



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council conclusions on the Union's Approach on Responsible Sourcing of Minerals

*FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 23 June 2014*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council recalls that trade in minerals holds great potential for development. However, when minerals are sourced from conflict-affected and high-risk areas their trade can intensify or perpetuate violent conflict and undermine development, stabilization efforts, good governance, human rights and the rule of law. Breaking the links between conflict and minerals extraction is a complex challenge and one that is critical to stability and peace.
2. The Council welcomes the presentation of the integrated approach by the High Representative and the Commission. Its objective is to stop profits from the trade of minerals being used to fund armed conflict and to promote responsible sourcing from conflict-affected and high-risk areas based on the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High Risk Areas.
3. The Council recalls that the OECD Guidance is based on the concept of due diligence as developed by the United Nations Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Council reaffirms its support for the implementation of the OECD Guidance. The Council notes that while the trade of conflict minerals is relatively well documented for the Great Lakes Region, responsible sourcing is also a matter of concern in other countries and regions.
4. The Council underscores the need to reduce the opportunities for armed actors to resort to trade in minerals in conflict-affected and high-risk areas, to promote the practice of due diligence by EU operators and to create the conditions for companies to source responsibly from conflict-affected and high-risk areas. In this regard, the Council notes that supply chain due diligence must be encouraged in a way that is proportionate and in line with EU industrial and raw material policies while preserving legitimate and responsible mining activity and related trade in and from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

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5. The Council stresses that breaking the links between conflict and minerals extraction requires a broad range of policies and actions, including appropriate incentives for EU companies, capacity building and outreach activities, to be deployed in a strategically coherent way in order to effectively tackle the root causes of conflict and fragility.
6. The Council acknowledges that the Commission and the High Representative will continue to promote a strong, comprehensive and coherent EU raw materials diplomacy, addressing the security-development nexus in a joined-up and strategic manner. The ongoing mapping exercise on raw materials projects in third countries should increase the EU's capability to address the foreign and security policy aspects of raw materials in a comprehensive way. Such exercise should include the identification of areas of added value of EU action in relation to Member States' action on foreign and security policy aspects of raw materials, thus ensuring synergies and a coherent and effective use of EU instruments.
7. The Council welcomes the Commission and the High Representative call for action by Member States to support due diligence efforts at national level through appropriate instruments.
8. These Council Conclusions relate to the Union integrated approach on responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas and are without prejudice to the appropriate examination of the legislative proposal mentioned therein or its subsequent review."
