



# Trade MEPs beef up rules to stem flow of conflict mineral money to armed groups

[14-04-2015 - 15:19]

**EU smelters and refiners importing „conflict” minerals and metals would have to be certified by the EU in order to help stem the flow of revenue to armed groups, under a draft law as amended by the International Trade Committee on Tuesday. Other amendments lay down conditions for EU recognition of industry self-certification schemes, and labelling requirements. All these amendments still need to be approved by Parliament as a whole.**

The draft law would govern „supply chain due diligence” for importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

“The goal of this legislation, which Parliament called for years ago, is to break the link between mining and trade in minerals and metals and the financing of illegal armed groups. The amendments voted today strengthen the Commission proposal by stepping up the responsibility of smelters and refiners and inserting clear conditions for the EU to recognize existing industry initiatives and take on board work already done by the OECD, in line with the industry’s own due diligence guidelines”, said rapporteur Iuliu Winkler (EPP, RO), after the vote.

Trade MEPs voted down amendments suggesting mandatory certification of all „downstream” operators, i.e. those in the EU who buy, process and use these minerals and metals to make mobile phones, washing machines, fridges, etc. A proposal to extend the scope of the regulation to include other minerals and metals was also voted down.

The amended text was approved by 22 votes to 16, with 2 abstentions.

## **A “European responsible importer” label**

The draft legislation establishes the requirements that EU importers of minerals or metals containing or consisting of tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold must meet if they choose to be self-declared „responsible importers” and wish to eliminate the risk of financing armed groups and security forces via their business activity.

The certification schemes to which many EU importers and refiners already belong would thus be brought into the EU system, without imposing any additional burdens upon them.

Trade MEPs strengthened the Commission proposal by suggesting that compliance be made mandatory for EU smelters and refiners (around 5% of all smelters and refiners operating in the industry worldwide). They also suggest establishing a “European responsible importer” label for responsible importers and “European certification of responsibility” for “downstream operators”, as well as providing technical and financial assistance to micro, small and medium entrepreneurs who chose to take up the self-certification initiative.

## **Next steps**

The amended Commission proposal is to be put to a vote by Parliament as a whole at the May plenary session, (tbc).

## **Further information**

- Video extracts from the vote: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?id=9e939df6-edb2-4f63-a368-a47a00b55b7f>

# Press release

- The example of Congo: how mineral extraction may fuel internal armed conflicts (by EP Research Service): <http://epthinktank.eu/2014/02/20/minerals-from-conflict-areas-existing-and-new-responsible%e2%80%90sourcing-initiatives/>
- Conflict minerals: preventing military groups from funding their activities: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150413STO41613/html/Conflict-minerals-preventing-military-groups-from-funding-their-activities>
- Committee on International Trade: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/inta/home.html>

## Contact

### **Agnese KRIVADE**

BXL: (+32) 2 28 43562

STR: (+33) 3 881 73612

PORT: (+32) 498 98 39 83

EMAIL: [inta-press@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:inta-press@europarl.europa.eu)

TWITTER: EP\_Trade