

# PRESS RELEASE



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## **iTSCi responsible minerals programme receives donation from Qualcomm**

iTSCi announced that its responsible minerals programme has received a donation from Qualcomm Incorporated, a world leader in 3G, 4G and next-generation wireless technologies, to help break the link between minerals and conflict. iTSCi is a unique and highly successful initiative delivering on-the-ground traceability, due diligence and risk identification, supporting the marketing of minerals and enabling community projects for tin, tungsten and tantalum (3T) mining in four countries of the African Great Lakes region.

“This is a welcome and important contribution to the iTSCi programme from our long-term Associate Member Qualcomm, especially at a time when recent market conditions have pressured upstream funding to a critical level,” said iTSCi Governance Committee member Kay Nimmo. “With this donation Qualcomm continues to show leadership in recognising the responsibility of downstream companies to give more than just verbal support to due diligence efforts of upstream producers.”

“Qualcomm has been committed to efforts to responsibly source minerals from the DRC and surrounding regions since before 2010, when we published our first conflict free minerals policy,” said Paul Guckian, Vice President of Engineering at Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. “We believe it is important to not only continue to promote responsible in-region sourcing, but also to contribute to on-the-ground traceability and development efforts in the Great Lakes Region.”

iTSCi now supports the supply of ‘3T’ minerals from over 1,500 mine sites across the region in accordance with recommendations of OECD Guidance.

The programme supports government tagging and enables traceability of each bag of minerals from sites across DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda that are regularly monitored for security issues and any potential serious human rights abuses. Data is collated by iTSCi and made available to smelters giving mine-to-metal traceability for downstream user audits. The work includes monitoring of due diligence, incident monitoring and auditing and, through achieving successful marketing of minerals, enables community projects to develop.

Qualcomm made a previous donation to iTSCi in 2014 which helped kick start activity on step-by-step improvement of health and safety in the mining areas through production of a training curriculum. This is now being rolled out and bringing benefits more widely through additional project funding for ‘Scaling up Mineral Traceability (iTSCi)’ from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This is achieved through the iTSCi field teams who engage with community groups, other NGOs and business in the region in order to also support capacity building.

Earlier this year the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) praised the “remarkable progress” made by iTSCi as a leading initiative in the implementation of its Due Diligence Guidance for supply chain sourcing from conflict and high-risk areas. Its report published in

April stated that iTSCi “is the only on-the-ground traceability and due diligence programme that has to date been able to demonstrate a clear impact on mineral production and exports.”

Over the last six years around 85,000 tonnes of minerals have passed through the programme, providing livelihoods for tens of thousands of miners and their dependents by enabling them to access international markets for the minerals they produce daily.

**-ENDS-**

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**About iTSCi:**

The iTSCi Programme is a joint industry mechanism designed to address ‘conflict mineral’ concerns in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and other Great Lakes Region countries. The Programme establishes traceability in the upstream mineral chain for 3T minerals by working with local Governments and their field agents, and assists companies to establish due diligence through independent monitoring on the ground and regular audits. The Programme supports the practical implementation of the OECD’s Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas as well as the UN Security Council Resolution 1552 (2010) due diligence recommendations. Members are expected to recognise all aspects of these guidelines and cooperate with monitoring, evaluation and audits as required, as well as working on their own company policies and contracts to influence the supply chain in a positive way. Through the implementation of the internationally recognised OECD Guidance, the Programme aims to aid compliance with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Rule interpreting the US Dodd Frank law, section 1502 on conflict minerals. The Programme complements other initiatives, including the Conflict-Free Smelter audit programme (CFS), the ICGLR’s Regional Certification Initiative, and BGR’s Certified Trading Chains Initiative (CTC). Please see the project website; [www.itsci.org](http://www.itsci.org)



**About ITRI:**

ITRI is the world's foremost authority on tin with over 80 years’ experience in tin related technologies. It is a membership based organisation representing major tin producers and smelters and is the premier source of tin related information. ITRI has specialist knowledge of tin use in all the major sectors as well as groups responsible for technology, statistical and market information, regulatory affairs and sustainability. It provides links to the main tin consuming sectors through a substantial network of industry contacts. The organisation hosts seminars, conferences and industry-specific group meetings. It also provides marketing and technical support to its members and the tin industry in general. ITRI is the tin representative to the iTSCi programme Steering Committee and Secretariat of the programme. Further information can be obtained from ITRI <http://www.itri.co.uk>



**About T.I.C. – the Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center:**

The Tantalum-Niobium International Study Center (T.I.C.) is an international non-profit association, established in 1974 under Belgian law. It comprises around 90 members, all involved in the industries of tantalum and/or niobium, at various positions along the supply chain (mining, trading, processing, capacitor manufacturing, recycling, other end-users such as medical, aerospace...). The association organises an annual meeting with technical presentations and a plant tour to the facility of one of its members. It also collects/consolidates (via an independent company to ensure confidentiality) then reports industry statistics on production and consumption of tantalum and niobium products. It provides technical help to members and non-members and issues a quarterly Bulletin. The association also addresses major issues and challenges facing its industry: artisanal and small-scale mining, transport of radioactive materials. T.I.C. is the tantalum representative to the iTSCi programme Governance Committee. Please see further information on <http://www.tanb.org>