



Supporting Resource Rich Nations
in Balancing Economic and
Environmental Issues of Mining

I. Committee Background

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the key organization in the framework of the United Nations dedicated to development. The United Nations Development Program works in around 170 countries and territories assisting governments and people to build their capacity, to develop institutions, to overcome poverty, and preserve our planet. The Strategic Plan of the United Nations Development Program for 2026-2029 captures these ideas through four interconnected goals: prosperity for all, good governance, resilience to crises, and a healthy planet. Consequently, UNDP becomes quite relevant to the problem of sustainable management of natural resources together with human development.

The connection between mining and the UNDP's work is that the extraction of minerals provides the government with an opportunity for earning money, creating jobs, building infrastructure, exports, and industrial development. However, mineral extraction is associated with the possibility of negative effects on the environment and society in case there is inadequate governance and regulation. UNDP has been engaged in the activities of managing the extractive industry.

UNDP helps countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the promotion of economic, social, and environmental development. Through collaboration with the government, UNDP tries to develop strong institutions, increase access to resources, generate economic activities, and come up with policies that can guide sustainable development. This particular goal is especially important for countries that are endowed with natural resources since the government needs to use these resources in such a way that it improves the welfare of its people and also preserves the environment for future generations.

United Nations Development Programme's Environmental Governance for Mining Initiative links environmental governance to human rights and developmental issues. Activities of this program help countries develop their mining policies and regulations, increase participation and accountability, work with local communities, and deal with environmental degradation and injustices. Furthermore, the UNDP has put forward its guidelines on embedding the principles of environmental governance and human rights in mining governance.

These include policy advice, technical assistance, capacity development, knowledge management, partnerships, and institution building. This means that the committee can look at tangible means at the disposal of countries for improving mining governance.

II. Introduction to Topic

What is poverty on an international scale?

Nearly half of the world's population currently lives in poverty, which is described as an income of less than 2 US dollars per day, this population includes over 1 billion children. Over the population of people who live in poverty, 800 million of those people live in extreme poverty, which is described as an income of 1.25 US dollars a day. People who live in poverty lack access to proper nutrition, clean drinking water, and adequate health services. SDG (sustainable development goal) 1 states specific targets that aim to eradicate extreme poverty. Youth involvement is crucial in eradicating poverty because $\frac{2}{3}$ of the people living in poverty are under 25. The UNDP is in about 170 different countries

working to eradicate poverty.

Sustainable global development

Sustainable global development is improving the well-being of humans and economic progress without ruining or using up resources that future generations need. The problem is that all development isn't sustainable. Development has taken us to climate change, environmental destruction, conflict, poverty and hunger, vast inequalities, and social instability. This heavily reduces the chances of the sustainable development goals being achieved by 2030. The UNDP tries to counter this by reducing inequalities and building crisis resilience. The UNDP does this by connecting short term emergency relief with long term sustainable development, empowering local communities, and addressing the root cause of vulnerability so that communities or governments know where to fix the problem.

Economic Opportunities and Risks

The mining industry can help achieve development goals through the payment of taxes and royalties, employment, infrastructure, foreign investments, and synergy with other sectors. It may decide to use its mineral wealth for internal processing as opposed to exports in an unprocessed form. This can create more job creation, skills

development, technology advancement, and industrialization but will require energy, transportation, water, money, and knowledge.

One economic challenge would be the country's dependency on the export of primary commodities. The world market prices for minerals tend to be very volatile and can influence government revenues, foreign exchange earnings, investments, and government expenditures. UNCTAD warned about the risks of heavy reliance on the export of primary commodities.

Critical Minerals and Energy Transitions

The adoption of low-carbon energy sources has led to the growing importance of minerals such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, copper, graphite, manganese, and rare earth metals. Such minerals find usage in batteries, electric power systems, renewable energy sources, and numerous other modern-day uses. UNCTAD has pointed out that developing countries have considerable mineral deposits and are capable of creating extra jobs, income, and value.

This poses quite a dilemma for policy, since one needs to increase mining in order to meet the demands of other countries and attract investments, without experiencing any negative environmental, social, and equity effects. In this regard, policy takes into account not only mining itself but also its governance.

III. Essential Questions/Key Issues

1. Economic Development and Mineral Revenue

What should mineral-rich countries do to raise money for services and infrastructural projects from their mining projects without being too dependent on raw material exports?

2. Environmental Regulation

What environmental standards need to be maintained at mining operations, and how do governments regulate pollution, land degradation, water usage, waste production, and the effect on biodiversity?

3. Local Communities and Indigenous people

In what ways can the affected communities be included in the processes of licensing, monitoring, land use, and benefits-sharing?

4. Transparency, Governance, Corruption

What measures will ensure that mining contracts, government receipts, environmental impact assessments,

5. Economic Diversification

In what ways do states leverage their mineral wealth to create possibilities for sustainable development within manufacturing, services, agriculture, infrastructure, education, and technology?

6. Local Value Addition and Processing

Are there countries that should look at the idea of manufacturing their mineral resources rather than sending out their minerals without any processing? What do they require to make this happen?

7. Small-Scale Mining

What are some strategies that the government can use to improve safety, formalization, environmental awareness, income levels, and market access among artisanal miners?

8. Mine Closure and Restoration

Who is supposed to pay for any expenses incurred during the rehabilitation of mines once mining activities have ceased? What can governments do to make sure there is enough funding?

9. Critical Minerals and Energy Transition

How does the rising international demand for critical minerals provide an opportunity for growth without harming the environment and society of the mineral-producing countries?

10. Internal Cooperation and UNDP Support

In what way can the UNDP really provide technical assistance, capacity building, financial support, data sharing, or policy advice to the resource-rich nations?

Key Issues:

- Minimum environmental standards and national management of mining policies.
- The need for companies to offer better assurances about financing their restoration efforts and mine closures.
- The amount of processing and manufacturing that needs to take place at home before minerals are exported.
- How revenues generated by mining should be shared among national development, local communities, environment conservation, and future generations.
- Ways in which international backing can help bolster national institutions without compromising sovereignty.

IV. Countries

1. Democratic Republic of the Congo
2. Australia
3. People's Republic of China
4. Republic of Chile
5. Republic of Indonesia
6. Canada
7. Republic of South Africa
8. Republic of Peru
9. Republic of Zambia
10. United States of America

11. Republic of Namibia
12. Republic of Ghana
13. Federative Republic of Brazil
14. Federal Republic of Nigeria
15. Argentine Republic
16. Mongolia
17. Republic of Kazakhstan
18. Kingdom of Norway
19. Independent State of Papua New Guinea
20. Republic of India
21. United States of America
22. United Mexican States
23. Republic of Ecuador
24. Republic of the Philippines
25. Republic of Zimbabwe

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