

EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Views of Turkey on Mining

05 May 2010

Thank you Chair

Distinguished delegates,

Turkey is one of the few countries in the world which can satisfy an important share of its raw material demand thanks to the diversity of its mine ores. Turkey attaches high priority to sustainable mining within the context of its national sustainable development policies, international commitments through the UN system and its national program for the EU accession process.

The impact of mining activities on the environment from mine prospecting until the end of the process varies depending on the factors such as environment, type of mine, mining pit and mining techniques applied.

In line with the provisions of the Turkish Constitution, mines are under the authority and disposition of the State and are not subject to private land ownership. The State may transfer this right to real and legal entities for defined periods of time. Mining activities are entitled to incentives (for those entities who create an additional value by processing the extracted mine in their own facilities in the country).

Turkey's Development Plan includes policies of improving environmental awareness and sustainable development approach, improving R&D infrastructure and increasing efficiency, improving the quality of working environment.

Distinguished delegates,

In accordance with its sustainable development priorities, Turkey believes that one of the most important aspects in mining is to minimize the environmental impact while reaching the maximum production capacity. Therefore, environmental protection is a legal obligation rather than a voluntary measure.

Regulation on Recovery of Natural Sites Degraded due to Mining Activity, which was put in force in 2007, ensures the balance between environmental protection and the exploitation of the resource.

In accordance with the Mining Law, license holders are required to submit “Environmental Compliance Plan”. In case of the exhaustion of mine ore reserves, the license holder is obliged to take the relevant safety measures and make the operation site environmentally-sound.

During and after mining activities, surface water, groundwater, air quality, land use, flora, fauna, human capital, archeological sites, natural and visual landscape may be affected. Therefore, mining projects undergo an environmental impact assessment procedure before they are put into operation in order to reduce and prevent their environmental impacts. In addition to this, mining operations are subject to controls on a frequent-basis.

Mining sector, by its nature, has a specific character with respect to risks it entails and is among the heavy and dangerous sectors which require knowledge, experience, expertise and continuous supervision. There is ongoing work in this respect, such as the Occupational Health and Safety Campaign in Mining Sector realized in 2007-2008. Within the scope of this campaign, seminars were organized in regions with high frequency of occupational accidents.

Thank you.