

6TH ICGLR-OECD-UN GoE FORUM ON RESPONSIBLE MINERAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Opening remarks by Ms. Sabrina Ramzi, OECD Multi-stakeholder Steering Group (MSG) Chair and Senior Policy Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Government of Canada

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Good morning everyone, and welcome to the sixth ICGLR-OECD-UN Group of Experts joint forum on responsible mineral supply chains. My name is Sabrina Ramzi, and I am the chair of the multi-stakeholder steering group that assists with the promotion and implementation of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance.

Je vois que la salle est bien remplie – en fait, plus de trois cent soixante-quinze personnes se sont enregistrées pour ce réunion – et je vous remercie pour votre présence. Comme vous le savez, c'est la première fois que nous avons organisé cette conférence dans la région des grands lacs, et nous sommes ravies de voir une telle forte participation.

Before I invite our hosts and other distinguished guests to offer some welcoming remarks of their own, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the contributions of the various organizations and stakeholders without which this meeting would not have been possible.

First of all, I would like to express our collective thanks to the Government of Rwanda for offering to host this meeting in Kigali, and to the excellent team they've put in place to provide much-needed and much-appreciated logistical and administrative support.

We are very privileged to have with us a number of high-level representatives from the region, including Minister Kamenzi and his fellow ministers from the Rwandan Government, as well as Mr. Modibo Touré from the UN, and I would like to address a very warm welcome to you all and thank you for taking the time to participate in our meeting.

Je tiens à remercier les trois co-organisateurs du Forum conjoint, la conférence internationale sur la région des grand lacs, l'OCDE et le groupe d'experts des Nations Unies. Ces organisations ont rassemblé les réunions du Forum deux fois par an depuis 2011, et leur collaboration continue est vraiment appréciée.

I would also like to express appreciation for the contributions of all the members of the multi-stakeholder steering group – including the Vice-Chairs – and all of the members of the Forum. It is your engagement that has made this initiative so worthwhile. Last, but by no means least, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the OECD Secretariat – Tyler, Shivani and Lucy – for all of their tireless work on these issues.

With that, I will now turn to our hosts to offer some remarks. Please note that the members of the media are currently present for this part of the session, but, following the opening, we will return to our usual format.

I would like to introduce Professor Roel Niewenkamp, Chair of the OECD Working Party on Responsible Business Conduct, and ask him to provide some remarks.

Thank you. Maintenant, je voudrais passer la parole au Professor Ntumba Luaba Lumu de la conférence internationale sur la région des grand lacs.

Merci beaucoup. I would now like to ask His Excellency Stanislas Kamenzi, Minister of Natural Resources with the Government of Rwanda to officially open the Forum meeting.

Thank you very much, your Excellency. At this juncture, I would like to thank the media for their participation and ask you that you kindly leave us so that we can continue with our agenda for today.

So, as you're all aware, we have nothing short of a packed agenda for today, so I will try to be brief as I quickly go through our objectives and the ground rules for this meeting.

As you will have seen from the agenda, we will be focussed on five main goals over the course of this Forum meeting:

The first goal is to better understand the successes, challenges and opportunities of implementation of the Guidance in the Great Lakes region. Our focus has always been, and will continue to be, on constructive engagement to enable responsible sourcing to take place in the region. One particular question we would like to explore a bit more deeply over the course of this meeting is how the Forum can best engage to allow companies to have confidence to source from the Great Lakes region?

The second goal is to resolve previously discussed implementation challenges, particularly with respect to the 3Ts. The sub-group that was formed to look into this issue has been working on a best practice approach, and we will be using our time in Kigali to try to advance this approach as far as possible. Some promising progress has been made since the May Forum, but there is still a ways to go. There are no simple solutions, but we have every faith that with your continued engagement and unbridled enthusiasm, the Forum will find a way through this very complex issue. One particular aspect that we're looking to elaborate is how we can keep the pressure on high quality assurance, while at the same time not penalizing good faith efforts on due diligence...we look forward to hearing from you.

The third goal is to promote pilot initiatives and engagement in the region (both existing or planned closed-pipe projects for 3Ts and gold). This Forum has placed an emphasis on practical and on-the-ground approaches to due diligence, and we're excited to hear about successful pilots and explore how we can further encourage and scale up such initiatives.

The fourth goal is to strengthen on-the-ground due diligence programmes based in the Great Lakes region, including regional certification schemes, by fostering increased coordination and mutual support.

Finally, the fifth goal of the meeting is to put our collective thinking caps on and **strategize about incentives for responsible mining and trade** in conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

Next, I'd just like to spend a minute on the ground rules for the meeting. So many of you are old hands at this, so I know you're all aware, but it's never a bad idea to remind ourselves that the purpose of this Forum is to foster a frank and open dialogue to advance responsible mineral sourcing. In other words, this is meant to be safe space to address issues and work together towards practical solutions. This doesn't mean that we will always agree (otherwise we could all just go home now), but that everyone treats each other with respect and that everyone is afforded the opportunity to express their views.

I believe you're all aware that, with the exception of the welcome session, this meeting is held under the Chatham House Rule, i.e. the information presented over the course of this meeting is only to be used on a non-attribution basis.

Also, just a quick word on social media – some of you may have already discovered the hash tag #3TGKigali, and we encourage you to do share your thoughts, with due respect to the Chatham House Rule, of course.

Finally, given that we have such a packed agenda, I just wanted to **quickly provide an overview of what we have in store for today:**

The **morning** sessions will include

- an **update on the security situation** in the Great Lakes region and on the **economic dimensions of the UN Peace Plan**;
- we will also hear from the **ICGLR on the implementation of the regional certification mechanism**;
- there will be **national-level updates** on the implementation of responsible mineral sourcing; and
- a discussion on the **enablers and incentives** for responsible mining and trade in the Great Lakes region.

In the **afternoon** sessions, we will continue with our focus on the region with

- an update on efforts undertaken to date in the **DRC** on responsible mineral sourcing;
- as well as **parallel working sessions** on the **3T best practice paper** I mentioned earlier, and a discussion of **gold implementation activities in Uganda, Burundi, and Tanzania**.

I don't think we could ask for a more interesting first day!

I think that's all for this first session – I hope we're still running on schedule! I would now like to ask **Ambassador Kabura** to come to the front to facilitate the next session, and grateful if the next intervenors – **UN Assistant Secretary-General Toure**, as well as **Mr. Fahey and Mr. Fombah of the UN Group of Experts on the DRC** –could also make their way to the front.

Thank you very much; merci beaucoup.