



IGF

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM
on Mining, Minerals, Metals and
Sustainable Development

1100 – 220 Laurier Avenue W.
Ottawa, Ontario
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IGFMining.org

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2017 AGM Communiqué

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) has experienced explosive growth in recent years due to several reasons, including the rising value of mineral prices and the increasing difficulty of earning a living from agriculture and other rural activities. An estimated 40.5 million people were directly engaged in ASM in 2017, up from 13 million in 1999: an increase of over 300 per cent. That compares with only 7 million people working in large-scale mining.

There is a pressing need to enhance the quality of life of miners working outside of formal legal and economic systems, and to enhance the contribution of the sector to sustainable development.

Within this context, the IGF Secretariat has received an increasing number of requests for assistance from members seeking to implement “IGF Guidance for Governments: Managing Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining,” which was published in January 2017.

As a result of this demand and in response to the needs of many IGF member states, the IGF’s 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM) focused on the theme “Managing Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining.”

13th AGM

The IGF convened its 13th AGM at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from October 17–19, 2017. More than 400 participants registered, including delegates from 65 countries, as well as representatives from international organizations, industry associations and civil society. The IGF was pleased to welcome as new members Cambodia, Chad, Ecuador, Guyana, Liberia, Somalia and South Sudan.

Prior to the official opening of the AGM, government representatives gathered on October 16, 2017 for workshops on regional priorities and emerging issues regarding mining code and regulations. A consultation was also held on the upcoming local content policy guidance document, which will be released in February 2018 at the African Mining INDABA.

On October 17, 2017, UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant welcomed delegates and spoke of the need for the mining industry to spread social and environmental progress to small-scale mines. “In many mineral-producing countries, improving the health, social and environmental conditions in which those millions of people live will be the difference between meeting the Sustainable Development Goals or not,” she said.

Panelists from 22 nations and more than 35 organizations shared real-world experiences and insights during the AGM’s 19 sessions.

While many sessions focused on ASM-related issues, a wide range of other topics were discussed, including: local content policies; Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights; global environmental and social governance trends; voluntary sustainability initiatives; development minerals; government, community and industry engagement; mine closure; environmental impact assessment; women and mining; indigenous rights; biodiversity; financial benefit optimization; and the Sustainable Development Goals.



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Report Launches and Lunch Sessions

Several notable organizations launched reports at the AGM.

The UN Development Programme, UN Environment, the African Development Bank and the African Tax Administration Forum released studies on human rights, mine tailings, financial models and tax avoidance.

UN Environment's International Resource Panel hosted a luncheon stakeholder consultation session on mineral resource governance.

Two other organizations presented overviews of their work during lunch sessions: the G7 CONNEX Initiative, and the Minerals and Energy for Development Alliance (MEfDA).

Tax Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Technical Workshop

On October 20, 2017, following the official close of the AGM, a full-day technical workshop was delivered on tax base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) in the mining sector. Specifically, the workshop covered: tax incentives; the use of debt in mining; valuing mineral exports; transfer pricing; and fiscal stabilization arrangements. Policy toolkits on each of these topics were circulated for consultation. The workshop marked the beginning of a broader program of work to address BEPS in mining. The program is intended to assist developing country tax authorities and mining regulatory agencies to address aggressive tax planning by mining multinationals.

Executive Committee and Governance

Elections were held for new members of the Executive Committee. Representatives from Dominican Republic and Germany were nominated for a second term, representing North America, Central America and the Caribbean, and Europe (respectively). Newly-elected Executive Committee members included Uganda and Senegal (Africa), Mongolia (Asia-Pacific), and Argentina (South America). The Dominican Republic was elected as a Chair.

In addition, members adopted updated rules of procedure for the overall governance of the IGF.

Closing Remarks

In closing, the IGF Chair thanked delegates for their participation and UNCTAD for once again hosting the meeting.

The delegates thanked the outgoing IGF Chair and Executive Committee members for their support of the IGF, and thanked the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) for hosting the IGF Secretariat and for enhancing the services it offers to members. Delegates also thanked the organizers, as well as the Canadian and German governments for their ongoing generous support of the Forum.

For more information, please contact the Secretariat: Secretariat@IGFmining.org