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REPORT

Raw Materials Week 2024

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Raw Materials Week

From December 9–12, 2024, the **European Commission** hosted the Raw Materials Week, featuring events and panels with experts from EU institutions, governments, and key industries. Discussions covered derisking raw material projects with EU funding, advancing technology and innovation, boosting domestic supply, enhancing circularity, market trends, and upholding environmental and social standards. Cooperation with international partners was also emphasized.

Speeches and Highlights of the panel “**Global Gateway: Advancing the 360-Degree Approach to Raw Materials Value Chains in the DRC and Zambia**” on December 9, 2024.

Mr. Koen Doens, Director General, DG INTPA, European Commission

- Affirmed **Africa’s pivotal role** in the Global Gateway strategy.
- Highlighted strategic partnerships as crucial to achieving autonomy and sustainable supply chains.
- Stressed the importance of green and digital transitions, particularly through partnerships with Zambia and the DRC.
- Announced EU financial support for **cobalt enterprises** in the DRC and technical capacity-building in Zambia.
- Emphasized investments through public-private collaborations to strengthen mining sectors in both nations.
- Recognized the DRC’s leadership as the largest cobalt exporter and a vital partner in the Lobito Corridor initiative.

Mr. Paul Chanda C. Kabuswe, Minister of Mines and Mineral Development of the Republic of Zambia

- Underlined Africa’s fundamental role in the global green transition and critical mineral supply.
- Advocated for value addition, job creation, and industrialization to maximize the benefits of Zambia’s raw materials sector.
- Presented Zambia’s Vision 2030 development agenda, aligned with global demand for critical minerals.
- Highlighted ambitious production goals: 3 million tons of copper, along with significant outputs of lithium, cobalt, and manganese.
- Acknowledged €10 billion in investments over the past two years, revitalizing Zambia’s mining sector.
- Defined **four pillars** for Zambia’s partnership with the EU:
 1. Strengthening partnerships with the EU.
 2. Access to advanced, cutting-edge technologies.

3. Availability of affordable capital.
 4. Value addition for job creation and economic growth.
- Announced efforts to map critical materials, regulate the mining industry, and formalize artisanal mining to tackle child labor and exploitation.
 - Called for stable infrastructure development, referencing the Lobito Corridor as a model partnership for resource movement and trade.

S.E. Kizito Pakabomba Kapinga Mulume, Minister of Mines of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- Expressed ambition to position the **DRC as a global leader** in mineral exports while driving shared prosperity.
- Emphasized EU's support for transparency, accountability, and value addition in the DRC's mining sector.
- Detailed **reforms underway**:
 - Establishment of a Congolese public council and regulatory authority to manage strategic resources.
 - Creation of a national capability for certification, with 30,000 certificates already issued.
 - Development of a comprehensive list of mining sites for inspections and validations by 2025.
- Promoted cooperation with global partners, including European companies, to ensure strong and transparent supply chains.
- Advocated for ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards and better business harmonization within the DRC.
- Invited European private sector investment to enhance local transformation, diversify resources, and improve living conditions.
- Highlighted new mining prospects, including zinc, and mechanisms for traceability to combat illegal resource exports.

The **11th Annual High-Level Conference on Raw Materials** saw the official endorsement of the **Roadmap for the Strategic Partnership between the EU and the DRC**.

Mr. Stéphane Séjourné, Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy, European Commission

- Emphasized the importance of enhancing and expanding partnerships worldwide to secure raw material supplies.
- Announced the forthcoming publication of 170 applications made for the list of strategic projects under **Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)** next year.

- Stressed the EU's commitment to raw material recycling and maintaining partnerships that respect environmental standards, human rights, and the sovereignty of partners.
- Highlighted enhanced partnerships with the DRC and Australia, with an official endorsement of their respective roadmaps.

Mr. Jozef Sikela, Commissioner for International Partnerships, European Commission

- Highlighted that partnerships cover the entire **raw materials value chain**, ensuring secure supply for the EU and supporting local development through tangible projects.
- Presented the DRC partnership roadmap as essential for strategic autonomy, clean energy transition, and sustainable economic growth.
- Urged collaboration among leaders from the DRC, Team Europe, and the private sector to further develop the partnership.
- Emphasized that the roadmap is a foundational step and a pathway to creating value and prosperity through shared frameworks.

Ms. Kerstin Jorna, Director General, Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission

- Reiterated the importance of secure, resilient, and sustainable value chains in advancing the EU's raw materials agenda.

S.E. Kizito Pakabomba Kapinga Mulume, Minister of Mines of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- Expressed pride and responsibility in launching the **roadmap** that solidifies the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the DRC and the EU.
- Presented the DRC's ambitious vision, reflected in **five priorities**:
 1. Promoting sustainable value chains for raw materials through collaboration.
 2. Investing in sustainable infrastructure and local processing of minerals to reduce dependence on raw exports.
 3. Strengthening natural resource management, particularly in critical materials like cobalt, while adhering to environmental standards.
 4. Advancing scientific and technological innovation for efficient resource use.
 5. Enhancing local capacities to create jobs and foster economic growth.
- Stressed the importance of transparent and equitable management of natural resources to benefit local populations.



- Positioned the DRC as a central player in the global energy transition towards net-zero carbon emissions.
- Encouraged transforming challenges into opportunities for an inclusive and prosperous future.

Conclusion

The event underscored the shared commitment of the EU, the DRC, and other global partners to creating a sustainable and equitable raw materials value chain. The endorsement of roadmaps and MoUs signifies a collaborative step towards achieving strategic autonomy, environmental sustainability, and economic inclusivity. These initiatives provide a robust framework for translating ambitious visions into concrete actions, fostering a global transition to cleaner energy and sustainable development.