



Delegation of the European Union



Permanent Mission of Spain

KEY EU MESSAGES

MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE: **MANAGING MINING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** **(3-6pm, ECOSOC Chamber)**

CSD 18

United Nations

New York

12 May, 2010

- Mining is an important topic to discuss at international level because minerals, metals and other raw materials play such an important role in modern society. Access to, and affordability of mineral raw materials is vital for the sound functioning of the world economy. Most importantly, mine operations have an enormous potential to create, contribute to and support sustainable development.
- One of the most pressing needs today is to find new ways of doing more with less, to increase the wealth and welfare of people but at the same time to decrease pressure on eco-systems. Access to raw materials may be more limited in the future than it is today. It will therefore be necessary to minimise the waste we generate and to increase recycling and reuse of resources to produce raw materials and products.
- The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation aims to fight poverty and to protect the environment. It acknowledges the importance of mining to economic and social development and proposes specific actions to enhance their contribution to sustainable development.
- The EU has made progress internally and wishes to contribute to progress internationally. It has increased resource efficiency and improved good governance. It has further enhanced the management of extractive industries activities and the rehabilitation of abandoned mines, as well as improving the health and safety of workers.

- However, we recognise that, both internally and at international level, some issues remain to be addressed. Governments play a crucial role in enhancing corporate social responsibility standards in the extractive industry. We need to improve governance in the mining sector and to ensure that natural resources contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication. Guidance is also required for the rehabilitation of abandoned mines and the methane hazard in coal mines needs to be reduced.
- Together, we are best placed to face any constraints on the rapid implementation of the objectives of Agenda 21. We need to develop and enhance interaction with and regulation of the mining industry and strengthen national institutions. It is our responsibility to take effective approaches to the funding of closure, to ensure equitable participation by all stakeholders in mining activities and to protect biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Among others, the EU is hoping to strengthen the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (the EITI) and certification systems in the mining sector. We would like to promote capacity building, to identify best practices and to create an appropriate knowledge base on mineral resources for strategic thinking and policy innovations. Together with companies, like-minded countries and the World Bank Group we aim to strengthen Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) requirements and to encourage new management techniques and promote broad-based capacities especially in science and technology.
- Importantly, we also wish to contribute to the improvement of the social, environmental, health and safety aspects of mining, while recognizing the benefits derived through this activity.
- CSD plays an important role in the achievement of these targets, notably due to its coordination potential and its role of mobilizing experts and decision makers in a number of different fields that are essential for the development of policies. We also attach particular importance to the contribution and input to be given by Major Groups to this debate.