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# **VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES ON SECURITY & HUMAN RIGHTS**

**International Conference on  
Artisanal and Small-scale Mining  
in the Asia Pacific Region**

Ulaanbaatar, May 29, 2013



# For the extractive and energy sector





# Assumptions and premises:

- **States have to protect and promote human rights**
- **Companies have to respect human rights (due diligence)**
- **Companies need security**
- **Companies can have significant influence on host country governments, economies, communities, and civil society**



# The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

- **Response to international criticism:** companies' security leads to human rights risks for communities
- **Guidelines for companies:** respect for human rights in protection of company facilities
- **Multi stakeholder platform:** dialogue, joint problem solving, capacity building, best practices on security and human rights
- **Focus on respect for civil and political rights:** right to life, freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment



# Three pillars : governments, companies, NGOs

- VPs established in 2000 through multi stakeholder dialogue, including UK and US governments, mining and energy companies, and leading human rights NGOs.
- Current membership: 8 governments, 13 NGOs, 22 companies, and 5 observers.
- Participating governments: Canada, Colombia, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, UK, and USA. Australia recently joined as engaged government.
- Switzerland currently chairs the VP Steering Committee.



# The Voluntary principles provide guidance on three issues:

1. **Risk assessment:** rule of law, conflict analysis
2. **Engagement with public security forces:** screen human rights records, conduct trainings
3. **Relations with private security services:** include VPs in contracts, report allegations of abuse





# Why implement the VPs ?

- Comply with the State duty to protect human rights
- Achieve human rights and development related objectives (e.g. rule of law, stable investment environment)
- Enhance human rights compliance of security forces and prevent abuses against ASM.
- Increase cooperation and problem solving among stakeholders at local and national level
- Improve companies' risk assessment and mitigation, community relations and management of social conflicts, including with ASM
- Prevent corporate complicity in abuses and reputational risks



# **International Conference “Mining and Human Rights“, Ulaanbaatar, October 2012**

## **Recommendations of the conference:**

- To the Government of Mongolia: to join the Voluntary Principles
- To mining businesses: to engage with the Voluntary Principles

## **UN Working Group on Human Rights and Business:**

- Ensure access to information of affected stakeholders and their participation in decision making
- Strengthen community engagement

VPs can serve as forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on security and human rights issues in the extractive sector.





# All participants are expected to:

- Proactively implement or assist in the implementation of the VPSHR.
- Attend plenary meetings and, other extraordinary and in-country meetings.
- Communicate publicly on efforts to implement or assist in the implementation of the Voluntary Principles.
- Engage in continuing dialogue with participants including to seek to resolve any concerns about the performance of a participant.
- Contribute to further developing the Principles to ensure their continuing relevance and efficacy.



## Recent developments in the VPs:

- November 2012 formation of the VP Association in the Netherlands (legal entity)
- March 2013 Plenary Meeting in The Hague (NL):
  - Australia joined as Engaged Government
  - 2 companies, including Swiss-based mining company Xstrata, and 3 NGOs joined
  - Switzerland Presidency until March 2014
- Increased outreach and implementation efforts: impact on the ground, participation by resource-rich countries
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI) developed by voluntary group of companies



# Challenges ahead :

- Increase number of government participants, in particular from resource-rich countries
- Make positive impact of VPs more visible (development of impact assessment tools)
- Have more ASM focused NGOs participating in VPs
- Strengthen effectiveness and accountability
- Connect VPs with UN GP and other business and human rights initiatives

