

PRESS RELEASE



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OECD PRAISE FOR “REMARKABLE PROGRESS” OF THE iTSCi PROGRAMME

The success of the iTSCi Programme in contributing to breaking the link between mineral trade and conflict in central Africa has been highlighted in the key findings of a detailed report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) discussed at the recent multi-stakeholder due diligence forum in Paris. The report, which looks at a number of supply chain initiatives developed in the last five years, notes that *“on-the-ground implementation of the Guidance in mineral producing and trading areas is by far most advanced in the 3T sector”* and praises the work carried out by iTSCi as *“the only on-the-ground due diligence programme that has effectively brought Great Lakes minerals to the international market.”*

The OECD, whose mission is to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world, highlighted in the report how *“iTSCi has made remarkable progress and 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.”* iTSCi’s work in the Great Lakes Region of Africa has led to an estimated 80,000 artisanal and small-scale miners - supporting an estimated 400,000 dependents - being granted access to the international market where they can sell their minerals freely.

The iTSCi Governance Committee is delighted with these comments which are a reflection of the commitment of the upstream 3T industry and the unique progress made by iTSCi and its partners since 2010. Reflecting on the progress made, Kay Nimmo, ITRI representative to the Governance Committee, explained during the Paris meeting *“ITSCi had to find ways to practically implement the OECD guidance by addressing not only business issues relating to shared implementation of due diligence, but wider challenges associated with fundamental limitations in infrastructure, stakeholder capacity, remoteness and security,”* adding that *“On-the-ground support is vital to really make a positive difference.”* These thoughts were echoed by the OECD Chief-of-Staff Gabriela Ramos who emphasised in her presentation that *“Agreements make headlines but implementation brings change.”*

Whilst this is welcome recognition of the achievements of iTSCi, we cannot be complacent. Further investment and support is always needed from donors and downstream tin users to ensure that the work to date continues to be built upon to bring even more positive results. An open letter describing restrictions in on the ground activity and funding resulting from the currently poor metal market conditions was issued in December 2015, a copy of which can be found [here](#).

The full OECD report (COM/DAF/INV/DCD/DAC(2015)3/FINAL) was approved by the OECD Investment Committee and Development Assistance Committee in 2015, declassified and then published on 28th April 2016. It can be downloaded [here](#).

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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 1952 (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



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>