

2017 IGF AGM Closing Remarks
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16 October 2017

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We have arrived at the end of the programme for the 13th Annual General Meeting of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF).

This year, we once again saw the value and the importance of the IGF as an intergovernmental forum embracing all stakeholders along the mining and minerals value chain. The largest-ever number of participants to the IGF's 2017 annual meeting and the seven countries that have become new members over the past year are a testament to the excellent work that the IGF is doing. We congratulate the IGF on your great achievements.

At the last year's closing, UNCTAD highlighted that one promising area that deserved further attention was artisanal and small scale mining (ASM) because, to a large extent, artisanal and small scale miners remained ignored and marginalized, by policymakers, donors, and the general public. We are very happy to see this year the IGF chose this important theme and spent the past three days examining and debating on "Managing Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining" guided by a distinguished group of experts before an enthusiastic audience.

In addition, important topics from previous years' IGF annual meetings, such as post-mining transition, the opportunities and challenges in the SDGs and mining, are debated again this year. We want to applaud the IGF for its continuous substantial contribution to improved understanding of these critical issues.

Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development gives us a roadmap to ensure a future of prosperity, dignity, and a better planet, for all. As we heard this week, artisanal and small-

scale mining is recognized to generate jobs, reduce poverty, and provide livelihood for millions of people in developing countries. However, the poor management of ASM could cause environmental, social and health concerns, which threaten the advancement of the SDGs, as our Deputy Secretary General highlighted at Tuesday's opening.

Diverse views, various approaches and different country experience were shared on how to formalize and manage the ASM sector. We heard interesting ideas on a decentralized regulation process to allow for quick response to mining opportunities, a call for "ASM hubs" to demonstrate positive contributions of the sector to global development, an adoption of the voluntary principles (VPs) as an additional layer of safeguard to help mitigate ASM-induced conflicts and violence.

As some delegates stressed, there is no one-size-fits-all solution considering unique country and community contexts. We at UNCTAD also underscore an inclusive approach to involve all the stakeholders in the discussion of the challenges and the possible solutions when formulating and implementing policy interventions.

In addition to the inclusive approach, we also put an emphasis on inter-agency collaboration as well as south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation, when providing demand-driven technical assistance to our member states. Furthermore, when we design and implement our technical assistance projects, we adopt an integrated policy approach to address economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development challenges.

At UNCTAD, we commit to assisting commodity dependent developing countries (CDDCs) to reduce commodity dependence and maximize sustainable development gains from commodity production and trade. Most mining CDDCs export raw minerals with little value added; the high dependence on mineral exports makes these countries vulnerable to market price fluctuations, and underdeveloped linkages between the mineral sector and the broader economy lead to the sector's limited contribution to job creation and economic diversification.

Our UNCTAD programme on mining and SDGs focuses on the following 4 work streams: increasing value added to raw materials; integrating to and climbing up the regional and

global value chain; strengthening developing linkages to transforming mineral resource wealth into sustainable development gains that benefit the rest of the economy, and last but not least, promoting diversification and structural transformation.

We welcome mining CDDCs to approach UNCTAD for your development needs. We also look forward to working closely with other international organizations and intergovernmental fora to provide concrete and evidence-based policy assistance contributing to mining CDDCs' achievement of the SDGs.

One project we are currently rolling out is to produce several country case studies on sustainable job creation in the mining sector, tracking the number, the types and the quality of jobs created linked to the mining sector activities. The first two case studies will be conducted in Ghana and Sudan, analyzing the breakdown in total jobs created in the studied country's gold mining sector, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of policy actions in fostering sustainable job creation in the sector. We hope to present the results of these case studies in the next year's IGF annual general meeting.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We had very exciting and productive couple of days. The insightful and well-constructed interventions by the panellists followed by interactive debates allow us to different perspectives and invite us to refine our individual thinking and approaches on the complex issues we endeavour to address.

We want to thank the IGF for choosing UNCTAD to host its annual general meeting. Every year, we at UNCTAD benefit from the intellectual exchanges taking place during the week. The meeting also provides us another platform to showcase UNCTAD ongoing work in the area of mining and SDGs.

UNCTAD is committed to strengthening our relationship with the IGF secretariat and its hosting institution - International Institute for Sustainable Development. And, we look forward to the next session of the annual general meeting in Geneva in late 2018.