

STATEMENT BY AUSTRALIA

Round Table 2: Managing Mining for Sustainable Development

Thank you Madame Chair. First I would like to acknowledge the participation of the Ministers present today.

Australia welcomes the inclusion of Mining as a theme in this cycle of CSD because we believe mining can make a significant contribution to progress toward sustainable development.

Managed appropriately, mining can be a key economic driver, alleviating poverty, supporting the broader economy and generating employment and training opportunities for both indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Certainly this has been our experience over the past 50 years.

In his opening address this morning the Chairman of CSD posed the question how can we generate the full involvement of all local and national actors in sustainable mining? Furthermore at this roundtable we have been asked how can action be streamlined, what are the remaining challenges and are there concrete steps that could be taken to move forward.

Australia believes that mining can be sustainable in both developing and developed countries – achieving that requires a partnership between the mining companies, communities and government. The key elements of a successful partnership are:

- Strong and transparent governance, regulations, legislation and clear revenue arrangements;
- Trained and experienced government officials who can implement these regulations and undertake assessments such as Environmental Impact Assessments; and
- A legislative system that offers protection to the environment, biodiversity, indigenous and non indigenous communities, and security to the mine operations themselves.

Australia recognises that the absence of these elements has been identified by many countries as barriers and challenges to moving toward sustainable mining.

These challenges can be overcome – in fact they must be overcome to maximise the development impact of the mining sector.

Australia is working with a range of countries and international organisations to transfer knowledge and provide practical guidance to support efforts to promote environmentally sound mining.

We have produced the Leading Practice Sustainable Development Program for the mining industry. This program makes available information on best practices including engagement with Indigenous communities; biodiversity, water and tailing management; hazardous materials management; and product stewardship.

In summary, a cooperative partnership approach, between all local and national actors, and promotion of best practices is a model that the CSD could consider to assist developing countries to gain the greatest benefit from the development of their mineral resources.

Thank you.