

**Intervention by
Mr. Rajiva Mishra in the
Round Table: Mining for Sustainable Development
High level Segment - CSD 18
12 May 2010**

Mr. Chairman,

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mining in India is an important contributor to the country's GDP and is also a significant source of employment generation. The total value of mineral production during the year 2009-10 in India stood at roughly US\$ 27 billion.

Mr. Chairman,

It is well recognised that mining, unless properly regulated, can have adverse environmental and social consequences. On one hand, mining disturbs the soil, water and ecological regimes and on the other hand, unless accompanied by proactive measures to promote inclusiveness, it can lead to the alienation of the local population and assume socially unacceptable dimensions. This brings me to the first of the three major issues related to the sustainability of mining operations.

Indian experience has shown that Relief and Rehabilitation (R&R) solutions are not as easy as they seem and unless properly designed and implemented, can have law and order implications as well. India has come up with a comprehensive National R&R Policy in the year 2007 and the newer R&R plans like that of Jharia (2009) incorporate self-contained new townships for the displaced population and also a detailed programme for skill upgradation.

Mr. Chairman,

The second issue is, how do you plan upfront for sustainable mining operations? India has managed to evolve a fairly robust system of environmental clearances as well as forest land diversion related clearances. However, the real challenge lies in monitoring and enforcing the conditions stipulated in these clearances. Since mining activities are mostly carried out in remote and far flung areas, institutional innovation and creation of empowered monitoring authorities to take care of such concerns, has to be ensured on a priority basis.

Mr. Chairman,

The third issue related to mining is land degradation. A country like India has about 0.7% of its land mass under mines. Despite detailed guidelines of the Indian Bureau of Mines, restoration of land after mines closure remains a big challenge. A two pronged strategy is needed to address this issue: one, capacity building of mining companies along with greater stress on Corporate Social Responsibility.; and two, enacting a more effective regulatory regime. Application of GIS/GPS based

monitoring mechanisms and related technologies could prove to be very useful and this needs to be encouraged through greater flow of technology and resources to the developing world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
