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Afghanistan Mining Watch Presents Proposals to MOMP to Fight Corruption and Create Prosperity in Afghanistan Extractive Sector

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Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) and Mining Watch Afghanistan (MWA) shared their concerns regarding Afghanistan's extractive industry with Afghanistan acting minister of Mines and Petroleum. They demanded effective measures be taken by the ministry to address these concerns.

During the month of July, Integrity Watch Afghanistan and MWA met with Ms. Ghazal Habibyar, the acting minister, and discussed specific proposals focusing on Afghanistan's extractive sector. In this meeting, Sayed Ikram Afzali, Integrity Watch Executive Director and one member of MWA introduced the network and elaborated on its mission to fight against corruption and build transparency in the Afghanistan mining industry. Moreover, Mr. Afzali highlighted the necessity of effective relations between the network and MOM authorities. He also emphasized that regular meetings between authorities and the members of the network can serve as a mitigation channel between the people and the government on issues regarding mining extraction.

Mr. Abdul-Basir Toriali, one of the members of Mining Watch Afghanistan, mentioned to the necessity of a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) to be signed between the ministry and MWA and said, "This MOU, facilitates the possibility of further collaboration and coordination between the partners." Following this, Ms. Habibyar thanked the network for preparing this MOU and promised that MOMP will introduce two representatives that will be working with another two representatives from Mining Watch Afghanistan to finalize this MOU.

Mr. Afzal Shirzad, another member of the network, further elaborated on Afghanistan Mineral Law and pointed out that the Network had presented the proposed legislative reforms to the former minister and three of the proposed reforms were adopted by the ministry. Mr. Shirzad emphasized however that the ministry should adopt the remaining proposed amendments as well. At this point, Ms. Habibyar touched on the restrictions the ministry is facing in changing the law and stated that frequent change in law would result in undermining the laws and regulations. Following this, Mr. Afzali suggested that the ministry adopt all of the amendments as this is a great opportunity to create a robust legislative change once and for all. Ms. Habibyar held that the proposed amendments should be divided into two sets; one category for the adopted laws, and the less general amendments should be adopted in regulations. Ms. Habibyar also asked that the proposed amendments be shared with her so that the ministry could share them with relevant committee and if they saw fit, they would be passed as new laws. Mining Watch Afghanistan handed in these amendments, which included the following:

Publication of the contract and its requirements

Publication of data in regards to production and revenue

Publication of beneficial ownership

Enhancement of regulations focusing on bidding process to increase transparency and fairness

Creating a unified and transparent revenue account for all natural resources

Creating and using model contract

Support of community based monitoring and enhancement of conflict resolution mechanism to resolve disputes amicably

Community benefits of extractive revenue in a fair way

Following this meeting, MWA asked the acting minister to provide clarification on the EITI forth reconciliation report to the public. In response, Mr. Habibyar stated that a committee has been established to follow up on this report and that the committee is in the process of working on the report. Additionally, Ms. Habibyar mentioned that the ministry is evaluating the database related to the contracts and has identified some problems in this areas, however, these problems will be solved shortly and relevant data will be presented to public. The third EITI reconciliation report that was previously shared with MOMP included the followings:

The necessity to computerize the documents in MOMP,

Dealing with problems in collecting revenue

Publication of reports on small and medium scale mines

Evaluation of extractive companies and similar cases

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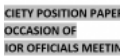
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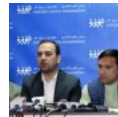
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