

**Statement of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the APEC  
Ministers Responsible for Mining Meeting (MRM6)  
August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018  
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea**

## Introduction

1. We, the APEC Ministers Responsible for Mining (MRM) and other senior officials, met in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea for the 6<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018 under the Chairmanship of Hon. Johnson Tuke, Minister for Mining for Papua New Guinea.

2. Reaffirming the 10 APEC Mining Policy Principles, we recognize that inclusive and sustainable development in mining remains a significant part of development and prosperity of the region, and will continue to be so going forward. We note also the growth of the Digital Economy and we stress the need to explore opportunities brought about by the digital era that can contribute further towards sustainable development in mining. In this light, we embrace the APEC theme for 2018 “Harnessing Inclusive Opportunities, Embracing the Digital Future” with three key priorities: ‘Improving Connectivity, Deepening Regional Economic Integration’ ‘Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Growth’ and ‘Strengthening Inclusive Growth through Structural Reform’.

3. We continue to acknowledge that significant challenges exist that entail the need to overcome barriers to innovation-driven growth and further investment. Equally important, we acknowledge the need for shared value in developing these resources so that the benefits accrued are enjoyed by all without compromising the environment.

4. In this connection, we welcome the 6<sup>th</sup> MRM theme of “Embracing Inclusive and Sustainable Mining in the Digital Age” focusing on ‘promoting further investment in mining’, ‘overcoming innovation-driven growth barriers’ and ‘inclusive development – shared value’, to achieve sustainable growth in the mining sector whilst minimizing impacts on the environment and improving the livelihood of communities.

5. The APEC region continues to be an engine of global economic growth as well as a significant producer and consumer of minerals, metals and related products and with the emergence and growing importance of new commodities such as lithium, graphite, cobalt and nickel, we acknowledge that the mining sector continues to hold significant potential in contributing to global trade.

6. We are encouraged by the fact that prices for many commodities have been slowly recovering from low levels, and with the emergence of new commodities with record high prices, coupled with actions by governments and industry, the mining sector is once again poised for growth.

7. At this juncture we note the emergence of innovative business adopting transformative technologies and practices in establishing mines of the future, and the important role that the mining equipment technology and services sector plays, particularly as we move into the digital age. We encourage further investments in innovation, technological advancement, and appropriate capacity building, noting that digital technology is revolutionizing industries and has the potential to generate significant advances in the mining sector.

8. We also reaffirm our commitment to closer cooperation in the mining sector in the Asia-Pacific region to promote innovation-driven growth and coordinated, sustainable, quality development as well as social responsibility to reduce project risk, by collaborating with all stakeholders.

9. In acknowledgement of the above, we call for appropriate structural reforms in government policies relating to project financing including investment in technology, as well as investments in social and economic development of all stakeholders including host communities. We further call for economies to continue work towards creating an enabling environment in which industry and government can regularly engage in dialogue to discuss policy outcomes and reforms.

To this end, we propose the following.

### **Promoting further investment in the Mining Sector**

10. Given the current global trend in commodity prices, we recognize the importance of continued investment in exploration and mining as a foundation for sustenance and growth, and call on all economies, and industry to continue to seek options to promote further investment in the sector.

Sound regulatory and fiscal frameworks are essential to encourage investment in mining, as are security of tenure to investors and stability of investment terms, as well as necessary safeguards for the environment, employees and communities.

11. We will continue to participate in the APEC Investment Facilitation Action Plan and encourage adoption of effective measures to promote an enabling environment for mining investment and trade facilitation in minerals, metals and related products. We also stress the importance of promoting open, transparent, and well operating markets in the mining sector, as well as in investment and cooperation.

12. We will continue to promote cooperation and collaboration on information sharing on mining issues with the private sector including through the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) in order to find solutions to promote investment in new areas and address new challenges. We recognize the importance of strengthening dialogue on mining policy and practices by working closely with other relevant stakeholders and international organizations that play an active role in the mining sector including the World Bank, the Inter-governmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development (IGF), and the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM).

### **Overcoming innovation-driven growth barriers**

13. We affirm that innovation is necessary for the mining industry to transform. This includes technological advancement, adoption of more innovative approaches to engaging with stakeholders, re-envisioning the future workplace, and identifying commodities that will be in demand going into the future. In doing so, we acknowledge the importance of addressing barriers to innovation-driven growth and therefore call for more collaboration between all stakeholders. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen physical, institutional, and people to people connectivity by 2025.

14. We continue to support creating an enabling environment for scientific and technological driven innovation policies, appropriate structural reforms and facilitating market-based transfer of appropriate technology. We recognize the importance of appropriate policy formulation and implementation, which also improve standards and regulations to meet our social and environmental objectives whilst facilitating trade and investment.

15. We acknowledge the importance of the wider value chain and the mining equipment, technology, and services sector, which helps to drive employment, growth and innovation and is an integral part of the mining, energy and resources industry

16. We also recognize the importance of new technology and techniques that promote sustainable, safe and efficient exploration, construction and mining. We encourage further investment in technological advancement to increase employment, efficiency and productivity.

### **Inclusive Development – ‘shared value’**

17. We recognize the importance of development in mining and encourage government, private sector and other stakeholders to develop appropriate policies that support social and economic development.

18. We recognize the importance of having transparent and reliable information and data, which is crucial for the decision making process in any project design. We therefore acknowledge the work undertaken by Chile on the development of the report “Mining Industry Competitiveness: Improving Productivity and Data to Attract Investment”, to promote the sharing of existing publicly available commercial and official data.

19. We acknowledge the efforts of the private sector in the corporate social responsibility space including benefit-sharing arrangements as well as community development initiatives, and encourage continued collaboration and partnership with all relevant stakeholders including the Inter-governmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF), APEC’s Investment Experts Group, International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), and ABAC to forge new partnerships that go beyond traditional corporate social responsibilities.

20. We note the importance of the development of the mining, equipment, technology, and service sector as identified by Australia and the strong role which APEC plays in capability development given the similarities across economies. We therefore acknowledge the work undertaken by Australia on the development of the report “Mining Equipment, Technology and Services”.

21. We recognize that mine closure and rehabilitation including decommissioning of mine facilities is an integral part of the mining cycle. Improving international best practices concerning mine closure regulation increases overall trust in the mining sector, reduces environmental impacts and builds public confidence to deepen regional economic integration. Appropriate closure can also result in mines becoming engines for development beyond their own life, through a process that minimizes adverse impacts and maximizes after-use benefits in the long term. We therefore acknowledge the work undertaken by Canada on the development of the APEC Mine Closure Checklist for Governments, to promote governance frameworks for mine closure in the APEC region that support sustainable mineral development.

22. We also recognize the importance of participation by all stakeholders, especially that of local communities. In that regard, we look forward to the outcome of Papua New Guinea’s project on “Promoting Inclusive Mining: Consultation Model for Dealing with Local Interests Including Indigenous Communities and Women in Mining”.

23. We also recognize the importance to local communities of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the mining sector; therefore, we look forward to the outcome of Chile’s project on “Identify Good Practices in Policies/Models for SME Mining Development”.

24. Women contribute significantly to the mining sector both as employees and as an important stakeholder group representing impacted community members. We therefore call for economic empowerment of women in the mining sector.

25. Recognizing that artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) plays an important role in the economic development of many economies, we support the improvement of ASGM activities through the development of appropriate policy guidelines. We encourage economies to address environment, health and safety issues within ASGM and, if they have not already, to ratify and implement the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which entered into force in August 2017. To this end, we welcome and look forward to the outcome of the U.S. project on 'Developing Training Materials to Promote Reduction of Mercury Use in Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining'.

26. As part of the improvement of the ASGM sector, we encourage increased transparency within the sector and its absorption into the formal economic sector. Recognizing the increase in ties between illegal mining and criminal activities, we encourage collaboration between stakeholders to combat criminal mining and its impacts.

27. We are aware that large mining projects in the APEC region face challenges with relocation and resettlement for communities displaced by mining projects. We understand that mining companies do consider and have in place relocation and resettlement plans. Therefore, we call for both government and industry to work together to appropriately address this important concern with all necessary socio-economic and infrastructure services made available to them.

28. We express satisfaction with the practical and substantial work of the Mining Task Force (MTF) this year, including participation in the APEC Mining Public Private Dialogue held annually since 2014 in conjunction with MTF meetings and we agreed that APEC should continue to be a platform for collaborative work with the private sector on mining related issues. We agree to work more closely with APEC working groups by identifying synergies through cross fora collaboration in order to deepen mining cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

29. We also acknowledge the contribution of ABAC through its initiatives stipulated in the 'White Paper' which demonstrates the potential to track development indicators and build non-mine dependent economies that result in economic empowerment across the APEC region. Extractive companies, governments, communities and civil societies can work together to foster development and to drive inclusive growth that reduces poverty, generates income, and creates sustainable development for the regions' low-earning income communities.

30. We acknowledge also the direct engagement of the region's mining industry CEOs. We noted the deliberations and valuable contributions made during the discussion with them on the topic of promoting further investment in the industry.

31. We are grateful to our host, Papua New Guinea for its arrangements and organization of the meeting as well as its warm hospitality.