

## **NORWAY: Mining (CSD 18)**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by making two points regarding the impacts mining may have on local communities and on the environment. First, surface mines involves large-scale land use and is closely related to last year's deliberations at CSD 17 as regarding rural development, land use planning and land rights. There is a need to safeguard indigenous people and local communities' rights over land and resources. Second, an important environmental issue we would like to raise is the smoldering fires in coal mines which have a significant climate effect. In addition to CO<sub>2</sub>, mine fires generate a number of other gases and partly toxic gases that create large environmental problems. We see the need for further research to develop innovative measures to solve this problem.

Corporate social responsibility must be an important part of the mining industry's response to the different social and environmental challenges laid out in the thematic report by the Secretary General and stated by several delegations in this session. To enhance CSR, the Norwegian government calls on its private sector to establish partnerships with public and private actors when investing in developing countries. In managing the Norwegian Government Pension Fund – Global the state, which is one of the world's largest Sovereign Wealth Funds, also shares the responsibilities for how the companies in which the fund invests conduct themselves, what they produce and their impact on the local community. Ethical guidelines have been issued to make sure the assets of the Fund shall not be invested in companies responsible for, inter alia, severe environmental damage. Mining companies have been excluded from the Fund based on these ethical guidelines.

To conclude Mr. Chairman,

Mining is associated with large capital investment and limited employment opportunities. National authorities' ability to regulate and tax these non-renewable resources is of crucial importance to ensure these investments' contribute to sustainable economic growth and development for the society at large. Norway does not have a large mining industry, but we do have some practice in holding off the resource curse due to oil and gas production. Transparency and accountability of the revenues in question, as advocated, inter alia, through the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, are in our experience absolutely crucial for economic growth, social welfare and sustainable development.