Minerals are essential for development and therefore for our quality of life and the creation of sustainable communities. Mineral planning ensures that societal and economic needs as well as the impact of extraction and processing on people and the environment are managed in an integrated way.
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Foreword by the President

2007 was a strong year for most of the extractive industry with rising prices, but also rising costs, in particular in the energy area. Consumption for most metals and minerals was soaring and exploration and new project development could not follow as quickly. Still, exploration activities have increased steadily and several new mines are under construction to start operation in 2008 and 2009.

One of the most important events and developments in 2007 was the EU Vice-President Verheugen’s announcement of the Raw Materials Initiative. Securing EU’s access to raw materials was becoming more and more important in an increasingly globalise world. Also the challenging environmental and social issues have become more and more important for the minerals industry.

The fact that the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm had raised the same issue but in a more intentional trade context showed that the EU’s concern was shared by other developed economies. The international race for resources, in particular mineral resources had reached a point where market forces alone could probably not guarantee an equilibrium to assure the continued growth of developed economies and the development of emerging and developing countries at the same time.

The policy makers are becoming concerned and rightly so.

Hence EUROMINES members welcomed Vice-President Verheugen’ initiative and whilst having worked already in the past years on a number of relevant issues reinforced their activities to support the initiative.

It also welcomed the European Council of Ministers’ mandate to the Commission under the leadership of DG Enterprise to develop a coherent policy.

Many of the EUROMINES activities that are linked to EU legislation and its implementation are in many ways a continuous struggle to improve the operating conditions for the extractive industry throughout the EU-27 and Turkey. Hence 2007’s work programme included many environmental and Health & Safety issues including the establishment of a new committee called “Resource-Access Committee”. Towards the end of the year the decision was made to set up an Energy and ETS Committee for 2008.

The Sustainable Development and Image Committee, however, was closed down and most of its issues either transferred to the new Resource-Access Committee or as in the case of the image and communication issues transferred to the Secretariat as permanent tasks.

Year 2007 was again a very active year and I would, since my term will end as the President, thank the team at Euromines for good work and cooperation during the last four years.

Tom Niemi, PRESIDENT
I. Securing access to Europe’s resources

Vice-President Verheugen’s initiative for reconciling Competitiveness, Energy and Environmental issues launched its 10th working group on 27 March 2007. This working group was dealing with “Access to natural resources, secondary raw materials and wastes”.

Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen clearly stated that “We are committed to improve the conditions of access to raw materials, be it within Europe or by creating a level playing field in accessing such materials from abroad.”

This is of particular importance as the industry is facing supply challenges:

- reduced availability of accessible deposits suitable for minerals extraction as a result of insufficient or short term land-use planning or due to a lack of geological knowledge;
- high administrative burden and costs for obtaining extraction permits due to additional regulations and time consuming preliminary studies;
- difficulties in obtaining extraction permits.

In order to secure the supply of raw materials for the European industry and to strengthen its competitiveness, it is crucial to address the challenges at a high level in a comprehensive approach drawing on a wide range of policy areas.

In response to Vice-President Verheugen’s initiative on access to resources for Europe the extractive industry formulated its position in 2007.

At the annual meeting of the Raw Materials Supply Group in June 2007 the extractive industry presented its position and recommendations in 4-5 pillars. This was taken up by DG Enterprise in its work programme throughout 2007 aiming at policy recommendations and a Communication during the second half of 2008.

The recommendations for an action package for ensuring the secure supply of sustainable resources for Europe

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Key actions:
1. Simplifying and streamlining the sustainable access to domestic raw materials
2. Facilitate exploration activities in Europe
3. Enhance RTD and innovation in the area of mining and raw materials
4. Use of GMES services
5. Address the problem of skill shortage
6. Improve Health & Safety performance in the extractive industry
7. Improve the legal framework and permitting system
8. Strengthen the compatibility of extraction and environmental protection

Key actions:
1. Ensure a sustainable supply from 3rd countries through the creation of a level playing field
2. Support transparency, good governance and anti-corruption initiatives in developing countries
3. Ensuring that imported materials are produced in sustainable manner

Key actions:
1. Encourage capacity building in developing countries
2. Encourage skills development for a competent workforce
3. Encourage attracting and recruiting young people
4. Promoting H&S as an underlying premise for extraction of resources

Key actions:
1. Encourage greater efficiency in the use of resources
2. Industry participation in a cooperative R&D programme with DG Research
3. Recognition of ETP-SMR
4. Reinforce the mineral intelligence at EU level
5. Improve stewardship and operational acceptability
6. Promoting envi. synergies

Key actions:
1. Establishing an adequate knowledge base on raw materials
2. Raising awareness of the role of minerals and the sustainability of the industries
3. Investing into universities and educational programmes
The recommendations included the following policy actions:

1. Facilitate exploration and extraction by reviewing existing legislation and ensuring better implementation in member states;
2. Develop Guidance for Member States to improve land-use planning, permitting processes and implementation of Environment Impact Assessments;
3. Improve mineral planning policies through exchange of best practices in the Raw Materials Supply Group (Commission Expert Group);
4. Facilitate internal market and Cohesion;
5. Provide funds for capacity building of civil servants at local level. This should be addressed to those involved with permitting activity and assessment of impacts, with special emphasis on newer EU Member States;
6. Recognize access to raw materials as a potentially overriding public interest and review the compatibility of extraction and the Natura 2000 Directive;
7. Endeavour to design and implement transportation networks and infrastructure (including canals and railroads) considering the location of EU bulk materials such as minerals;
8. Give official recognition to the European Technology Platform on Sustainable Mineral Resources (ETP SMR) and support its Research and Development efforts;
9. Use EU market power to promote appropriate practices so that imported materials are produced in a sustainable manner;
10. Foster implementation of European standards in these countries of origin through cooperation;
11. Prevent import of unsustainable imports through trade defence mechanisms;
12. Establish international panel to promote global sustainability principles and practices bringing together commission officials, NGO’s and business people or strengthen the International Forum under the thematic strategy for the sustainable use of Natural Resources by DG Environment and involve business, NGO and Commission in developing an International code.

ONE OF THE MAIN ISSUES IS THE LACK OF A EUROPEAN WIDE MINERALS SUPPLY POLICY.

Few EU Member States have undertaken a clear demand-supply forecast for mineral resources for the coming decades. The EU lacks the relevant information for the assessment of mineral demand for their major industrial and consumer good markets and for its own mineral potential. Regular updates and attempted outlooks are therefore necessary.

Already lacking in many EU Member States at national level, there is no coordinated view of the Member States as such on a European scale with regard to the overall policy for the provision of minerals.

The decentralisation of land-planning and minerals planning issues has lead to an inappropriate mineral supply policy which in its current state cannot match the EU’s sustainable development policies, neither in economic, environmental nor social matters, to the extent that this would be desirable and possible.

As most decisions about land use are taken at regional or local level within a Member State, the absence of a national policy can result in inconsistent decision-making.

Already in 2006 Leoben University concluded that most Member States consider the provision of minerals to be a low priority and only a small number have clearly defined national minerals policies.
In general there is a need for a **policy framework** which should aim to render existing operations more competitive and sustainable, to facilitate the extension of existing operations, and to facilitate the development of new operations. It should, however, also look at the ongoing restructuring and the closing of certain sites.

This could be achieved through **ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN WIDE MINERALS SUPPLY POLICY**. Each EU Member State has a national supply policy and should make this available in an English comprehensive publication on a regular basis. The EU’s current and future mineral potential should be updated on a regular basis and made easily available.

EU’s strategic minerals should be identified and should on the one hand be identified as key priorities in national and regional land use planning and on the other hand supply policies from non-EU sources should be coordinated at EU level in order to benefit from market force and other EU policies.

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**The European Non-Energy Extractive Industries** provides jobs for 295,000 employees in about 17,500 companies, with a turnover of 45 billion € and contains many SMEs. It promotes environmental responsibility and sustainable development through its member organisations and is committed to corporate social responsibility.

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**Metal mining investments by region 2006**

- **Oceania**: 22%
- **Africa**: 16%
- **Asia**: 13%
- **North America**: 13%
- **Latin America**: 27%
- **Europe**: 9%
II. Improving the access to resources in Europe

II.1 Improving the access to European resources

In the EU the land area available for mining is not only constrained by geological considerations, but also by nature conservation areas, agricultural land, forests and other competing land uses which are considered by society to be of high value as well as by a high population density in large areas. While Europe's population demands raw materials for new roads, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure, there is often widespread opposition from local communities to any proposals from the extractive industry to work a new area of land or to extend an existing operation.

According to a variety of sources it is becoming increasingly difficult to gain access to new resources, either because some national and local governments do not recognise the importance of minerals and therefore give relatively little weight to the need for minerals compared with other land use planning issues or because large tracts of land are designated under EU, national or local legislation as protected areas, from which the industry is excluded. Furthermore, to obtain a permit may take several years and the outcome is often uncertain.

EUROMINES continuously strives to improve its members' access to resources and to facilitate and improve their operating conditions.

In 2007 in particular the following activities could be highlighted:
II.1.1 Exploration in Europe

The extractive industry has two sectors: the mining sector and the exploration sector. The mining sector's base is the exploration sector. Without an exploration sector finding resources there can be no mining sector. The basic fact is that the EU does not have a strong competitive exploration sector. Due to the increased demand and the increased prices exploration for metals and minerals has been rising substantially in the past 3 years, worldwide and in Europe at least in a number of countries. Responding to this trend in 2007 EUROMINES held its first meeting dedicated to the exploration sector. A good twenty companies attended the meeting and identified a number of issues and hurdles for the exploration sector.

Exploration meeting, Brussels, June 2007
The EU needs to research how many EU prospectors and exploration companies it has, and how many of those companies actually explore in the EU (most of them explore outside the EU). Prospectors are at the base of the exploration pyramid. Exploration companies are the top of the exploration pyramid. This pyramid is based upon a whole range of services and skills. The majority of new resources are discovered by the exploration sector and then acquired by the mining sector. The focus in the EU needs to be directed at creating a vibrant exploration sector to provide new resources to the mining sector.

The companies conclusion of their meeting was that if the EU desired to source increasingly from its own resources it needed to become more competitive, it needed to recognise the exploration sector's differing and special needs. Exploration needed to be targeted as a subject in its own right if the mining
sector has to thrive. The EU needed to facilitate exploration activities in Europe through better national regimes which would

- provide grant aid to exploration companies against exploration work carried out,
- improve security of tenure for exploration properties to raise investor confidence,
- reduce exploration property acquisition time to an acceptable commercial period and
- run promotional campaigns to encourage exploration companies to be formed and outside companies to be attracted to explore in the EU.

In terms of RTD, knowledge and capacity building it would be desirable to have more industry participation in cooperative R&D programmes at EU and national levels for the development and application of modern new exploration technologies with the aim to enlarge the resource base. Equally, joint efforts by national governments through their geological surveys to invest in data collection of available reserves on the basis of modern exploration techniques would stimulate the exploration activities.

Big exploration meetings such as the biannual meeting in Rovaniemi and the PDAC in Canada show that the exploration sector is on the move and that it just needs that support to unlock new resources in Europe. More and more European geological surveys and ministries are nowadays present at the PDAC and more and more Canadian companies are exploring in Europe. Now, discussions are under way to represent Europe at the PDAC in a much stronger way.

II.1.2 The extractive sector’s lack of attractiveness for investors in many EU Member States

Investments into most extractive industry operations are substantial at the beginning and have to pay off over the life-time of the operation which can be more than 50 years. In order to assess the profitability of such an investment a stable and predictable legal framework is of utmost importance. Large sections of the extractive industry are in direct competition with operators from other parts of the world for internationally traded commodities. The shorter the distance between extraction site and market, the shorter the transport and thus energy consumption and CO₂ emissions are reduced. Self-sufficiency and the proximity principle should be respected wherever possible and sustainable. The European mining technology supply industry is world class and can remain so only with a competitive industry base. Investment capital always goes for the best return on investment. European investments are going to extractive operations all over the world, but not as much into Europe.
II.1.3 The right to operate

With regard to the right to operate extractive operations in Europe the industry – in the context of the Verheugen initiative raised a number of issues. One of them is the unreliability and unpredictability of some European jurisdictions with regard to permitting. Arbitrary decisions on permitting which are not linked to the fulfilment of legal requirements are unacceptable and will deter any investment.

Secondly, the industry raised the issue of the national legal frameworks for permitting and the approaches to implementation of EU legislation of relevance taken in the 27 Member States. The considerable variations neither provide the necessary confidence for investors nor provide sufficient legal certainty for the operators who are dependent on a long-term stable legislative framework to be able to operate through the various economic cycles. The reduction of staff in the competent authorities of a number of Member States was neither in the interest of the government, nor the industry, nor the general public. The industry expressed a serious concern about this development.

Thirdly the industry raised the issue of overrunning adopted legislation which was still in the process of being implemented by new additional legislation and that this was totally counterproductive to the planning of long-term competitiveness of the extractive sector. Legal provisions should have a reasonable life-span. Duplication and overlap of legislation needed to be avoided.

And last, but not least the companies should be given a competitive framework in which to operate. Energy costs and available infrastructure are here the two main factors that can make an operation viable or not attractive for investment.

II.1.4 The level playing field – a sustainable supply from 3rd countries

The G8 Summit declaration of Heiligendamm stated that “free, transparent and open markets are fundamental to global growth, stability and sustainable development” and called for a strong commitment to the principles of free trade and a further strengthening of the multilateral trading system. The G8 Summit also announced to promote global applicability of and compliance with WTO rules, also with regard to trade in primary and secondary mineral raw materials and calls on their trading partners to refrain from trade restraints and competition distortions in contravention of WTO rules.

The main policy issue here is to integrate the concept of sustainability into the EU trade policy. While it is important to ensure that the EU downstream-industry has a sufficient and secure supply of mineral resources from a global market, it needs to be understood that the solution cannot be only in the abolition of trade restrictions on the side of EU or other countries. Nor can it be found in the abolition or weakening of trade defence instruments on the side of the EU.

The EU needs to recognise that applying sustainability criteria to the supply of mineral resources to Europe also means limiting import from resources which have not been produced in a sustainable fashion. Since it is a very difficult and lengthy procedure to promote EU social and environmental standards to developing and emerging countries and ensure that supplies from these countries are sustainable, it seems reasonable to maintain at least the sheer defence against economic dumping
which would harm the European industry operating according to sustainable criteria, force it to relocate and increase the EU's industry's dependency on imports.

The EU needs to strike a better balance between its trade, energy and environmental policies. In particular it needs to

- Use EU market power to ensure that materials imported are produced in a sustainable manner;
- Foster implementation of European standards in these countries of origin through cooperation;
- Prevent import of unfair/unsustainable imports through trade defence mechanisms - maintain strong trade defence mechanism against unfair trade;
- Emphasize in Development Policy the inclusion of projects related to resource and related technology issues;
- Include sustainability criteria which would be appropriate in the assessment of projects from the donor and the beneficiary country;
- Capitalise on the expertise available in Europe to assist developing countries to develop their resources in a sustainable way.
II.2 Dealing with the legal framework

REACH

The beginning of 2007 saw EUROMINES’ major meeting on REACH and its impact for the extractive industry. The very well attended seminar explored the basics of the REACH obligation as well as the potential impacts, question of interpretation and developed a work programme which was followed up throughout the year.

In particular the interpretation of the exemption for ores and concentrates, the question of “chemically modified”, the revision of the Annexes IV and V of the regulation as well as the impacts for the extractive industry as a downstream user of chemicals were explored and then followed up. Due to the strong involvement most naturally occurring minerals are exempt from REACH registration now and consequently costs and workload for the industry could therefore be substantially reduced; a few cases are still to be resolved with the review of Annex V. Since not all decisions were taken in 2007, this work continues in 2008. In particular the work on the revision of the Annexes and the downstream user aspect needs further follow up.

EUROMINES launched is web-based REACH-tool and participated in various industrial groups and Commission consultations to represent the extractive industry's point of view.

Preparations for the implementation of the GHS system and the classification of ores and concentrates are under way and will be tackled in 2008.

Data to describe different ores and concentrates are already being collected and considerable effort will be required to bring traditional chemists and mineralogists to a common understanding of the legal framework and the technical requirements.

At the same time it has evolved that the EUROMINES Secretariat will be hosting a consortium for calcium carbide as well as a consortium for magnesia and related compounds. For the gold mining industry EUROMINES will be providing the point of call for occupational exposure scenarios as well the graphite industry do for coal tar pitch and pet coke.
Implementing the Mine Waste Directive

The Directive on the Management of Waste from the Extractive industry still requires a series of guidance notes for its implementation which should have been concluded by the Technical Adaptation Committee of the Member States by March/April 2008. Two work items were of particular interest: the guidance note on Financial Guarantees and the work of the CEN Standard for Characterisation of Wastes on acid generation behaviour. EUROMINES experts were much involved in developing the new EU standard for waste characterisation with specific emphasis on ARD potential and a general guidance on how to characterise extractive industry waste. The guidance on financial guarantees equally occupied the experts since the application of such guarantees in terms of their forms and size can have serious impact on the competitiveness of concerned operations.

New Waste Framework Directive

In conjunction with the new Mine Waste Directive the revision of the EU Waste Framework Directive provided an opportunity to adapt an aged piece of legislation to modern practices and economic as well as environmental management standards. The definitions of ‘recovery’ and ‘by-product’ and their relevance for mining operations will hopefully be clarified with this new piece of legislation that will be adopted in 2008.

New EU Soil Framework Directive

The Commission’s attempt to issue an EU wide Framework Directive on soil protection was in the end delayed by the Council. The extractive industry, due to its site specific geological and soil conditions, shared the view of some Member States that although soil protection is an integral part of each operation an EU wide system of monitoring and remediation would not have been appropriate. It remains to be seen what future Presidencies will propose as a possible way forward.
Halting the loss of biodiversity

Following its Communication on the halting of biodiversity-loss, the Commission had produced a number of guidance documents on the application of Article 6 of the Natura 2000 directive. A few Member States (e.g. Finland and Sweden) produced guidance for their minerals industries on how to approach the issue of compatibility of extraction and biodiversity protection.

The industry tackled the issue at international level, under the roof of ICMM and produced good practice guidance on biodiversity and environmental protection.

Several events on the matter were held and the newly founded EUROMINES Resource-Access Committee spent considerable time and efforts to address the issue. The committee is keen to further promote the ICMM Good Practice Guidance for Mining and Biodiversity and to contribute to follow-up of the European Commission's Communication on Halting the Loss of Biodiversity by 2010.

The Resource-Access Committee hopes to tackle the problem of access to mineral resources, by promoting debate of the current mining boom; international competition for resources; competition for access to land & water; the role of land-use planning and the role of community partnership.

Other environmental issues

But apart from directives that are of very specific concern to the extractive industry, 2007 saw many other legislative proposals and guidance notes that the extractive industry had to review and deal with, such as the mercury phase-out, the Surface Water Directive, and the E-PRTR.

For 2008 much discussion on the security of energy supply and energy price levels as well as the impact of the new ETS proposal are expected. Here the industry is concerned twofold, on the one hand as a producer of energy minerals and secondly as a user of energy for processing.
Improve Health & Safety performance in the extractive industry

The extractive industry is striving continuously to improve its health and safety performance. Much progress has been made, but it should be recognised that companies subject to restructuring processes and in process of closing do have issues due to lack of funds and changing priorities. This is of concern to all parties involved and should be addressed in a constructive way.

The SWPEI could play a major role in this area. 2007 saw the finalisation of the last translations of the guidance document and the preparation of the reporting under the first cross-sectoral European wide Social Dialogue Agreement for the protection of workers against respirable crystalline silica. The extractive industry is one of the 12 sectors that have signed up to this agreement.

The Social Dialogue Committee looked into various health and safety statistics as well as the difference between own employees as well as contractors. Due to the incompatibility of national statistics the EUROMINES Health and Safety Committee established its own accident reporting and reviewed the available data. Following the assessments best practice guides are under preparation. For 2008 at least two seminars on best practice in H & S management are planned.

At international level a review of the OEL setting procedures across the globe was conducted and guidance on OEL setting was published.
III. Knowledge and capacity building for more sustainable supply

Although advancement of technology has increased the efficiency of substances and products, in many cases this is offset by an even higher consumption of the same products. However, higher demand and lagging supply, like the ones now occurring on several raw material markets, usually lead to increasing prices which stimulates economical use of resources.

Knowledge about European resources

Information on production of mineral resources are publicly available from national statistics published in almost all EU Member States. Comprehensive compilations for many metals and minerals are available from geological surveys and governments or consultants. However, what is not available is up-to-date information on the mineral potential of Europe as well as a European wide comprehensive analysis of demand forecasts.

Therefore joint efforts of the national governments through their geological surveys to invest in data collection of available reserves on the basis of modern exploration techniques should be encouraged. Links between the national geological surveys and the European Data Centre on natural resources should be established and an EU (geological) resource map of sufficient detail for land use policy decisions should be developed.

Promoting sustainable production and use of resources in Europe

Innovation

The extractive and processing industrial sectors have continuously improved their resources and energy efficiency since both consumption items are cost factors. Due to costs of energy and prices for resources paid by the market the extractive industry has increased its energy and resource efficiency continuously.

But there is a need for advancement in technological development and in innovation related to the way the world produces and consumes.

Two years ago the industry established a European Technology Platform (ETP SMR) with a strategic research agenda which is addressing a number of research projects which are targeting a further 5-10% improvement in resources and energy efficiency. For most uses of mineral resources the biggest potential for improved resources efficiency lies in new product and application solutions and in totally new concepts.

In 2007 the ETP SMR held two major events, one concerning sustainable building and construction materials in the Belgian house “Living tomorrow” which demonstrates advanced materials application for our future living and in the former Belgacom building concerning high-tech and IT innovation in the extractive industry. On the occasion of the latter event the sector held a High Level platform discussion with Mr. Behrndt, member of the Cabinet of Vice-president Verheugen, and high level representatives of the industry.
Networking for European Mining Regions – the ENMR and local communities

2007 was – for the time being – the last year of EU funded cooperation for the European Network of Mining Regions. The network had brought together former and current mining regions across the whole of Europe in order to promote cooperation and information exchange between local authorities for the benefit of developing the extractive sector and its benefits for local communities. Over the past 3 years this project had produced a series of documents that had shown the interrelationship between economic development and the regions and their communities.

At international level this was mirrored in a major work by ICMM with regard to the Resource Endowment project which provided an analytical framework as well as a number of case studies. In particular with regard to the resource rich Eastern European Member States this type of work should be carried out in partnership with the national governments, possibly supported by DG Enterprise. EUROMINES in 2008 will seek to find new ways in order to foster the regional development as well as the networking across Europe.

Furthermore ICMM developed and published in 2005 a very well received Community Development TOOLKIT which aims to

- Foster constructive working relationships and alliances among communities, companies, and governments;
- Build capacity within governments, companies, and communities to address sustainable development issues at the local level;
- Promote the value-adding potential of mine development and operation in support of local and regional social and economic sustainable development efforts;
- Improve opportunities for the sustainable development of mining communities and regions during all phases of the mining cycle.

The ICMM toolkit includes
- Assessment Tools;
- Planning Tools;
- Relationships Tools;
- Program Management Tools,
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Tools.

Many new and old operators and exploration companies find this toolkit very useful and in 2006 and 2007 EUROMINES has been actively distributing this document since it underpins very much the sector’s Corporate Social responsibility activities.
Investing in education and future engineers

For several years EUROMINES has been actively supporting the work of the European Minerals Programmes, cooperation between several European universities and their mining and mineral departments. The industry therefore welcomed the Commission's decision to finally accept a proposal by the universities to continue their cooperation under the auspices of the Erasmus Mundus programme.

Due to the boom in the industry the sector is confronted with a shortage of personnel on all levels. For the EU three main areas of capacity building needs have been identified:

1. Skill development for a competent workforce in the industry with special attention to the retraining of Eastern European workforce in the extractive sector;
2. Increase of numbers of staff in local and regional competent authorities to cope with the increasing activity in the sector;
3. Capacity building in academic institutions by improving the financial and personnel situation of relevant university departments by their national governments.

Promoting sustainable production and use of resources in developing countries

Most products produced in the EU and worldwide contain components made from resources which are extracted and processed. These resources, components and products are imported to various degrees to Europe from elsewhere and hence their use/consumption in Europe indirectly has a global impact.

The new ACP-EC agreement, signed on 23rd of June 2000 in Cotonou, was concluded for a twenty-year period from March 2000 to February 2020. Recognising that instability of export earnings, particularly in the agricultural and mining sectors may adversely affect the development of the ACP States, the 2000 new ACP-EU Partnership Agreement established a system of additional grant support within the European Development Fund financial envelope for support of long-term development. This support substituted the traditional Stabex and Sysmin previously operated to compensate the instability of export earnings in agriculture and mining sectors.

Having identified strategically important metals and minerals the EU should prioritise its development aid and should

- provide political and possibly financial support for special partnerships for regions and areas where European enterprises are expressing an interest to invest in mining operations, in particular for the network of mining regions and their authorities, but also
- support research and development programmes that assist communities in developing countries to deal with their resource endowment and to complement the international Resource Endowment Programme by adding a few additional case studies.
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