to seeing you in Geneva.

Glenn Gemerts

Chair of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development