

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Mining has a direct impact on the environment and local communities, not only in the immediate area of the mine itself but also in the much wider area affected by machinery plants, processing equipment, loading facilities, transport access, accommodation and so on. This impact will be on either or both of:

- Areas not currently used by humans, with effects on wildlife and biodiversity, and
- Areas in use, including for other livelihoods such as low scale animal production.

Decisions regarding the benefits of mining projects must be based on available information, legislation, consultation and early social and environmental impact assessment. NGOs and other organizations support communities and have extensive experience in collecting, systematizing and analysing information on mining activities and their impacts on different regions of the planet, although, unfortunately, data are often collected only after the damage is done.

In response to number three of the key questions we believe that mining companies have a duty to safe guard the environmental and social aspects of mining that goes beyond the current standards of being a corporate citizen.

As mentioned by the panelists and several delegates, governance is a major issue with mining. I suggest that this issue of responsibility is not limited to governments, but extends to the companies as well. If companies are unable to safeguard the environment and social aspects, and operate in an open and transparent manner, then it is questionable whether they should be in operation at all.

Mining companies that are capable of safeguarding the environment and communities need to conduct Environmental impact assessments that include not only the effect on environment, but also on the workers, the communities, landscape, cultural heritage, biodiversity, and animal welfare. We wish to endorse the interventions made by other delegates on this aspect.

As a way forward International and national policy and legislation must be developed to ensure that priority is given to human rights such as the production of food, clean water, a healthy environment and security, rather than to mining interests and profits. Additionally, mechanisms supporting alternative economic activities must be developed

In conclusion, we suggest a way forward that is sustainable; holds mining companies responsible for their actions and abilities; that Environmental impact assessments, and international and national laws are inclusive to realities of people, workers, animals, and the environment; and that these discussions take on a holistic approach, that considers the 3 Es: Environment, Economics, And Ethics.

Thank you.

Jennifer

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