

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

T.I.C. responds to International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) motion 064

Brussels, Belgium, January 31st 2020

A motion¹ at the upcoming IUCN conference claims that ‘environmental degradation in Africa happens because importers fail to follow OECD guidelines on sustainable mining practices and human rights compliance (“OECD Guidance”)’. The motion alleges without any factual justification that those sourcing columbite-tantalite (coltan) in Africa fail to follow the standards laid out in the OECD Guidance.

To the contrary, the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.)², as the industry organisation, requires its members to comply with the requirements of the OECD Guidance. Furthermore, all tantalum smelters/refiners, that are members of the T.I.C., are required to be independently audited³ to verify their compliance with the OECD Guidance.

“The T.I.C. membership takes seriously its leadership position in social and environmental issues for the tantalum and niobium industry, as witnessed by the fact that 100% of our smelters have been audited and verified as conflict-free through the RMAP audit process. The tantalum industry is proud of its track record in the area of verifiable compliance programs for ethical minerals extraction in central Africa and strongly condemns any and all illegal mining activities in the region” stated Dr. Daniel Persico, President of the T.I.C.

The industries that are regulated through these verification programs support tens of thousands of workers and their families while involving the whole supply chain in the process of sourcing integrity.

The T.I.C. was an early adopter of conflict-free mining initiatives in central Africa, having engaged with the tin industry, via the International Tin Association (ITA), in setting up the on-the-ground track and trace ITSCI Program from 2008 onwards. This program, underscored by OECD Guidance, remains to this day the largest due diligence program for tantalum, tin and tungsten minerals mined in the DRC and neighboring countries.

Roland Chavasse

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Daniel F. Persico, Ph.D.

President

1 - 064 “Promoting sustainable and ethical mining practices in Africa”

2 - The T.I.C. is the international association for the tantalum and niobium industries. It is a non-profit organisation founded in 1974 under Belgian law that represents around 90 members from over 25 countries involved with all aspects of our industry. Further details can be found at www.TaNb.org.

3 - The Responsible Minerals Assurance Process (RMAP) operated by the Responsible Minerals Initiative

[END]

About the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.)

Since its inception, the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C. or the Association) has grown and developed to encompass the changing nature of the tantalum and niobium industries and will continue in the same spirit in facing future challenges. After initially focusing on just tantalum, in 1986 niobium joined the association and today our membership represents every aspect of the global tantalum and niobium industries.

The Association:

- An international, non-profit association founded in 1974 under Belgian law.
- Around 90 member companies from over 25 countries involved with all aspects of the tantalum and niobium industry supply chain (including mining, trading, processing, recycling, metal fabrication, capacitor manufacturing, medical...).
- The Association is run by its Executive Committee. This Committee reflects the range of activities of the members and covers the geographic spread of the membership, too. Presidents have been drawn from all sectors of the industry and from many parts of the world. Elections are held annually.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness and promote the remarkable properties of tantalum and niobium in all their forms.
- Disseminate information on any matter affecting that industry, excluding price and related information and any other proprietary information.
- Address major issues and challenges facing its industry such as conflict minerals legislation, artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), and the transport of naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORM).
- Organize a General Assembly of the membership in October each year for business and technical presentations. Typically, this includes a field trip to a member company or associated industrial facility.
- Publish a quarterly Bulletin newsletter containing interesting and informative articles about the T.I.C. and the global tantalum and niobium industries.
- Collect statistics from member companies (via an independent company to ensure confidentiality) on tantalum and niobium production, shipments and consumption. Participating members receive quarterly statistics updates.

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