

## Conflict-Free Tin Initiative announced

BRUSSELS – Sept. 18, 2012 - Industry partners convened by the Dutch government today announced their intention to start a conflict-free tin sourcing program in South Kivu, an eastern province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This happened during the GeSI and EICC Conflict-Free Minerals Workshop attended by over 175 stakeholders representing Industry, Governments and Civil Society.

The *Conflict-Free Tin Initiative* is a pilot that aims to create demand for conflict-free tin from a region whose economy has collapsed due to series of severe internal and cross-border conflicts. Armed groups in the East of the DRC are known to control or tax minerals trade as a source of revenue. Many companies worldwide have shied away from purchasing minerals from some parts of the DRC. Moreover, recent legislation in the United States has created a de facto embargo in the region.

The *Conflict-Free Tin Initiative* introduces a tightly controlled conflict-free supply chain outside the control of the armed groups. It offers a first step towards renewed economic activity and hope to the masses of unemployed miners. Currently, the infrastructure is being put in place in the DRC for this pilot to be able to start.

So far Royal Philips Electronics, Tata Steel, Motorola Solutions, Research In Motion (RIM), Alpha, AIM Metals & Alloys, Malaysia Smelting Corporation Berhad (MSC), Traxys and ITRI are committed to participate in the *Conflict-Free Tin Initiative*. The *Initiative* welcomes all companies, including mines, smelters, component manufacturers and product manufacturers (end-users) to join, and its success will be largely measured by the industry participation in the closed-pipe supply system.

The traceability and due diligence mechanism (iTSCi) is operated by Pact, an independent NGO. The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the neutral broker that brought the partners along the supply chain together, from mine to smelter to end-user. The DRC government and local civil society are closely involved in the initiative which is structured within the framework of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region and will be consistent with the due diligence guidance of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This project is hoped to contribute to the reform efforts of the Government of the DRC and its Mines Ministry. Its progress will depend on how the security situation in South Kivu develops.

Ben Knapen, Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation: 'It is unique that this diverse group of stakeholders has been brought together in an initiative that can improve the livelihoods of the people in conflict prone South Kivu. This can be a first step in a region where there are many wrongs to make right.'

ITRI: 'We are delighted to be able to contribute to this very significant step towards bringing mining based communities in conflict free areas of the Kivu's back into responsible international supply chains - offering the opportunity for further development and a better economic future.'

Fredrick Spalcke, Chief Purchasing Officer, Royal Philips Electronics said: 'We want to contribute to a solution that offers a prospect out of the conflict, by creating a demand for legitimate trade of minerals throughout our supplier base all the way back to the mines in DRC. Philips does so by placing its first order for tin through this closed-pipe initiative.'

Kees Gerretse, Chief Purchasing Officer, Tata Steel: 'As a tinsplate producer operating worldwide we take very seriously our responsibilities regarding the sustainable sourcing of tin in conflict areas.'

Looking after the wellbeing of our own employees is an important aspect of Tata Steel's heritage and we applaud initiatives like this that also benefit suppliers' employees.'

Sasha Lezhnev, Senior Policy Analyst at the Enough Project, the project to end genocide and crimes against humanity: 'Consumers across North America and Europe are demanding electronics and other products that contain conflict-free minerals from Congo, and this joint initiative is showing leadership by sourcing minerals from a conflict-free mine in eastern Congo. Minerals must be transparently traded, so that exports fully match production capacity, and consumers can be confident they are buying conflict-free products that help communities in Congo.'

David Suraski, Executive Vice President, Assembly Materials Division: 'AIM Metals and Alloys is proud to support this industry initiative which will ensure the success of legitimate mines and empower the people of the DRC. This adds to AIM's industry leading commitment to social causes along with our environmental and solder technological advances.'

More information about the *Conflict-Free Tin Initiative* can be found on the official website: <http://solutions-network.org/site-cfti>.

---

Resources:

- Conflict-Free Tin Initiative website: <http://solutions-network.org/site-cfti/>
- GeSI and EICC Workshop official website: <http://www.resolv.org/site-scworkshop2012/>
- The iTSCi mechanism: [https://www.itri.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_zoo&view=frontpage&Itemid=60](https://www.itri.co.uk/index.php?option=com_zoo&view=frontpage&Itemid=60)
- NGO PACT: <http://www.pactworld.org/>
- Solutions for Hope project: <http://solutions-network.org/site-solutionsforhope/>