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Mongolia visit Colombia to exchange experiences on artisanal and small-scale mining

Artisanal and small-scale mining in Colombia and Mongolia has success stories but also faces certain challenges in the formalization of the activity and in ensuring that it is a responsible and sustainable source of income for miners and their communities. Today a high-level delegation from Mongolia led by the Minister of Mines and composed by the Mineral Resource Authority of Mongolia, and other industry representatives, come to Colombia to meet with a number of important public and private institutions who work in the mining sector in the country to learn from the Colombian experience as well as to share its own.

The visit has been organized by the Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM) and the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia, APC-Colombia, in collaboration with the Sustainable Artisanal Mining Project (SAM Project) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Mongolia and Colombia are both among the countries where a number of artisanal and small-scale gold mining organizations have reached Fairmined Certification. The Fairmined Standard and Certification System was developed by ARM to encourage the implementation of good social, environmental, organizational and economic mining practices through access to ethical markets. Through Fairmined Certification, ARM seeks to contribute to the transformation of artisanal and small-scale mining and improve the quality of life of the miners and their communities.

The Mongolian delegation will meet with the Minister of Mines and Energy and representatives of other national entities such as the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the National Mining Agency, the Directorate of National Taxes and Customs, APC-Colombia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as with the Autonomous Regional Corporation for the Defense of the Bucaramanga Plateau and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. They will also visit the Mining Center of the local institution SENA in Sogamoso, Boyacá, and three mines that are working with ARM in Vetás, Santander.

The meetings will address several important issues on how to achieve profitable and responsible practices in the artisanal and small-scale mining sector to contribute to sustainable development. Among the issues to be discussed are formalization, environmental stewardship, export opportunities and barriers, and how to provide accessible training to miners and professionals working in the sector. Finally, at the meeting with APC-Colombia, opportunities for bilateral cooperation between the two countries will be explored.

This is the second time that ARM facilitates this type of exchange between Colombia and Mongolia in collaboration with the Sustainable Artisanal Mining Project in Mongolia.

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