

Press Communiqué

The Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development

Geneva, October 24, 2014

This year marked the tenth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development (IGF), held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from October 20-24, 2014. The IGF is a unique global venue for sustained discussions on practical issues related to the governance, sustainable management and development of the mining, minerals and metals in the sector. It serves as the only intergovernmental forum for dialogue among member country governments, which includes mining companies, industry associations and other sustainable development actors in the sector. With the addition of Congo-Brazzaville to the IGF family in September of this year, membership now stands at 49 countries from around the world.

Participants at this year's AGM met to discuss and share information and best practices on key issues facing the mining, minerals and metals sector. Over 280 individuals from 55 countries and over 110 international financial institutions, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, donor governments and other actors were present. The diversity of countries and organizations taking part in this year's meeting is a clear indication of the IGF's growing significance and relevance for sustainable development.

The meeting, co-hosted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), opened with remarks from UNCTAD's Secretary-General, Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, who welcomed the role the IGF is playing in enhancing the capacity for strengthened governance in the mining sector, and identified ways in which the UNCTAD might work more closely with the IGF and its members.

The overarching aim of the AGM was to advance the implementation of the Mining Policy Framework and in building a stronger IGF. The thematic focus of the AGM was 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 was the focus of six expert panel discussions during the AGM.

Significant attention was also placed on 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 2015. This year's IGF AGM presented a valuable opportunity to reflect on key ways to advance sustainable development objectives connected with the minerals sector. The IGF membership expressed an interest 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 the IGF Mining Policy Framework as key guidance for advancing sustainability through mineral development.

Presentations on emerging trends and lessons learned were made during the AGM, including a presentation on the pilot projects on assessments of MPF implementation in the Dominican Republic, Uganda, and Madagascar, as well as integrated ecosystem management in mining regions in Suriname, by the International Institute for Sustainable Development. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) also presented a review of the issues and IFC experience on Benefit-sharing in the Natural Resource Sector. UNCTAD, the International Council on Mining and Metals, the World Economic Forum and others also made presentations on key issues in the sector.

New to this year's AGM was the launch of the IGF Networking Fair, featuring presentations by civil society organizations, consultancy firms, industry, academia and international organizations. Participants highlighted that the Fair presented a welcome space to engage and collaborate with one another, and to informally discuss initiatives, approaches and information important to them. Discussions were also held on the challenges and opportunities in managing artisanal and small-scale mining. Members also exchanged experiences regarding the G7 Fast-track Partnerships for Extractive Sector Transparency.

Interim Executive Committee elections were also held, and members elected new Vice-Chairs for Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean, Margad Jambaldorj (Mongolia) and Jackeline Goncalves de Oliveira (Brazil), respectively.

Finally, members expressed their gratitude to the Governments of Canada and Germany for their financial support to the IGF, Vale and the World Gold Council for their hospitality, and to UNCTAD for its support as co-host.

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. 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 to seek ways to strengthen and ensure the ongoing relevance of the IGF, and to understand how the IGF can complement existing initiatives relating to mineral policy and governance at national, regional and international levels.

The 11th Annual General Meeting of the IGF is proposed to be co-hosted by UNCTAD in Geneva from October 26-30, 2015.

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More details, including the speaker presentations, are available at: www.globaldialogue.info.