

## **Wealth Creation by Mineral Extraction in Europe**

*4th December 2013*

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**Brussels: Hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), on 3rd December 2013  
Euromines held an event on Wealth Creation by Mineral Extraction in Europe.**

Mr. Jacques Glorieux, EESC, welcomed the participants to this fruitful dialogue and highlighted the advisory function of the EESC to the other European institutions.

Mr. Ingmar Haga, Vice-President Europe of Agnico-Eagle, the company that operates the EU's largest operating gold mine at Kittilä in Finland, gave practical insights regarding the mine, its development and its commitment to sustainable mining in terms of both environmental standards and development opportunities for employees and the community.

Ms. Anna Mäkelä, the mayor of Kittilä, highlighted the positive impacts that the opening of the mine had on regional development through significantly reducing local unemployment and contributing to population growth but also its successful coexistence with traditional and other activities, such as tourism. She stressed that tourism benefited from mining as, for example, workers use the ski resort facilities year-round.

Mr. Gwenole Cozigou, Director responsible for Resources Based, Manufacturing and Consumer Goods Industries at DG Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, outlined the most recent EU policy developments regarding raw materials. He emphasized in particular the importance of the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Raw Materials whose recently adopted Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) sets the roadmap "to ensure a sustainable supply of raw materials to the European economy to make Europe a world leader in raw materials exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution by 2020." He stressed the importance of the future call for commitments which is an important milestone towards this objective.

Experts then had the opportunity to develop various but complementary matters linked to raw materials. Mr. Francisco Javier Fernández Cortés, Director of a technological centre focusing on Marble, Stone and Materials, outlined the difficult situation of the natural stone sector in Spain but also presented various projects, some of them co-funded by the EU, aiming at fostering research and development in the field of raw materials. Ms. Hilde Van Laere, Delegate of the European Economic and Social Committee, outlined the importance of responsible and transparent sourcing of raw materials imported from third countries and shared practical solutions to improve sustainability across the value chain. Prof. Vladko Todorov Panayotov, Member of the European Parliament, explained how critical a sustainable supply of raw materials is for Europe, highlighting the insolubly complementary nature of mining and recycling to meet a demand which is increasing worldwide in the with population growth and the development of emerging economies.

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Euromines is the European representation of the extractive industry. The organisation represents 42 different metals and minerals being mined in Europe and abroad and companies employing 350000 people in Europe. Its membership also includes many technology providers for the extractive industry.

Prof. Per Nicolai Martens from RWTH Aachen University the Moderator, then outlined the latest progress linked to environmental standards in mining and the contribution of the academic world to their development before opening the floor for a debate with the public.

Mr. Mark Rachovides, President of Euromines, closed the conference debate by stressing that Europe is resource-rich in terms of mineral deposits ideas and people and can meet tomorrow's raw materials challenges. Above all, he highlighted that regulatory standards must enable progress and good performance and can make a real difference when it comes to innovation, where Europeans and European companies are world leaders.

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