

**Statement by the STC Major Group on
Creating an Enabling Environment for Sustainable Mining**

Thursday, May 12, 2011

(15:00 – 18:00)

For mining to contribute positively to sustainable development, negative impacts need to be minimized, potential benefits maximized, and the risks associated with alternative mining and mineral processing methods identified and dealt with. This necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the mineralogical characteristics of the deposit, the environmental systems within which it resides, including terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, and the social systems and cultures of peoples adjacent to the proposed site and as well as those potentially impacted by development. Such understanding will depend on input from geological, environmental, mining and metallurgical, mechanical, chemical and civil engineers, among others.

Sustainable mineral development (mine planning and development), and mineral and metals extraction and processing, closure, and reclamation technologies, as well as minerals and metals reuse and recycling, will require continued advances and innovation in technology, which can only be achieved through education of the next and future generations of scientists and engineers, and other professionals, as well as the funding of basic and applied research. In addition, a well trained workforce will be essential to ensure that life cycle thinking, best mining practices and cleaner production are followed. We therefore want to stress the importance of worker training, sharing of best practices, technology transfer, and capacity building in all relevant fields.

The Scientific and Technological Community Major Group is prepared to work in partnership with the United Nations, member states and all interested parties on these efforts.

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