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Zambia's Ministry of Mines Enforces Local Content Compliance for Mining Companies

The Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development has directed all mining and mining-related companies in Zambia to submit their Annual Procurement Plans and Quarterly Reports in accordance with the Local Content Statutory Instrument No. 68 of 2025.

The directive comes into effect following the implementation of the statutory instrument on 1 January 2026, which aims to strengthen compliance and promote local participation in the country's mining sector.

Fred Banda, Ministry Director for Large-Scale Mining and Mineral Investment Promotion, stated that the regulation mandates all stakeholders to submit the required compliance documentation to the Ministry.

According to Mr. Banda, submissions for the first quarter must be filed by 15 April 2026 via the Local Content Access System (LOCAS), which will become operational on 20 March 2026.

The required documentation includes Annual Procurement Plans and Quarterly Reports, covering tender declarations, tender disclosures, and any applicable exceptions.

Mr. Banda cautioned that failure to meet submission deadlines will result in penalties as stipulated in the statutory instrument.

He emphasised that compliance is essential for enhancing transparency, accountability, and the development of local content within Zambia's mining industry.

The Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that the mining sector contributes meaningfully to national development through increased local participation and adherence to responsible business practices.

Alphamin Resources Reports Strong Q1

Earnings Growth Driven by Higher Tin Prices

Democratic Republic of Congo-focused tin producer Alphamin Resources is expected to report a 46% quarter-on-quarter increase in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA), reaching approximately \$158 million for the quarter ended March 31.

Tin production for the period totalled 5,026 tonnes, broadly in line with guidance of 20,000 tonnes annualized output and consistent with the previous quarter's performance.

Tin sales amounted to 5,016 tonnes, representing a marginal 1% decline compared to the prior quarter.

Despite the slight dip in sales volumes, the company benefited from significantly stronger market conditions.

Improved road infrastructure and a 30% quarter-on-quarter rise in tin prices contributed to a substantial increase in cash generation, with net cash rising by approximately \$128 million over the period.

The combination of stable production and stronger pricing supported overall financial performance, reinforcing the resilience of the company's operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Alphamin Resources is scheduled to release its full financial results for the quarter on or around April 29.

DRC Gold Exports Surpass \$2.2 Billion in 2025 as Production Increases 4%

The gold sector remains a cornerstone of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) economy, contributing significantly to national revenue. In 2025, total gold exports reached an estimated \$2.2 billion, according to consolidated and provisional data from the Technical Unit for Mining Coordination and Planning (CTCPM) and other mining sector authorities.

This export value corresponds to more than 28,201 kilograms of gold, highlighting the sector's continued growth. Overall gold production in 2025 rose to 28,202.89 kilograms, up from 27,037.84 kilograms in 2024 a 4% increase, or 1,165 kilograms more than the previous year.

Industrial Mining Leads Gold Exports

The industrial segment dominates the gold export market, with production valued at over \$1.9 billion, representing 25,366 kilograms of gold. Industrial operations continue to drive the bulk of the DRC's gold revenue, reflecting ongoing investment and modernization efforts in the sector.

In contrast, artisanal gold mining contributed a smaller share, totaling just over \$286 million in exports.

The highest artisanal production originates from Maniema, while the lowest comes from Kinshasa.

Economic Significance and Risk Exposure

The mining sector overall accounts for nearly 70% of the DRC's economy, underlining its strategic importance.

This heavy reliance also exposes the country to international commodity price fluctuations, which can have a direct impact on revenue stability and economic planning.

Gold remains one of the most resilient drivers of the Congolese economy, and the 2025 growth demonstrates both the potential and the challenges of maintaining production in a sector highly influenced by global market conditions.



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Glencore Backs \$1.4 Billion Bid for Stake in Eurasian Resources Group

Glencore Proposes Financing Deal to Support \$1.4 Billion Bid for Eurasian Resources Group Stake

Mining giant Glencore is considering supporting a \$1.4 billion bid by Kazakh entrepreneur Shakhmurat Mutalip to acquire a 40% stake in Eurasian Resources Group (ERG), according to reports citing people familiar with the discussions.

Under the proposal, Glencore would provide an upfront pre-payment of about \$800 million in exchange for future shipments of ferrochrome, a key raw material used in steel production. The arrangement would help finance Mutalip's bid

while securing long-term supply of the alloying metal for the company.

Negotiations around the deal are said to be advancing, with Mutalip's offer reportedly moving ahead of a competing bid from Shukhrat Ibragimov, the chief executive of Eurasian Resources Group and son of the company's co-founder, Alijan Ibragimov.

If completed, the transaction would represent one of the largest recent ownership changes involving the Kazakhstan-based mining group, which is a major global producer of ferrochrome and other metals.

Glencore has previously shown interest in the

company. In 2011, the commodities giant reportedly attempted to acquire the former FTSE 100-listed miner in a deal valued at about £12 billion.

In parallel with the current discussions, Glencore and Mutalip are also said to be negotiating the possible sale of Glencore's 70% stake in Kazakh mining company Kazzinc. That stake could be valued at roughly \$3.5 billion, according to people familiar with the talks.

The potential transactions highlight increasing investor interest in Kazakhstan's mining sector and could reshape ownership structures in some of the country's most significant resource assets.



Vedanta to Split into Five Listed Companies as Part of Major Restructuring

India-based Vedanta Limited will break up into five separately listed companies early next month, as part of a multi-year restructuring program designed to reduce debt and unlock shareholder value.

The demerger plan, approved by a tribunal in December, will see Vedanta operate as the holding company for its base metals business, while four other entities Vedanta Aluminium, Talwandi Sabo Power, Vedanta Steel and Iron, and Malco Energy will be separately listed.

Anil Agarwal told the Financial Times that the combined market capitalization of the five companies is expected to be significantly higher than the conglomerate's current \$27 billion valuation.

A private parent company controlled by Agarwal will retain roughly 50% of the shares in each of the new entities.

The restructuring plan, first proposed in 2023, faced initial opposition from the Indian government, which expressed concerns that the breakup could affect its ability to recover outstanding dues.

Ajay Goel confirmed that the company intends to list the four demerged units on Indian stock exchanges by mid-May, signaling the final phase of a strategic plan to simplify the conglomerate's structure and strengthen its financial position.

The demerger marks a pivotal moment for Vedanta, allowing the company to focus on its core operations while providing investors with clearer exposure to distinct business segments in metals, energy, and power.



Flooding Disrupts Rail Traffic on Lobito Corridor, Halting Key Mineral Export Route

Severe flooding in western Angola has forced the suspension of rail traffic along the Lobito Corridor, disrupting a critical export route for minerals from the region's mining sector.

The line operator, Lobito Atlantic Railway, reported that "significant damage" was sustained to railway infrastructure near the Halo River between Cubal and Caimbambo, approximately 140 kilometres southeast of the coastal city of Benguela.

Flooding also damaged infrastructure near the Cavaco River following heavy rainfall on Sunday, the company said in a statement released on Monday.

Rail operations along the affected sections have been suspended indefinitely while repairs and safety assessments are carried out.

The Lobito Corridor supported by investment from the United States and European partners connects major mining regions in the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Atlantic Ocean port of Port of Lobito.

The route transports copper and cobalt exports, as well as critical inputs used in mining operations, making it a strategic supply chain artery for global metals markets.

Meanwhile, the state broadcaster Televisão Pública de Angola aired footage showing residents stranded on rooftops as floodwaters inundated homes and streets in Benguela, located about 500 kilometres south of Luanda.

The region has experienced repeated flooding in recent weeks. In early April, heavy rains destroyed approximately 200 homes and resulted in at least 23 fatalities, bringing the nationwide death toll to 39, according to Angola's emergency services.

Zambia Secures \$1.5bn Energy Investment to Expand Power Generation Capacity

Zambia has secured a US\$1.5 billion investment in its energy sector following an agreement between the Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) and China Machinery Engineering Corporation, aimed at expanding national electricity generation capacity.

The project will deliver a diversified 900-megawatt (MW) power portfolio comprising three equal components: a 300MW coal-fired thermal plant, a 300MW solar facility, and a 300MW wind energy project.

ZDA Director General Albert Halwampa described the investment as a key milestone in Zambia's plan to increase installed generation capacity to 10,000MW by 2031.

He said the project reflects growing investor confidence in Zambia's energy sector and supports broader economic reforms aimed at strengthening long-term growth.

Halwampa added that rising regional electricity demand presents Zambia with an opportunity to become a net power exporter while accelerating industrial development.

Zambia's Ambassador to China, Ivan Zyuulu, said the agreement demonstrates deepening economic cooperation between Zambia and China, noting strong investor confidence in the country's investment climate.

The China Machinery Engineering Corporation confirmed plans to visit Zambia in June 2026 to conduct feasibility studies, stating that it has the financial and technical capacity to develop all three power plants concurrently.

The Zambia Development Agency and the Zambian Embassy in Beijing are currently conducting a joint investment promotion mission in China to attract large-scale infrastructure investment and position Zambia as a key regional energy hub.



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Chile's Copper Production Falls to Nine-Year Low, Highlighting Global Supply Pressures

Chile, the world's largest copper producer, reported its lowest monthly copper output in almost nine years, reflecting ongoing challenges from declining ore grades and underperformance at key mines.

Production totaled 378,554 metric tons in February, down 8.5% from January and 4.8% compared with February of last year, according to figures released by the national statistics agency.

This is the lowest monthly output since March 2017, when a strike temporarily halted operations at Escondida Mine, one of the

world's largest copper mines.

No major operational disruptions were reported last month, but seasonal factors such as heavy rains in northern Chile and high seas can occasionally disrupt logistics during the summer months.

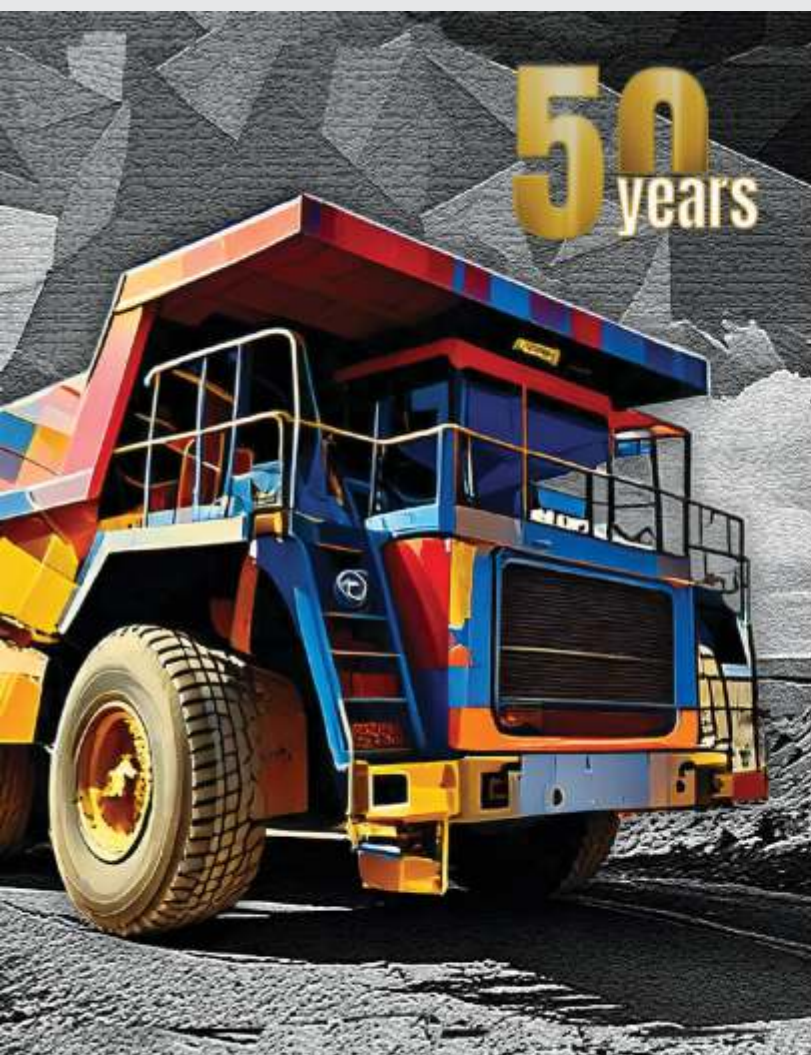
More broadly, Chile's copper production has declined on a rolling 12-month basis for seven consecutive months, constrained by challenges at projects designed to access higher-grade ore.

Chile accounts for roughly one-quarter of global mined copper supply, making these declines significant for the international

market.

The production shortfall highlights ongoing supply constraints that contributed to copper prices reaching record highs in January, before easing in early February and softening further amid geopolitical uncertainties in other regions.

Analysts note that Chile's structural challenges declining ore grades, ageing operations, and logistical hurdles could continue to pressure output, underscoring the importance of investment in mine expansion and modernization to support global copper supply in the years ahead.



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VEGAPULS 6X Built for the toughest conditions Built for mining

Precision drives the Copperbelt's mining future

As Africa's mining sector is moving forward to meet the demands of a greener, more connected world, the need for smart, resilient, and precise process control has never been greater. From copper to cobalt, lithium to gold, the continent's mineral wealth is fuelling global industries, but extracting these resources sustainably and efficiently requires technology that can thrive where conditions are toughest.

In remote operations across Africa, dust, humidity, corrosion and extreme temperatures often test the limits of both people and equipment. Downtime is incredibly costly, and access to technical support can be limited. In this environment, measurement accuracy and equipment reliability are not luxuries; they are lifelines for productivity, safety, and sustainability.

For decades, VEGA has built its reputation on engineering instrumentation that stands up to the realities of mining. Today, its latest generation of level, pressure, and density sensors brings the precision, simplicity, and digital integration that modern mines demand.

Reliability that endures the elements

Every mine site depends on accurate level measurement. Whether it's controlling feed rates, managing slurry densities, or preventing overflows in tailings ponds. The VEGAPULS 6X radar sensor delivers this precision without compromise.

Designed as a universal radar solution, the VEGAPULS 6X eliminates the complexity of choosing between multiple radar technologies. It measures liquids and solids alike, offering stable, interference-free readings even in the presence of dust, steam, foam, or condensation. Its focused radar beam penetrates the harshest conditions, ensuring uninterrupted data flow and

consistent performance from stockpiles to separation tanks.

This "one sensor for all" approach simplifies maintenance, reduces spare-parts inventory, and minimises unplanned downtime — all key considerations for mines operating far from major service centres. In short, the VEGAPULS 6X helps operations run leaner, safer, and more efficiently.

Pressure you can trust

In mining, managing pressurised systems (from slurry pipelines to filtration plants) is critical for operational control and safety. The VEGABAR 80 and VEGADIF 85 series have become trusted tools in these demanding applications.

Built on over 40 years of pressure measurement expertise, the VEGABAR 80 range combines advanced ceramic and metallic measuring cells for stable, drift-free readings in liquids, gases, and viscous media. Its resilience to abrasion and chemical attack ensures long service life, while diagnostic intelligence supports predictive maintenance, enabling operators to identify and correct potential issues before they escalate.

The VEGADIF 85, meanwhile, excels in differential pressure measurement. Compact yet robust, it delivers the control required for flotation and separation processes where maintaining precise pressure differentials determines yield and product quality. Together, these solutions enable safer, more responsive process management.

A non-contact revolution in slurry density control

Few processes are as punishing as slurry transport, yet getting density measurement right is essential for efficiency and recovery. The SOLITRAC 31 takes a non-intrusive, radiometric approach, using gamma radiation

to measure slurry density without ever touching the medium.

This eliminates wear, blockages, and contamination risks, while providing continuous, highly accurate density readings. With SOLITRAC 31, mines can maintain optimal separation efficiency and avoid costly shutdowns for maintenance or calibration. It's precision without interruption, perfectly suited for Africa's high-intensity processing environments.

Empowering the digital mine

As the mining industry embraces automation and data-driven decision-making, VEGA's technology evolves in tandem. The VEGA Inventory System brings level and pressure data into a central, cloud-enabled platform that gives operators a real-time view of their entire operation from anywhere.

This visibility enables proactive adjustments, optimised logistics, and improved resource management. By combining robust field instrumentation with intelligent data systems, VEGA supports mining companies on their path to digital transformation, efficiency, and environmental responsibility.

Partnering in Africa's mining progress

From the Copperbelt to South Africa's platinum mines and Ghana's goldfields, VEGA's instrumentation is already part of Africa's mining success story. Built for durability, precision, and ease of integration, VEGA's solutions help mines reduce downtime, increase throughput, and strengthen safety standards; all while advancing sustainability and digitalisation goals.

In an era where precision equals progress, VEGA stands as a trusted partner, helping Africa's mining industry move confidently toward a smarter, more sustainable future.

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FQM's Kansanshi Mine Showcases World's First Ultra-Large Battery-Electric Mining Truck in Zambia

By Constance Makungu

Zambia's Kansanshi Mine Showcases Hitachi's Ultra-Large Battery-Electric Mining Truck, Pioneering Sustainable Copper Production

In the copper-rich expanse of Solwezi, Zambia, a new sound is echoing across the open pits. Where once the roar of diesel engines dominated, the hum of electric motors now signals a profound shift in mining.

At First Quantum Minerals' Kansanshi copper and gold mine, the showcase of the world's first ultra-large battery-electric mining truck marked a turning point not only for Zambia, but for the global mining industry.

The truck was not being formally commissioned into service but rather presented to the world as proof of what is possible when innovation, partnership, and vision come together in one of Africa's most important mining regions.

The atmosphere of the event underscored its significance. Industry leaders stood alongside government officials, engineers, and mine workers, all gathered to witness a machine that symbolized more than technological progress.

It was a declaration: Zambia is ready to lead the charge in sustainable mining. By harnessing its abundant hydroelectric power, the country is positioning itself as a pioneer of technologies that reduce emissions, cut costs, and build skills for the future.

Years in the Making

Standing before the towering truck its tires taller than most spectators FQM Chief Executive Officer Tristan Pascall reflected on the journey: "We are standing at an event where Zambia is right at the forefront of renewable energy and low-emissions technology. Today is about what

can be achieved when a mining company, a technology partner, and government work together to move the industry forward."

The truck is engineered to haul 221 tonnes of ore across steep gradients. But its true significance

innovation for the betterment of society."

Why is Zambia the Perfect Testbed?

Zambia's energy profile makes it uniquely suited for electrified mining. Unlike jurisdictions reliant on coal, Zambia generates over 85% of its



lies in its power source: advanced lithium-titanate oxide (LTO) batteries that replace diesel engines.

This innovation is the culmination of years of research, development, and collaboration between FQM, Hitachi engineers, regulators, and operational teams.

Pascall acknowledged the role of government, particularly the Mine Safety Department, in enabling safe testing. "Government remains a key partner through ZCCM-IH's shareholding.

This is a strong example of an enabling environment that allows industry to invest in

electricity from hydro. This clean energy backbone maximizes the environmental benefits of electrification.

Ray Kitic, Vice President of Hitachi's Mining Business Unit, explained:

"If we're talking about true decarbonisation in Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, this is the location. Within Zambia, more than 85 per cent of electricity is hydro-generated."

Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from equipment. Scope 2 relates to electricity consumption. Scope 3 encompasses the broader

supply chain.

Electrifying heavy equipment in Zambia addresses all three simultaneously a rare alignment in industrial sustainability.

The Economics of Electrification

Electrification is not just about climate goals it's about economics. Mining companies face volatile fuel prices, rising carbon costs, and investor pressure to demonstrate environmental responsibility.

"Fleet electrification has real potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, especially at a time of global fuel price pressures," Pascall said. "This innovation makes business sense. It leverages Zambia's abundant hydroelectric renewable energy and reflects our culture of continuous improvement, safety, and adaptation."

Hitachi's modelling shows the truck is already cash-positive compared to diesel alternatives in certain operating conditions. Kitic added: "There's a lot of scepticism around alternative energy that comes with compromise on performance, reliability, or cost. This is not the case."

Inside the Technology

The ultra-large battery dump truck showcased at Kansanshi is the result of a joint development between Hitachi Construction Machinery and ABB Ltd., a global leader in electrification and automation. Combining Hitachi's experience with trolley-assist haulage systems and ABB's advanced battery design, the truck demonstrates how electrification can work at ultra-large mining scale.

Instead of stopping for long charging sessions, the truck recharges directly from overhead trolley lines when climbing uphill and recharges more through regenerative braking when going downhill.

This dynamic charging system allows it to recharge while operating, minimizing downtime and keeping productivity on par with diesel fleets.

The battery itself is optimized for mining conditions. By limiting overall volume, engineers reduced weight, maximizing payload capacity and cost performance.

A full charge takes about 10 minutes, providing roughly 40 minutes of standalone operation, but in practice the truck runs continuously thanks to its dual charging sources.

At the heart of the EH4000 is its lithium-titanate oxide (LTO) battery system, chosen for durability, safety, and rapid charging:

Durability: Up to 20,000 charge cycles, essential for nonstop mining. **Fast Charging:** 80% charge in about 15 minutes at 4C rates.

Safety: Lower risk of overheating, ensuring reliability under extreme loads.

Together, these innovations make the EH4000 more than a showcase of engineering—it is proof that ultra-large mining trucks can be electrified without sacrificing performance, setting a benchmark for sustainable mining worldwide.

Kitic explained: "We can charge faster, but it's always a balance between battery durability and life. Heat kills batteries, so this is the right balance for us."

Building Skills for the Future

Beyond machinery, the project is about people. Pascall highlighted how Zambian employees are now leading in battery-electric and trolley-assist systems expertise unique worldwide.

Training programs are equipping engineers, technicians, and operators with advanced skills in electrical systems, diagnostics, and digital monitoring.

With 96% of FQM's workforce in Zambia being local citizens, the initiative strengthens domestic talent and aligns with national development goals.

Government Endorsement

Ministry of Mines Permanent Secretary Dr Hapenga Kabeta praised the partnership:

"Environmental stewardship is essential if we are to protect the planet from the rising impacts of climate change. Such strategic partnerships represent the future of responsible and sustainable mining."

Kabeta emphasized that the initiative reflects Zambia's stable regulatory environment and commitment to balancing profit, people, and planet.

He noted that FQM is not only a leader in copper production but also a pioneer in technology adoption, driven predominantly by Zambian talent.

A Decade of Partnership

The success builds on a partnership dating back to 2012, when FQM and Hitachi introduced trolley-assist systems at Kansanshi.

That foundation paved the way for today's battery-powered trucks, proving that incremental innovation can lead to transformative change.

"Our long-standing partnership with Hitachi dates

back to 2012," Pascall said. "Today's success is the result of that shared vision and commitment."

Global Implications

While rooted in Zambia, the Kansanshi project has global resonance. Kitic confirmed that expansion to other mine sites worldwide is already under consideration.

Industry analysts predict that battery-electric haul trucks could become standard within the next decade, driven by advances in battery technology, falling energy costs, and tightening environmental regulations. Kansanshi may well be remembered as the launchpad for this transformation.

Beyond Emissions

The benefits extend beyond carbon reduction: Cleaner air, free of diesel exhaust.

Quieter operations, improving safety and communication.

Stronger ESG credentials, boosting investor confidence.

Noise reduction and elimination of diesel fumes improve working conditions and community well-being an often overlooked but vital aspect of sustainable mining.

Zambia's Opportunity

As global demand for copper surges driven by electric vehicles, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure Zambia is positioned to lead. Producing copper with low-carbon methods enhances its value in environmentally conscious markets.

"It shows that Zambia is not only a producer of minerals, but a pioneer in technology adoption," Dr Kabeta said.

This distinction could attract new investment, stimulate job creation, and support long-term economic growth.

The transition to fully electrified fleets will take time, requiring infrastructure upgrades and workforce training. But the trajectory is clear.

The Kansanshi truck is both a symbol and a starting point proof that mining can be profitable, responsible, and sustainable.

As the hum of electric motors replaces the roar of diesel engines, Zambia is not just mining copper. It is mining the future.





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Glencore Bets on DRC Operations to Drive Copper and Cobalt Growth Strategy

Glencore is intensifying its investment focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as part of a long-term strategy to become one of the world's leading copper producers without relying on large-scale mergers.

The company recently ended merger discussions with Rio Tinto that could have created the world's largest mining group.

Instead, Glencore has opted to strengthen its balance sheet and sharpen its portfolio around high-demand transition metals, particularly copper and cobalt sourced from its operations in the DRC.

A central component of this strategy is the restructuring of ownership in its flagship copper and cobalt assets in the country.

Glencore agreed to sell a 40% stake in key DRC operations to the Orion Critical Minerals Consortium, a move aimed at unlocking capital while maintaining operational control of some of the world's most strategically important battery metals assets.

DRC Assets at the Core of Growth Plans

Growth in Glencore's copper output is expected to be driven largely by improvements and expansions at existing operations, particularly the Kamoto Copper Company Complex (KCC).

A land access agreement with the state-owned miner Gécamines is expected to support production growth toward approximately 300,000 tonnes of copper per year while extending the mine's operational lifespan.

The company has reaffirmed plans to produce more than 1 million tonnes of copper annually by 2028, with output projected to rise further to around 1.6 million tonnes by 2035.

These targets position the DRC as a cornerstone of Glencore's future production profile and a critical contributor to global supply of energy transition minerals.

Production Performance Reflects Operational Pressures

Glencore produced 851,600 tonnes of copper in 2025, representing an 11% decline compared with the previous year, largely due to lower ore grades and recovery rates at several international operations.

However, production strengthened significantly in the second half of the year as operational performance improved.

In the DRC, cobalt production declined slightly amid export controls and regulatory measures introduced to stabilise global markets.

These policy interventions have underscored the growing role of the Congolese government in managing strategic mineral supply and pricing.

Across its broader portfolio, zinc production increased, while nickel output declined in response to weaker market conditions.

Despite these operational fluctuations, the company continues to prioritise copper and cobalt assets in the DRC as long-term growth drivers.

Financial Performance Shows Resilience Amid Market Shifts

Glencore reported higher revenue in its latest financial results, supported by strong

commodity trading activity and stable demand for industrial metals.

However, profitability was affected by weaker coal prices, reflecting the gradual shift in global energy markets toward lower-carbon fuels.

Coal remains a major source of cash flow for the company but presents increasing strategic complexity due to environmental pressures and long-term decarbonisation trends.

As a result, Glencore continues to rebalance its portfolio toward minerals essential for electrification, renewable energy and battery manufacturing sectors in which the DRC plays a central role.

Strategic Outlook Anchored in DRC's Critical Minerals

Glencore expects to maintain strong production levels in the coming years while navigating regulatory, operational and geopolitical risks associated with mining in resource-rich jurisdictions.

The company did not issue formal cobalt production guidance for 2026, citing uncertainty surrounding export quotas and market controls in the DRC.

Despite these uncertainties, the company's standalone growth strategy is increasingly anchored in the country's vast copper and cobalt reserves.

With global demand for critical minerals projected to rise sharply, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is positioned to remain a pivotal hub in the global energy

ZDA Approves US\$600,000 Export Fund to Boost Youth Businesses and Local Mining Supply Chains

The Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) has approved a new US\$600,000 loan facility under the Zambia Export Development Fund (ZEDF) to support businesses engaged in exporting Zambian products.

The funding is designed to accelerate the growth of Zambia's non-traditional exports, create employment opportunities, and strengthen local industries.

Notably, US\$400,000 has been specifically allocated to youth-led export enterprises, underscoring the Fund's strong commitment to empowering young entrepreneurs and improving their access to regional and international markets.

The remaining US\$200,000 has been earmarked for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) supplying goods and services to the mining sector.

This targeted support is expected to enhance local manufacturing capacity, reduce reliance on imports, and increase Zambian participation in the mining supply value chain.

This financing initiative is being implemented through the Zambia Export Development Fund, which is managed by the Zambia Development Agency under a Memorandum of Understanding

between the European Union and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning.

The Fund focuses on supporting businesses with strong export potential and the capacity to contribute meaningfully to Zambia's economic development.

The US\$400,000 allocation for youth-led enterprises represents a significant step toward ensuring that young Zambians play an active role in export-driven growth. The funding is expected to:

Improve access to affordable finance for youth entrepreneurs, who often face barriers when seeking loans from traditional financial institutions
Support innovative and modern export businesses, including those leveraging digital trade platforms, improved logistics systems, and advanced supply chain solutions

In addition to youth-focused financing, the Zambia Export Development Fund continues to support high-impact non-traditional export sectors that are critical to economic diversification, including:

Apiculture: Enhancing honey processing capacity, promoting value addition, and supporting organic certification to meet international market

standards

Livestock: Strengthening cold-chain infrastructure, improving supply chain efficiency, and ensuring compliance with disease-free zone requirements to facilitate meat exports

Supplies to the Mining Sector: Expanding the capacity of local manufacturers and suppliers of industrial consumables, reducing import dependence, and strengthening local content participation

Commenting on the approval, ZEDF Fund Manager Dr. David Chewe stated that the targeted investment in youth-led enterprises reflects a forward-looking trade strategy that will enable young entrepreneurs to compete effectively at both regional and global levels.

Approved Funding Allocation

Strategic Focus	
Apiculture	USD 200,000
Entrepreneurship and Innovation	
Livestock	USD 200,000
Quality Standards and Regional Export Expansion	
Supplies to the Mines	USD 200,000
Local Content Development and Import Substitution	
Total Approved Financing	USD 600,000



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AFRICA'S
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Baseload from the sun is here – and it's cheaper than you think

By Franck Alloghe

Copper has become one of the defining materials of the global energy transition, but the conversation about supply often overlooks a more immediate constraint: the ability to power its extraction. Across the Copperbelt, ambitious production targets and strong investor interest are colliding with a structural energy deficit. In the DRC and Zambia, power systems are already stretched, forcing mining operations into a costly reliance on diesel, imports, and emergency generation. What is changing, however, is not the scale of the challenge, but the economics of the solution. The latest analysis from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) suggests that renewable energy can underpin industrial activity even more reliably and cheaply than fossil alternatives. Across high-quality solar regions, many of which resemble the Copperbelt's resource profile, IRENA's modelling shows that firm renewable costs have already fallen sharply, declining by almost 50% over the past five years. These costs are predicted to fall even more as technology costs decline. What this implies is not incremental progress, but a structural shift. Firm renewable electricity is no longer an aspirational concept: it is becoming cost-competitive with conventional baseload generation. Across multiple markets, solar plus storage systems are already undercutting the price of new gas and coal plants, particularly in high-irradiance regions. The economics are further strengthened by the fact that, once built, these systems are largely insulated from fuel price volatility and supply chain complications, which have driven significant cost instability in fossil-based generation. Firm renewable electricity is no longer an aspirational concept: it is becoming cost-

competitive with conventional baseload generation

The underlying drivers of this transformation are well understood. Solar PV costs have fallen by 87% since 2010, while battery storage costs have declined by over 90%, reaching approximately US\$197 per kilowatt-hour by 2024. As storage becomes cheaper and system design more sophisticated, the costs of baseload renewable power are no longer prohibitive; they are increasingly marginal.

The implications for mining are considerable. Moving to baseload renewable systems reduces exposure to fuel price fluctuations and reduces operational risk. In addition, as global markets place greater emphasis on carbon intensity and traceability, the energy mix behind mineral production is becoming part of the value proposition. Access to firm, low-carbon electricity is increasingly relevant not only for cost management, but for securing offtake agreements, financing, and long-term partnerships.

How these systems are configured and procured is an important factor in the economics. Bespoke energy systems should take into account mining load profile, shape, and the costs of battery capacity, generation overbuild, and hybridization between solar PV, wind, and other sources of energy. Once operational, systems need to be managed carefully to ensure always-on power. For mining companies, the capital outlay, design and build process, and ongoing management of energy systems can be prohibitive. After all, energy generation is an enabler to mining operations, not a core revenue-generating activity. Energy as a Service (EaaS) is emerging as an elegant solution. Paying per kWh — as operations would do if procuring from an energy

grid — reduces cost and risk exposure to energy generation. Performance guarantees ensure that risks of downtime remain low.

These economics are particularly compelling in contexts where grid access is constrained or where continuous supply is essential. In the Copperbelt, high solar irradiance reduces the depth of energy shortfalls, limiting the amount of storage required and lowering overall system costs. This changes the nature of energy supply from a bottleneck to a lever.

For years, the renewable energy debate has centred on whether it could match the reliability of fossil fuels. Today, the evidence suggests that it can, and at a comparable or lower cost. The economics of renewable baseload have shifted faster than perceptions.

The mines that move first to secure reliable, cost-competitive renewable power will not just mitigate risk, they will define a new benchmark for how copper is produced in the energy transition era. Baseload from the sun is here to stay.



Franck Alloghe



KoBold Metals Launches Construction of Zambia's Largest Copper Mine

KoBold Metals Breaks Ground on \$2.3 Billion Mingomba Copper Mine in Zambia, Boosting Output Ambitions

By Constance Makungu

KoBold Metals, a U.S.-based exploration company backed by investors including Bill Gates and Sam Altman, has officially begun construction of the Mingomba copper mine in Zambia, marking one of the largest mining investments in the country's history.

The project, valued at more than \$2.3 billion, is expected to become Zambia's largest copper mine.

Once fully operational, Mingomba is projected to produce over 300,000 tonnes of copper per year, placing it among the top producers on the African continent.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the shaft sinking, President Hakainde Hichilema said the project demonstrates growing investor confidence in Zambia's mining sector and economic potential.

KoBold Metals used advanced artificial intelligence technology to accelerate exploration at the site.

After acquiring the project in December 2022, the company identified a high-grade copper deposit deep underground that had not previously been discovered.

The development comes at a time when global demand for copper is rising rapidly, driven by the growth of electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, and data centers.

Analysts widely expect a future supply shortfall, which could increase the importance of large-scale projects like Mingomba.

However, the project also presents technical challenges. The mine is expected to reach depths of approximately 1,700 meters, making it one of the deepest copper mines in the world.

The area, located near Zambia's border with the Democratic Republic of Congo, is known for high groundwater levels, requiring extensive pumping systems to prevent flooding.

KoBold Metals expects to finalize a detailed cost estimate after completing an engineering study by early next year.

The company has not previously developed a mine, having focused primarily on mineral exploration, making Mingomba its first major development project.

For Zambia, the project supports the government's goal of significantly increasing copper production over the coming decade.

Other major mining companies have also been expanding operations in the country, reinforcing its position as a key global copper

producer.

Meanwhile the Mineworkers Union of Zambia has welcomed the investment, describing it as a major milestone for the mining sector and a potential driver of economic growth in the Copperbelt region.

Union President Joseph Chewe said the project could help revitalise the region but stressed that its success should also be measured by the quality of jobs created.

He called for competitive wages, safe working conditions, and strong labour standards.

He also urged the government to ensure that Zambians benefit beyond employment, including through participation in ownership, supply chains, and business partnerships.

Strengthening local involvement in the mining value chain, he said, would support long-term economic development.

As construction progresses, the Mingomba project is expected to play a key role in Zambia's mining future and contribute to meeting growing global copper demand.





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First Quantum Minerals Leads Solwezi's Infrastructure Revolution with Mitech-Boom Gate Road Upgrade

Solwezi Rising: The Mitech-Boom Gate Road Upgrade and the New Face of Urban Growth

By Constance Makungu

Over the past decade, Solwezi has undergone a steady transformation from a quiet provincial town into one of Zambia's fastest-growing economic centres. At the heart of this growth has been the sustained presence and investment of First Quantum Minerals (FQM), whose operations have increasingly extended beyond mining into infrastructure development that supports the town's expansion.

As economic activity rises, so too does the demand for modern infrastructure capable of sustaining industry and a growing population.

FQM has positioned itself as a key partner, working alongside government and local authorities to address these needs.

The most visible example is the Mitech-Boom Gate Road upgrade, a strategic project reshaping mobility, improving safety, and laying the foundation for long-term urban growth in Solwezi.

A Partnership Forged in Concrete

Implemented through Kansanshi Mining PLC, a subsidiary of FQM, the project represents a K104 million joint investment between the mining company and the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

Each party is contributing K52 million to transform a 4.91-kilometre (3.05-mile) stretch

of road into a modern dual carriageway.

This collaboration highlights the power of public-private partnerships in delivering infrastructure that benefits both industry and community.

North-Western Province Minister Robert Lihefu welcomed the initiative:

"This event is a clear demonstration of the partnership that exists between the Government of the Republic of Zambia and the private sector."

A Critical Corridor Under Pressure

The Mitech-Boom Gate Road has become a vital artery for Solwezi's transport network, serving commuters, businesses, service vehicles, and heavy-duty mining logistics. But congestion, seasonal deterioration, and safety challenges have made an upgrade urgent.

The decision to reconstruct the road into a dual carriageway marks a shift from incremental maintenance to full-scale infrastructure planning.

Once complete, it will feature two lanes in each direction, improved drainage, reinforced structural layers, and formalised traffic management systems.

For residents, this means shorter travel times and safer journeys. For businesses, it means smoother logistics and reduced costs. For the mining sector, it ensures reliable transport capacity to sustain operations.

Engineering for Heavy-Duty Use

Operations Superintendent Site Services at

Kansanshi Mining PLC, Leonard Kabwiku, explained the phased approach:

"We are widening the road first and then building it up in layers until we reach the underside of the surface. After that, the surfacing team will complete the final stage, followed by drainage works, finishing, and installation of signage."

This layered construction ensures durability, while integrated drainage systems protect against seasonal rainfall.

Safety and sequencing remain central, given the need to manage traffic flows in a live community environment.

The engineering design mirrors standards used in other major infrastructure projects in Zambia, ensuring that Solwezi's road network is built to withstand decades of use.

Safety and Community Interface

The project unfolds within an active urban setting, requiring careful coordination with residents. Heavy equipment is transported along a designated 16-kilometre haulage route, with strict safety protocols in place.

Kabwiku stressed:

"We do not compromise on safety. We are working in the community, and we expect the community to support us as we bring heavy equipment to the site."

This emphasis reflects industry best practice, where community engagement and risk management are inseparable from engineering execution.



For Solwezi's residents, the project is not just about a road it is about trust. Ensuring that construction integrates smoothly with daily life is critical to maintaining community support.

Local Participation and Economic Inclusion

A defining feature of the project is its emphasis on local participation. Up to eight Zambian subcontractors are engaged across disciplines such as earthworks, drainage, and finishing.

Kabwiku noted:

“This project is proudly Zambian the contractors are Zambian, the workforce is Zambian, and the road is being built by Zambians.”

This model spreads economic benefits across multiple firms and strengthens skills within Zambia's construction sector.

It also ensures that expertise is retained locally, building capacity for future projects.

For young engineers and construction workers, the project is a training ground. For local businesses, it is an opportunity to grow.

For Solwezi, it is a chance to prove that development can be both inclusive and sustainable.

Quality Assurance: Built to Endure

Kansanshi Mining PLC Assistant General Manager Axel Kottgen underscored the importance of durability:

“Our standard here is the same as the smelter bypass. We're talking about a stone-based dual carriageway with proper drainage, curbing, and a central divider made to last.”

This reflects a philosophy of long-term resilience, critical in a rapidly growing urban environment where industrial transport demands are high.

By setting high engineering standards, FQM and its partners are ensuring that Solwezi's infrastructure can support growth for decades to come.

Government and Local Authority Perspectives

At the municipal level, Solwezi Mayor Remmy Kalepa reinforced community inclusion:

“We will work hand in hand to ensure that the people of Solwezi feel part and parcel of the development taking place in their district.”

This sentiment captures the essence of modern governance: development must be participatory, not imposed.

The government's involvement in the 50:50 funding arrangement reflects a shared commitment to infrastructure development as a driver of regional growth.

Timeline and Delivery

The project is expected to be completed within 12 months, with initial stages focused on earthworks, widening, and foundation preparation.

Once finished, maintenance will be handed over to municipal authorities, embedding the road within Solwezi's public infrastructure network.

The phased delivery approach ensures continuous progress while maintaining safety and quality standards throughout the construction cycle.

A Road Within a Larger Transformation

The Mitech–Boom Gate Road upgrade is part of a broader transformation sweeping across Solwezi.

Mining-led growth has created unprecedented demand for modern infrastructure systems roads, utilities, and public services all under pressure to adapt.

FQM's role has expanded accordingly. Beyond mining, it has become a key infrastructure partner, investing in projects that support operational efficiency while uplifting communities.

This dual role operator and developer positions FQM as a central actor in shaping Solwezi's future.

Infrastructure as a Driver of Urban Growth

As Solwezi continues its transition into a major economic hub, infrastructure will remain the backbone of its trajectory.

The 4.91 km Mitech–Boom Gate Road upgrade is more than a transport solution it is a symbol of partnership, resilience, and foresight.

Through collaboration between government, mining companies, contractors, and local authorities, Solwezi is building the foundation for a more connected and resilient urban environment.

At the centre of this transformation, First Quantum Minerals stands as both miner and builder, contributing to the long-term development of Solwezi and the wider North-Western Province.

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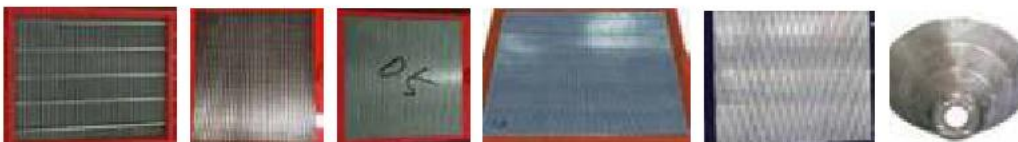
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by Bob Spicer

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Bob Spicer is managing director of 2SP Solution Providers Inc. www.2SP.ca

A QUICK CASE IN POINT: Coal wash plant, CMS detected an abnormal vibration trend on a critical vibrating screen. The CMS system's analysis pinpointed the issue: early inner-race damage on a specific SKF bearing. Armed with this precise forecast, the plant scheduled a replacement during a planned stop, avoiding an unplanned shutdown, and confirming the benefits and the strong return on investment of the CMS Diagnostic System.

2SP Solution Providers Inc.

In Zambia, Contact: **Patuma Kazembe** Mobile-WhatsApp: **+260.768.168.700**, Patuma@2sp.ca
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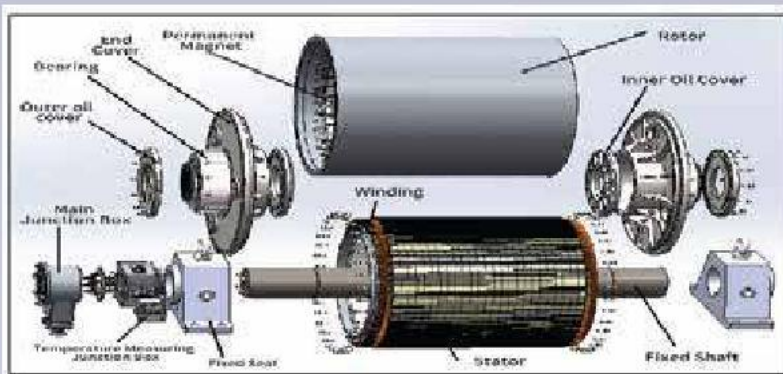
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PMDD

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- 750 to 3000mm length
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- 0.8 to 6m/s speed
- 11 to 2000kw power
- **≤5000 tph transfer**



1. The PMDD pulley structure: the stator and the outer rotor. The stator is composed of an iron core and windings, while permanent magnets are embedded on the outer rotor. The stator generates a rotating magnetic field that interacts with the magnets on the outer rotor, driving the rotor to rotate as required.
2. Disc - caliper brake and pulley backstop systems.
3. **Efficient cooling systems: water or air cooling.**
Patented Internationally

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Advanced technology in belt conveyor drive pulleys:

Permanent magnet direct drive pulley system

This article examines the technical principles, structural features, and application effectiveness of the patented Jasung permanent magnet intelligent direct drive pulley system, designed to reduce maintenance costs and improve energy efficiency compared with traditional belt conveyor drive pulleys. The system consists of a permanent magnet direct drive pulley and an intelligent variable frequency drive (VFD), achieving deep integration of machinery, electricity, and software.

SYSTEM COMPOSITION AND WORKING PRINCIPLE

The core of the system is the permanent magnet direct drive pulley, which adopts an outer rotor permanent magnet synchronous motor structure. Its technical features are as follows:

- 1. Integrated structure:** The pulley body serves as the motor rotor. Permanent magnets (UH-grade NdFeB) are embedded into the inner wall of the pulley, which is laminated from silicon steel sheets, forming the rotor magnetic field.
- 2. Fixed stator:** The main shaft acts as a fixed component, fulfilling the function of the stator. The stator core (laminated silicon steel sheets) and three-phase windings are fixed to the main shaft, generating a rotating magnetic field when energized.
- 3. Drive and control:** The matching intelligent VFD supplies symmetrical three-phase alternating current. Through precise field-oriented control (FOC) strategy, it drives the pulley (rotor) to rotate, thereby enabling the start-up, speed regulation, operational protection, and condition monitoring of the conveyor belt.
- 4. Specifications:** 11 kW to 2000 kW drives. 0.8 to 6 metre per second belt speeds. ≤ 2400 mm diameters. ≤ 5000 t/h. X-P sealed design.

This revolutionary design fundamentally replaces the traditional multi-stage transmission chain composed of motors, reducers, couplings, fluid couplings, and mechanical pulleys.

TECHNICAL ADVANTAGES AND EFFICIENCY DATA

- 1. Energy efficiency improvement:** By eliminating mechanical losses in multi-stage transmission (such as gear meshing, windage, and friction losses), the system's transmission efficiency is significantly enhanced. Measured data show that its comprehensive efficiency can exceed 96%. Compared to traditional gear transmission systems, it achieves an energy consumption reduction of 18% to 25% under equivalent working conditions.



Components of the patented Jasung permanent magnet intelligent direct drive pulley system.

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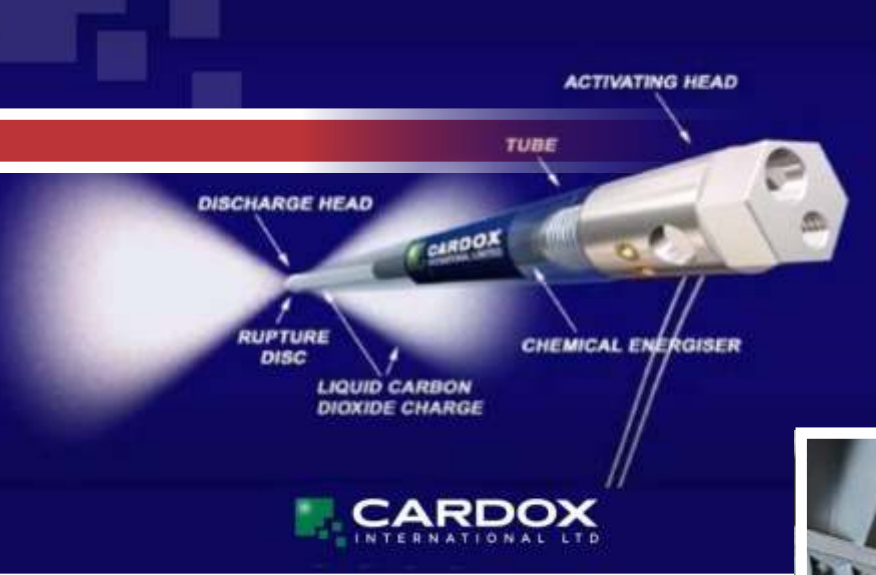
- 2. Maintenance cost optimization:** The simplified structure directly leads to a significant reduction in maintenance requirements. The primary maintenance focus is on bearing lubrication, with a maintenance cycle extended to 20,000 operating hours. It avoids routine tasks such as reducer oil changes, gear wear replacement, fluid coupling maintenance, and alignment adjustments. Application cases in bulk material handling sectors such as ports, mining, and grain processing demonstrate that customers' comprehensive maintenance costs can be reduced by over 35%.
- 3. Enhanced reliability:** The removal of vulnerable components reduces the failure rate, significantly shortening unplanned downtime. The fully sealed (IP66) protection design ensures long-term operational reliability in harsh industrial environments such as dust and humidity.

The Jasung permanent magnet outer rotor direct drive pulley system provides an efficient and reliable power solution for belt conveyor drives through its electromechanically integrated design. Engineering application data confirms its significant advantages in improving energy utilization efficiency, reducing lifecycle maintenance costs, and enhancing system reliability. This represents a significant advancement in belt conveyor driving technology suitable for continuous conveying applications. **CMJ**

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Driving Mining Excellence in Zambia with DMC Services

DMC Mining Suppliers, Contractors and Consultancy Limited has established itself as a specialized provider of drilling, blasting, and explosives management services within Zambia's mining and construction sectors. Operating in environments where safety, precision, and regulatory compliance are critical, the company supports mining houses, contractors, and infrastructure developers with technically demanding solutions.

Founded in 2005 and incorporated as a private limited company in 2013, DMC Mining has grown alongside Zambia's expanding mining and infrastructure landscape. Its formal registration with the Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA) marked the beginning of its participation in the mining services market, while incorporation enabled greater operational scale and service diversification. Over the years, the firm has built a reputation centered on technical competence and adherence to regulatory standards, reflecting the broader rise of specialized local service providers in Zambia.

DMC Mining offers a wide range of services, including drilling and blasting, explosives supply and transportation, quarry development, and explosives magazine consultancy. Its multidisciplinary workforce comprises engineers, technicians, and logistics specialists with expertise in blast design, explosives handling, and inventory management. All operations are conducted in line with national safety regulations and relevant international standards, underscoring the company's strong emphasis on risk management and environmental responsibility.

One of DMC Mining's notable strengths is controlled blasting in sensitive and high-risk environments. The company has carried out

operations near residential areas, under live transmission lines, and around critical infrastructure. These projects require precise blast calculations, vibration monitoring, permit-controlled systems, and strict access controls. Specialized tasks such as anthill removal and foundation blasting under power lines demonstrate the firm's adaptability and technical precision in complex settings.

As Zambia invests heavily in infrastructure development, demand for construction aggregates continues to increase. DMC Mining supports this growth through quarry development and production blasting services that include quarry design, blast optimization, production planning, and operational support. The company integrates environmental controls such as dust suppression, noise management, and site rehabilitation into its quarrying operations. Preventative equipment maintenance and efficient production cycles are emphasized to ensure consistent output aligned with project timelines.

Explosives supply represents DMC Mining's core business. The company provides certified explosives, detonators, and blasting accessories in full compliance with Zambia's increasingly stringent regulatory environment. Its procurement and inventory management systems are designed to match client-specific operational needs, while licensed handling, storage, and spill-prevention procedures reinforce workplace and environmental safety. This focus is particularly relevant given heightened oversight of explosives due to safety and regional security considerations.

Transportation of explosives is another critical service offered by DMC Mining. The company operates an MSD-authorized fleet dedicated to safe explosives transport nationwide. Measures include trained drivers, tracked vehicles, convoy systems,

real-time monitoring, route risk assessments, and emergency response readiness. Operational efficiencies, such as optimized routing and reduced idle times, also help manage fuel and logistics costs.

In explosives storage, DMC Mining owns and operates the Ichimpe Magazine facility, consisting of four compliant storage houses with a combined capacity of 30,000 cases. These magazines are rented to clients and supported by consultancy services that include compliance audits, inventory tracking, access control systems, and safety assessments. Surveillance, segregation protocols, waste handling, and environmentally responsible storage practices underpin the facility's management.

With a workforce exceeding 80 technical staff, DMC Mining continues to expand its operational footprint. Its positioning emphasizes safety, compliance, and technical expertise, reflecting the evolving demands of Zambia's mining sector. However, the company acknowledges that independent verification of its client base and project outcomes remains limited, highlighting a broader need for transparency within the industry.

Within the regional context, DMC Mining plays a supporting role in Zambia's copper-driven mining economy by providing specialized services that enable larger operators to focus on extraction. Its growth mirrors a wider African trend where local firms increasingly deliver cost-effective, context-specific solutions once dominated by multinational contractors.

Looking ahead, DMC Mining's opportunities lie in expanding consultancy services, enhancing transparency, and strengthening alignment with sustainability frameworks as Zambia's mining and infrastructure development continues to advance.

www.miningdmc.com

Rome Resources Reports High-Grade Tin Results at Kalayi Prospect in DRC

Rome Resources Confirms High-Grade Tin at Kalayi Prospect in Democratic Republic of the Congo Amid Ongoing Drill Programme

AIM-listed Rome Resources has reported continued success at its Kalayi prospect within the Bisie North project area in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, confirming consistent near-surface high-grade tin mineralisation as its drilling programme nears completion.

The Kalayi prospect lies about 8 km from Alphamin Resources' Mpama tin mining complex, highlighting its strategic location within a proven tin-producing region.

Since the company's last update in mid-February, two drill rigs have remained active as part of a post-merger mineral resource

estimate (MRE) drilling campaign.

Nearly 2,700 metres of core have been recovered since drilling began in late 2025, including extensions below the current resource area.

With only two drill holes remaining, Rome has already shipped approximately 600 kg of samples to ALS Laboratories in Johannesburg, South Africa, in addition to a previously submitted 360 kg batch, for assay analysis.

Preliminary portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF) results from drill holes KBDD028 to KBDD030 indicate strong mineralisation, including:

10 metres grading 1.3% tin from 220 metres

1 metre grading 5.4% tin from 32 metres

4 metres grading 1.0% tin from 47 metres

With tin prices currently around \$50,000 per tonne, the grades encountered suggest significant economic potential for the Kalayi system.

CEO Paul Barrett said the results reinforce confidence in the project:

"The latest intercepts confirm that high-grade tin mineralisation continues at depth beneath the existing resource, validating our structural model and supporting the potential for further resource expansion."

Rome Resources plans to incorporate the final assay results into its next MRE update for Kalayi, while continuing discussions with potential strategic partners to advance development of the asset.

Ivanhoe Mines Sees Strong Local Demand for Sulphuric Acid in DRC Amid Global Supply Tightness

Ivanhoe Mines says it has a "captive market" for sulphuric acid in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), as global prices surge amid constrained supply linked to geopolitical disruptions in the Middle East.

The Vancouver-based miner recently began commercial sales of sulphuric acid produced as a byproduct of copper smelting at its Kamoa-Kakula operation to other mining companies operating along the DRC's copper belt.

The acid is a key input in copper processing, used in heap leaching to extract metal from ore.

Global supply constraints, particularly from the Middle East, have tightened availability and driven up prices, raising concerns of a broader shortage in international markets.

Ivanhoe Mines CEO Marna Cloete said the DRC represents a substantial and structurally strong market for the product, with domestic demand estimated at around 2 million metric tons per year.

She made the comments on the sidelines of a copper industry conference in Santiago.

The company produced just over 100,000 tonnes of sulphuric acid in the first quarter, supplying major regional mining operators including Glencore and Eurasian Resources Group.

Cloete said annual output is expected to rise to between 600,000 and 700,000 tonnes once the smelter reaches full capacity.

She added that local demand is more than

sufficient to absorb future production, noting that export limitations on sulphur from neighbouring Zambia have constrained domestic acid production in the DRC, effectively strengthening reliance on Ivanhoe's output.

"We've got a captive audience in terms of our distribution," Cloete said.

Ivanhoe also reported that its Kamoa-Kakula smelter has reached about 60% of capacity, with further expansion currently limited by insufficient concentrate feed.

The company said its sulphuric acid sold for approximately \$500 per tonne in the first quarter, with spot prices rising steadily over the same period due to tightening supply conditions.



Ivanhoe Mines Updates Kamoakakula Copper Production Guidance Amid Technical Optimisation

SX-listed Ivanhoe Mines has released an updated independent technical report for the Kamoakakula Copper Complex in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The report incorporates changes to the mine design and extraction sequence and applies conservative geotechnical parameters to ensure long-term safety and operational stability.

As a result, Ivanhoe has revised its production guidance for the complex to 290,000–330,000 tonnes of copper anodes in 2026 and 380,000–420,000 tonnes in 2027.

The company expects annualised production to exceed 500,000 tonnes from 2028 onwards. Previously, the guidance had projected 380,000–420,000 tonnes in 2026 and 500,000–540,000 tonnes in 2027.

Production in 2025 was disrupted by seismic events in May, which caused flooding on the eastern side of the Kakula mine. Dewatering efforts slowed output for much of the year, impacting overall production.

CEO Marna Cloete said the company focused on safeguarding the Kakula mine and strengthening its technical foundation.

She emphasized that the updated mine design is conservative, safe, productive, and sustainable.

She noted that while these conservative assumptions reduce production in 2026 and 2027, they set the stage for record output beyond 2028, with copper anode and blister production exceeding 500,000 tonnes per year over a multi-decade life.

Ivanhoe has also started an optimised feasibility study that will cover the first five years of operations in high definition.

The study will incorporate additional data, particularly after the dewatering of the Kakula mine is completed.

Despite the challenges of 2025, Cloete highlighted the operation's

achievements. Over the past six years, Kamoakakula has produced more than 1.6 million tonnes of copper and generated over \$7 billion in EBITDA.

These earnings funded the Phase 2 and Phase 3 expansions as well as Africa's largest 500,000 t/y state-of-the-art copper smelter, which is ramping up ahead of schedule.

The smelter also generates additional revenue through by-product sulphuric acid sales and reduces the cost of shipping the 99.7%-pure copper to market.

Executive Co-Chair Robert Friedland stressed that Kamoakakula is at the centre of the richest sedimentary copper district in the world.

He highlighted the mine's extraordinary grade and long life, supported by hydroelectric and solar power.

Friedland said that in today's environment of fragile global supply chains, Tier 1 operations like Kamoakakula are critical to national and global security.

He added that the first 60 MW of on-site solar capacity will be commissioned in the second quarter of 2026, with another 60 MW planned for 2027.

To support the next phase of optimisation and long-term planning, Ivanhoe has appointed Simon Bottoms as Executive Vice President of Technical Services.

Cloete said Bottoms brings extensive experience in Africa and globally and will play a key role in delivering additional value to shareholders as the company continues to optimise Kamoakakula operations.

Despite short-term production adjustments, Ivanhoe Mines is positioning Kamoakakula for record-breaking copper output from 2028 onwards, supported by disciplined operational planning, sustainable energy integration, and a robust technical design.



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Mukoleku Security Services Expands into Marine Operations, Advanced Escort Protection, and Specialized Rescue Capabilities

From the copper-rich regions of Solwezi and Kalumbila to Zambia's industrial corridors, Mukoleku Security Services has evolved from a modest guard company into a multi-disciplinary security operation.

Founded in 2014 in North-Western Province, the company now protects copper convoys, escorts oversized cargo, and provides marine and rescue services.

In a sector once dominated by international contractors, Mukoleku's growth reflects the increasing strength of indigenous firms in integrated security and emergency response.

Mining Roots, Expanding Horizons

Mukoleku's foundation was built in mining security. With copper central to Zambia's economy, the company established its reputation through static guarding, access control, and perimeter protection for mining and industrial sites.

Unlike many international contractors, Mukoleku emphasized flexibility and community integration. Its workforce was largely recruited locally, strengthening trust and responsiveness.

Over time, the company expanded into a larger operation with personnel trained for high-risk industrial environments. Mining remained the core of its growth, but the company steadily widened its scope.

Escorting Copper and Oversized Cargo

As copper production increased, secure transportation became more important. Mukoleku developed a cargo escort division to protect copper convoys moving through remote areas vulnerable to theft and disruption.

Escort operations included route analysis, coordination, and real-time communication.

The company also expanded into abnormal load escorting, handling oversized mining equipment and heavy industrial machinery requiring special clearance.

This role combined security with logistics coordination, traffic management, and regulatory compliance.

The move reflected a broader trend in which security firms are becoming integrated risk-management partners.

Marine Operations: Securing Waterways

One of Mukoleku's most significant developments has been its move into marine operations. Mining and infrastructure projects increasingly intersect with rivers, dams, and water systems where land-based security alone is insufficient.

Mukoleku's marine division now monitors river

crossings, secures water-adjacent infrastructure, and protects logistical assets in aquatic environments.

This expansion places the company among the few indigenous firms offering integrated security coverage across both land and water.

As industrial activity continues to expand near waterways, this capability has become increasingly valuable.

Diving and Underwater Support

Complementing its marine division, Mukoleku has invested in diving and underwater support services.

The company now conducts underwater inspections of bridges, pontoons, and submerged infrastructure while also assisting with equipment recovery and engineering support around water systems.

By adding these capabilities, Mukoleku has expanded beyond conventional guarding into technical operational support.

For industrial clients, combining security and underwater services under one provider improves coordination and reliability.

Lifesaving and Rescue: Bridging Security and Emergency Response

Mukoleku has also expanded into lifesaving and rescue operations. Mining and construction projects near rivers expose workers to water-related hazards, creating demand for rapid-response capabilities.

The company now deploys trained personnel for drowning incidents, search-and-recovery operations, and emergency extraction missions.

This hybrid model bridges the gap between private security and emergency response by integrating both functions into a single operational framework. For clients, this means faster response times and improved coordination during emergencies.

An Integrated Model

Mukoleku's operations now extend far beyond traditional guarding services. Its integrated model includes:

- **Physical site security**
- **Cargo and convoy escorting**
- **Abnormal load protection**
- **Marine surveillance**
- **Diving and underwater support**
- **Emergency rescue operations**

Consolidating these services under one structure reduces fragmentation for clients operating in high-risk industrial environments. It also improves

accountability, coordination, and operational efficiency.

Positioning in Zambia's Growth Story

Zambia's industrial landscape continues to evolve. While copper remains central to the economy, infrastructure projects involving roads, dams, and industrial facilities are expanding rapidly.

These developments bring greater logistical complexity, safety demands, and operational risks.

Mukoleku's diversification aligns with these changes. By investing in specialized divisions and trained personnel, the company is positioning itself as a strategic partner in industrial risk management rather than simply a provider of guards.

Indigenous Trust and Regional Resonance

Mukoleku's rise also reflects growing confidence in indigenous firms. For years, many high-risk operations were dominated by international contractors.

Mukoleku's expansion demonstrates that local companies can operate at scale while maintaining strong community integration and local understanding.

This local grounding remains one of the company's strongest advantages, particularly in mining regions where trust and regional knowledge are critical to effective operations.

Challenges Ahead

Expansion into marine operations, diving, and rescue services requires continuous investment in equipment, training, and regulatory compliance.

Competition is also increasing as more firms pursue integrated security and emergency-response models.

Mukoleku's advantage lies in its operational flexibility, local roots, and established track record. Maintaining that position will require continued professionalism and adaptation as Zambia's industrial sector grows.

Conclusion: From Guard Posts to Integrated Partner
Mukoleku's evolution from a small guard company into a multi-disciplinary security and rescue operation reflects both corporate ambition and Zambia's wider industrial transformation. By combining convoy protection, marine surveillance, diving support, and rescue capabilities, the company has expanded beyond traditional security into integrated risk management.

As Zambia's mines, infrastructure projects, and waterways continue to develop, Mukoleku's growth highlights the expanding role indigenous firms can play in supporting modern industry.

www.mukolekuss.online

BHP Expands Copper Exploration in Zambia Amid Rising Global Demand

Global mining giant BHP is increasing its exploration efforts in Zambia as part of a broader regional campaign to identify large-scale copper deposits, highlighting renewed international interest in the country's mineral potential.

Zambia, Africa's second-largest copper producer after the Democratic Republic of Congo, is seeking to significantly expand its copper output over the coming decade and is actively encouraging foreign investment to unlock underexplored resources.

BHP's renewed engagement marks a strategic shift after the company reduced its direct presence in parts of Africa following the 2015 spin-off of its non-core assets into South32.

The company is now re-entering the region

through an exploration-focused program spanning southern Africa, including Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, and Angola.

According to Zambia's Ministry of Mines, BHP is concentrating on identifying large, deeply buried copper deposits that are difficult to detect using conventional exploration techniques.

The company is deploying advanced geological modeling, geophysical surveys, and data-driven exploration methods to locate large mineral systems capable of supporting long-life mining operations.

Industry specialists note that many of the world's remaining copper resources are located deeper underground and require more sophisticated exploration technologies and

higher capital investment to develop.

Zambia's government has been implementing policy and regulatory reforms aimed at improving the investment climate in the mining sector, positioning the country as a key contributor to future global copper supply.

Demand for copper is expected to grow steadily due to its critical role in electrification, renewable energy systems, electric vehicles, and power grid expansion.

While BHP's current activities are focused on exploration rather than mine development, the company's involvement underscores Zambia's strategic importance in the evolving global minerals landscape and signals growing international interest in the region's long-term copper potential.

Luanshya Copper Mine Set to Restart Production After Two Decades of Rehabilitation

Luanshya Copper Mine is scheduled to resume production in August 2026 after more than two decades of inactivity, marking a significant milestone in Zambia's efforts to expand copper output and revitalize legacy mining assets.

The mine is majority owned by China Nonferrous Mining Corporation (CNMC), which acquired the operation in 2009 and holds an 80 percent stake.

Zambia's state mining investment company, ZCCM Investments Holdings (ZCCM-IH), retains the remaining 20 percent share.

Before operations could restart, the mine underwent an extensive dewatering process after severe flooding damaged underground infrastructure and halted production for years.

Dewatering Milestone Clears Path for Mine Restart

According to the Ministry of Mines, approximately 87.9 million cubic metres of water had been pumped out of the mine as of

March 27, enabling the start of infrastructure rehabilitation and construction activities required for production.

Operations are expected to resume first at the upper mine section in August 2026, while production from the deeper underground levels is planned for a later phase.

The lower mine is projected to begin operations in 2029 as part of the ongoing redevelopment of the 28 Shaft, a major capital project being undertaken by China Luanshya Mine.

Major Capital Investment Driving Long-Term Expansion

The redevelopment of the 28 Shaft represents a substantial investment estimated at approximately \$710 million, covering the construction of new shaft systems, a modern concentrator plant, and associated infrastructure upgrades.

Project developers have already invested more than \$75 million toward the redevelopment, with additional capital expenditures expected as construction progresses.

The operating company is also exploring potential collaboration with ZCCM-IH to develop new mining opportunities in recently acquired exploration areas within the Luanshya region.

Strategic Role in Zambia's Copper Growth Targets

Once fully operational, the Luanshya mine is expected to produce approximately 100,000 metric tonnes of copper annually by 2030, contributing to Zambia's national strategy to significantly expand copper output.

The country Africa's second-largest copper producer is pursuing an ambitious target to more than triple annual copper production to 3 million tonnes by 2031, driven by renewed investment in existing mines, new project development, and infrastructure modernization.

The restart of Luanshya represents a key step in restoring dormant capacity within the Copperbelt and strengthening Zambia's position in the global copper supply chain, particularly as demand for the metal rises in response to electrification and energy transition initiatives.



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New Mining Projects

MMG Eyes New Copper Projects in DRC as Global Expansion Strategy Accelerates

Global mining company MMG Limited is exploring new acquisition opportunities in Africa, with a particular focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo as it seeks to expand its copper portfolio.

The Chinese-owned miner is assessing several potential takeover targets across Africa and Latin America, targeting advanced copper projects that are close to development but not yet in production.

The company says it is interested in assets with significant scale that could strengthen its long-term production pipeline.

According to interim executive general manager Sandra Xiangjun Guan, MMG has already identified several projects of interest and is conducting technical assessments as part of its acquisition strategy.

While the targeted assets are not currently on the market, the company believes opportunities could emerge in the near future.

Focus on Africa's Copper Potential

Africa, and particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo, is considered a key region for copper expansion due to its vast mineral reserves and growing importance in the global supply of energy-transition metals.

The DRC is already one of the world's leading copper producers and plays a critical role in supplying metals used in electrification, renewable energy systems and electric vehicles.

Mining companies around the world are increasingly looking to expand their exposure to copper as demand rises rapidly.

The metal is essential for power grids, battery technologies and the infrastructure required for the global energy transition.

Strong Financial Performance

MMG reported a strong financial performance in 2025, with net profit more than tripling to \$509 million,

marking the company's best result since 2021.

The improvement was largely driven by stronger commodity prices and higher production at key operations.

However, the results still fell short of analysts' expectations, which had projected net income of about \$701 million.

Following the announcement, the company's shares declined on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

Copper Market Momentum

MMG chairman Cao Liang said the copper market strengthened in 2025 due to rising demand linked to electrification and the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence data centers, both of which require large amounts of copper for infrastructure and power systems.

At the same time, precious metals have continued to attract investor interest amid global economic uncertainty.

Operations and Investment Plans

MMG recorded production growth at its major operations, including the Las Bambas Mine in Peru and the Dugald River Mine in Australia.

However, the company's earnings were partly affected by an impairment charge linked to its Kinsevere Mine in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Despite these challenges, MMG continues to view Africa as a strategic region for future growth.

The company also plans to increase capital expenditure at the Las Bambas mine to between \$800 million and \$850 million this year to upgrade facilities and expand production capacity, taking advantage of stronger copper prices.

With global demand for copper expected to continue rising, MMG's expansion strategy including potential investments in the DRC could play a key role in securing future supply for the rapidly growing energy transition sector.



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Virtus Minerals to Restart Chemaf's Cobalt and Copper Mines in the DRC After Regulatory Approval

US-based Virtus Minerals announced it is moving to restart the Chemaf cobalt and copper mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) after securing full regulatory approval.

This marks the first acquisition of operating mines under the US–Congo minerals partnership, following a series of offtake agreements.

Virtus stated that its immediate focus will be on inventory verification, technical and operational assessments, and restart planning across Chemaf's asset portfolio, with timelines dependent on the completion of these evaluations.

The DRC is the world's top producer of cobalt and possesses vast reserves of copper and lithium,

minerals essential for electric vehicles and the global energy transition.

The United States has been actively pursuing strategies to build its critical minerals stockpile and reduce dependence on China's supply chains.

US Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Jacob Helberg confirmed that Kinshasa had approved the sale of Chemaf to Virtus under the bilateral minerals agreement between the two countries.

Virtus further stated that it had secured clearances from the mines ministry, the portfolio ministry, and the state-owned miner Gécamines, which holds the mining leases.

Reports indicate that some Gécamines executives

were removed due to concerns they had obstructed the Chemaf transaction, though both Gécamines and the DRC mines ministry have not publicly commented.

Virtus emphasized that its priority is to stabilize Chemaf's operations and support a responsible restart of production while planning for long-term growth beyond the Mutoshi and Étoile projects through Chemaf's broader permit portfolio.

Maintaining workforce continuity will be central to the transition.

The company noted that it is too early to provide details on output targets, staffing levels, or capital expenditures, but it affirmed its commitment to long-term operational and strategic development of Chemaf's mining assets.

Zijin Mining Advances Strategic Logistics Corridor for Manono Lithium Project

China's Zijin Mining is developing a dedicated logistics corridor to connect its Manono lithium project in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Tanganyika Province to export terminals in Tanzania.

As part of this strategy, the company is nearing completion of a fleet of cargo vessels designed to operate on Lake Tanganyika, forming a critical link in the regional supply chain and enabling a structured export route for lithium products.

Construction of the vessels is more than 95 percent complete as of March 2026. Two vessels have already been finalized, a third is awaiting regulatory clearance from Tanzania's maritime authorities, and a fourth vessel has been launched and is scheduled for completion in July 2026.

The rollout of the fleet marks a significant step toward operational readiness for the transport corridor.

The first vessel in the series, Golden Voyage No. 1, was launched in November 2025 and represents a key milestone in establishing a reliable transport route between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania.

Each vessel measures approximately 70 meters in length and 15 meters in width, with a carrying capacity of about 2,000 tons and an operational range of roughly 1,000 nautical miles.

The ships were manufactured in modular sections in China before being transported to Tanzania for final assembly at the port of Karema, a method that accelerated deployment while managing logistical constraints.

The vessel fleet is designed primarily to support the supply chain for the Manono lithium project, one of the largest hard-rock lithium developments in Central Africa.

Under the planned logistics configuration, lithium concentrate will be transported by road approximately 440 kilometers from the Manono mine site to the lakeside city of Kalemie.

From there, cargo will be loaded onto bulk vessels operating across Lake Tanganyika to the port of Kigoma in western Tanzania, before continuing overland to the port of Dar es Salaam for export to international markets.

This multimodal system integrates road, inland waterway, and maritime transport into a single export corridor designed to improve reliability, manage logistics costs, and provide consistent throughput capacity.

The lake transport operation forms part of a broader infrastructure strategy aimed at securing long-term export capability for the Manono project and supporting sustained production volumes.

In addition to the vessel deployment, Zijin Mining

has secured concessions to operate and upgrade key logistics assets in Tanzania, including facilities at Kigoma and the Malindi terminal at the port of Dar es Salaam.

Planned modernization works include improvements to warehouses, storage areas, and cargo-handling equipment to enhance operational efficiency and accommodate increased mineral export volumes.

The Manono lithium project itself is designed as a large-scale mining and processing operation with an annual capacity to handle approximately five million tons of ore.

The processing facility is expected to produce around 500,000 tons of spodumene concentrate annually, yielding roughly 95,000 tons of crude lithium sulfate. Commissioning of the plant is scheduled for June 30, 2026.

The deployment of cargo vessels on Lake Tanganyika is therefore a central component of Zijin Mining's logistics architecture, providing a controlled and scalable export pathway from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to the Indian Ocean.

Once fully operational, the corridor is expected to strengthen regional trade flows, improve supply chain predictability, and position the Manono project as a significant contributor to the global battery minerals market.



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The Multi-Million Dollar Liability Hiding in Your Organisation

Zambia's mining industry is scaling rapidly to meet the national target of 3 million tonnes of copper. As operations expand across the Copperbelt and North-Western provinces, a significant and largely invisible liability is quietly growing in site offices and HR departments across the region. It is not a cyberattack. It is not a hacker in another country. It is the physical paper sitting in your filing cabinets right now.

Contractor agreements moving between desks. Decades of mandatory employee silicosis tests and medical check-ups stored in rusting metal cabinets. Shift logs left on clipboards. Most executives believe data risk is strictly a digital problem, but under the Zambian Data Protection Act No. 3 of 2021, the law applies equally to paper records.

A locked filing cabinet is not a compliant records system. The law is clear and enforcement has begun.

The Ticking Clock of Compliance

A locked filing cabinet or a basic shared network folder does not meet the strict access controls required under the Act. If an HR file is left unattended on a desk, or a physical medical record is improperly discarded, the penalties are severe. Corporate fines can reach millions of kwachas, up to 2% of annual turnover, alongside potential criminal liability for Directors personally.

For contractors and sub-contractors, the exposure is compounded. Tier-1 mines are actively auditing their supply chains for DPA compliance. If your firm cannot produce documented proof of compliant records

management, you risk losing lucrative tender contracts overnight, not because of poor performance, but to protect the Tier-1 operator's own regulatory standing. The statutory grace period has expired. The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner mandated registration by April 30, 2025. That deadline has passed, and unannounced audits are already underway across the sector.

For organisations with cross-border activities in the DRC, the compliance landscape is equally demanding. The DRC's Law No. 20/017 on telecommunications and information imposes data handling obligations, and Tier-1 operators with dual-jurisdiction supply chains are increasingly requiring unified compliance standards from all partners regardless of which side of the border they operate on.

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Zimbabwe Marks First Lithium Sulphate Export as Huayou Advances Local Processing Push

Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt has shipped Africa's first batch of lithium sulphate from its Zimbabwe-based processing facility, just months after the government tightened restrictions on lithium concentrate exports over concerns about malpractice and revenue leakages.

The company's local subsidiary confirmed the shipment in a statement posted on X late Monday, describing it as a milestone for both Zimbabwe and the continent's mineral beneficiation efforts.

"This inaugural shipment represents the first lithium salt ever produced in Zimbabwe and across Africa, marking a major step forward in regional mineral beneficiation and industrialisation," the statement said. However, Huayou did not disclose the volume of the consignment.

The \$400 million processing plant, completed in

October 2025, has an annual capacity of around 50,000 metric tons of lithium sulphate.

The intermediate product can be further refined into lithium hydroxide or lithium carbonate key inputs in electric vehicle battery manufacturing.

Zimbabwe, Africa's largest lithium producer, has increasingly pushed mining companies to process more of the mineral domestically in order to capture greater value from its resources.

As part of this strategy, the government recently introduced a 10% export tax on lithium concentrate.

The levy does not apply to lithium sulphate or other higher-value processed products.

The country has also taken a more restrictive stance on raw exports. A full ban on lithium concentrate exports is scheduled to take effect in January 2027, while authorities temporarily suspended all such exports on February 25, citing "malpractices during

the exportation of minerals."

To regulate the sector in the interim, Zimbabwe introduced export quotas in April, alongside compliance requirements that include the publication of annual financial statements and adherence to labour, safety, and environmental standards.

So far, Chinese firms Sichuan Yahua, Chengxin Lithium, and Sinomine have received export quotas from Zimbabwean authorities.

Huayou has not confirmed whether it has been allocated a quota, and the company did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Chinese mining companies dominate Zimbabwe's lithium sector, reinforcing China's broader control over global battery mineral supply chains.

In 2025, Zimbabwe exported approximately 1.13 million metric tons of spodumene concentrate to China, accounting for roughly 15% of China's lithium concentrate imports for the year.

Ghana to Channel Artisanal Gold into Formal Trade to Boost Revenue

Ghana plans to direct approximately 127 metric tons of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) gold annually into official trade channels under revised sector reforms, aiming to increase foreign-exchange earnings and curb smuggling, Cassiel Ato Forson announced on Wednesday.

Across Africa, ASM gold leakage costs countries billions each year as undeclared production is smuggled through porous borders to global trading hubs such as Dubai.

Ghana, Africa's top gold producer, lost an estimated \$11.4 billion between 2019 and 2023, according to the non-profit foundation Swissaid.

Formalisation Targets \$20 Billion Annually

Forson told Parliament that the Ghana Gold Board will be required to purchase a minimum of 2.45 tons of ASM gold weekly, consolidating these acquisitions into a formal pipeline expected to generate over \$20 billion in annual inflows.

The initiative comes after a surge in ASM output, driven by rising gold prices and the establishment of GoldBod in 2025, which helped lift national gold production to roughly 186 tons that year.

Starting next month under the new policy, GoldBod will fully manage off-take agreements and the sale of all ASM gold procured.

The regulator will raise financing to maintain three to

four weeks of gold purchases in inventory and will use derivative and hedging instruments to mitigate price risks. The Bank of Ghana currently funds ASM gold purchases.

"To disincentivise smuggling, GoldBod may offer price incentives, including spot-market price purchases and bonuses for licensed miners," Forson said.

All foreign-exchange proceeds from the programme will be sold exclusively to the Bank of Ghana at pre-agreed rates under a formal agreement between the central bank and GoldBod.

Broader Reforms and Sector Modernisation

The minister also highlighted that formalisation will extend to environmental compliance, enforcement,

Serval Resources Launches 2026 Exploration Programme in Botswana's Kalahari Copper Belt

Copper and future metals developer Serval Resources has commenced its first exploration work programme of 2026 on Botswana assets owned by Kalahari Copper Limited (KCL), following KCL's approval.

The licences are located in the Kalahari Copper Belt (KCB), widely regarded as one of the most prospective regions globally for sediment-hosted copper discoveries.

Conditional Acquisition of KCL

As previously announced on 9 February, Serval has entered into a conditional share purchase agreement to acquire 100% of KCL. The launch of exploration activities signals early operational momentum ahead of completion of the proposed transaction.

Licence PL061 is held by Dalsu Investment, a wholly owned subsidiary of KCL. PL082 is also held by Dalsu.

Ground Magnetic Survey Targets Key Geological Contact

The 2026 programme will include a ground magnetic geophysical survey over PL061. The objective is to evaluate the regionally mapped contact between the Ngwako Pan Formation (oxidised sandstone) and the D'Kar Formation (reduced shale).

This redox boundary is considered the primary exploration target for significant sediment-hosted copper-silver mineralisation in the KCB, as mineralisation in the belt is typically controlled by reduction-oxidation traps along this contact.

The programme builds on a geophysical survey completed in the fourth quarter of 2025 on PL082, also undertaken with KCL's approval. Results from the PL082 survey are expected to be released once available.

Both PL061 and PL082 are located along strike from the Ngami Project operated by Australia-listed

Cobre Limited, which has delineated a growing copper-silver resource using integrated geophysics, field mapping and drilling.

Management Commentary

Serval CEO Robin Birchall said the company was pleased to have mobilised quickly in the KCB, highlighting the field team's engagement with local authorities and community representatives.

He noted that PL061 and PL082 are considered high-priority targets due to their structural position along strike from the Ngami Project.

The exploration model being applied mirrors that used at Ngami, combining geophysical techniques with systematic fieldwork and follow-up drilling.

With work now under way, Serval is positioning itself to advance exploration rapidly in one of Africa's most active emerging copper districts, pending completion of its acquisition of KCL.

Bezant Resources Reports Sevenfold Increase in Hope Open-Pit Mineral

Aim-listed Bezant Resources has announced a sevenfold increase in the Hope open-pit mineral resource at its Hope and Gorob copper-gold project in Namibia, raising the resource to over three million tonnes, up from the 2023 estimate of 410,000 tonnes.

The update was released on April 8 following a new Mineral Resource Estimate (MRE) prepared by independent consultants Sound Mining.

Bezant highlighted that the increase significantly improves the near-term development potential of the mine, reducing the strip ratio from 11:1 to 9:1 and extending the immediate life-of-mine from one year to 7.5 years, based on a production feed rate of 400,000 t/y.

An additional 3.6 million tonnes of mineralization remain as potential upgrades to the resource, while 1.3 million tonnes of low-grade material within the pit shell can be enhanced using the on-

site ore sorter, contributing to annual production.

At current mining rates, an extra year of high-grade stockpiled pre-concentrate is projected every 24 months.

Bezant confirmed significant mineralization exists beyond the current pit shell, which could extend open-pit production by at least five additional years with further drilling.

The company's Namibian subsidiary, Hope and Gorob Mining, currently operates the project.

Following a recent acquisition of an additional 20% stake announced on March 24, Bezant's interest in the project will rise to 90%.

The 2026 MRE classifies 1.1 million tonnes as measured, 500,000 tonnes as indicated, and 1.4 million tonnes as inferred, a marked increase in confidence compared to the predominantly inferred 2023 estimate.

This allows Bezant to accelerate Phase 2 development by five years, which includes constructing a new flotation plant near Walvis Bay to produce 25,000 t/y of copper, generating an estimated \$290 million in revenue at \$11,500 per tonne copper price, subject to statutory approvals.

Bezant Executive Chairperson Colin Bird emphasized the operational and financial benefits of the new MRE: lower stripping rates, longer mine life, and a manageable, cost-efficient operation.

He added that the company is advancing ore confirmation activities and plant design for Phase 2, with production expected to ramp up smoothly this year, leveraging upgraded existing plant infrastructure.

"Progress at Hope & Gorob, combined with favorable copper price forecasts, allows us to intensify all project activities and maintain full shareholder engagement," Bird concluded.

Fortescue Acquires Alta Copper to Secure Full Ownership of Cañariaco Project in Peru

Diversified mining company Fortescue has completed its acquisition of Alta Copper, securing full ownership of the Cañariaco Copper Project in northern Peru.

The transaction was finalized through a Canadian plan of arrangement, under which Fortescue subsidiary Nascent Exploration acquired all issued and outstanding shares of Alta Copper that were not already owned by the group.

Under the terms of the agreement, Alta Copper shareholders received C\$1.40 per share in cash, representing a total equity value of approximately C\$139 million.

With the acquisition now complete, Fortescue

holds 100% ownership of the Cañariaco project, which spans about 91 square kilometres of prospective mineral tenure.

The project lies within an emerging porphyry copper corridor and hosts several copper deposits with significant development potential.

According to Gus Pichot, CEO of Growth and Energy at Fortescue, copper remains a key element of the company's long-term diversification strategy.

"Copper is a core pillar of Fortescue's growth and diversification strategy, and the acquisition of Alta Copper strengthens our portfolio of critical minerals projects," Pichot said.

He noted that the Cañariaco project provides the company with exposure to a large undeveloped copper resource located in a promising geological belt in northern Peru.

Fortescue's immediate priorities will include conducting detailed technical reviews, strengthening community engagement, and advancing the studies required to guide future development decisions for the project.

The acquisition forms part of Fortescue's broader strategy to expand beyond iron ore and build a stronger presence in critical minerals such as copper, which are essential for the global energy transition and electrification technologies.



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UAE's IRH Expands Presence in DRC Copper and Cobalt Sector Amid Strategic Mining Deals

IRH Linked to New Copper and Cobalt Mining Projects in Lualaba as UAE Expands Critical Minerals Strategy in DRC

After concluding a \$367 million agreement in 2025 to acquire a 56% stake in Alphamin Resources, operator of the Bisie tin mine in North Kivu, International Resources Holding (IRH) is now being linked to copper and cobalt assets in the Lualaba province of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

According to reporting by Africa Intelligence, the Emirati group is associated with structures that have recently become partners of the state-owned mining company Gécamines following a series of mining asset transfers completed in September.

New copper and cobalt joint venture in Lualaba

Official documents released in recent weeks show that the Kabulungu project covering a copper and cobalt deposit in Lualaba is now managed under a joint venture called Kabulungu Kamilombe Mining (KKM). The company is owned 40% by Gécamines and 60% by Falcon Resources.

These filings confirm that Gécamines partially transferred rights over the asset to Falcon Resources, although IRH is not explicitly mentioned in the official documentation.

Additional mining asset transfers

Other mining-related transactions in Lualaba involve tailings and residue exploitation permits that were transferred to Kongo Mining Company (KMC), a joint venture between Gécamines and Luna Mining.

While public records confirm the existence of these entities and transfers, they do not directly establish a formal capital link between IRH and these companies.

However, Africa Intelligence reports that both Falcon Resources and Luna Mining are connected to the Emirati investment group.

The same source also notes that KKM and KMC share the same Chief Executive Officer, Yehezkel Ambar, suggesting operational coordination between the two entities.

Expanding Emirati footprint in critical minerals

In January 2026, 16 memoranda of understanding were signed in Kolwezi between the provincial government and Emirati companies.

According to local authorities, the agreements include the mining sector, although detailed information on the companies involved has not yet been disclosed.

These developments reflect the growing presence of the United Arab Emirates in Africa's critical minerals sector.

In Zambia, IRH acquired a 51% stake in Mopani Copper Mines for \$1.1 billion in 2024.

The group is positioning itself across strategic minerals essential to the global energy transition, including copper, cobalt, nickel, and lithium.

Corporate filings indicate that IRH operates as a subsidiary of 2PointZero, an investment platform within the broader International Holding Company (IHC) group structure.



DRC, Zambia, and Tanzania Move to Modernize Southern Central Corridor

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zambia, and Tanzania are collaborating to secure and modernize the southern section of the Central Corridor, a strategic trade route linking the port of Dar es Salaam to key commercial and mining hubs in the region.

Local media reports indicate that representatives from the three countries met on March 24, 2026, in Lubumbashi to review and approve feasibility studies aimed at improving the flow of goods and enhancing security along the corridor.

The initiative is supported by TradeMark Africa and funded by the United Kingdom through the Foreign, Commonwealth and

Development Office (FCDO).

The studies propose several measures, including the introduction of electronic payment systems at border posts and the deployment of surveillance technologies such as video monitoring and cargo tracking.

They also emphasize the need for better cross-border coordination and streamlined customs procedures. These recommendations were developed in consultation with transporters, customs authorities, law enforcement agencies, and private operators.

Since November 2025, TradeMark Africa, in partnership with the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency (AFTTCC), has been identifying challenges along the route.

These include continued reliance on cash payments, security risks, cargo theft, the proliferation of unofficial checkpoints, and coordination gaps among cross-border institutions.

In response, the DRC has already implemented security measures on sections of the corridor, particularly between Tunduma and Lubumbashi, in coordination with its neighbors.

These efforts build on broader regional initiatives. In January 2026, the DRC and Zambia pledged to strengthen security along the Kolwezi-Kasumbalesa corridor following repeated attacks on trucks transporting copper and cobalt, some of which involved violence against drivers.

DRC and Zambia Emerge as Key Drivers of Global Copper Supply Amid Surging Demand

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Zambia are reinforcing Africa's strategic role in the global copper industry as rising demand for the metal reshapes the minerals and energy economy.

According to a report by Visual Capitalist, the DRC ranks among the world's top four countries in terms of copper reserves, making it the largest holder of copper resources in Africa.

The country is also expanding its industrial footprint through new partnerships, including agreements involving state-owned Gécamines and Kamoto Copper Company, a major operation associated with Glencore Plc.

Zambia is also strengthening its position as a leading copper producer. The country is targeting

output of more than one million tonnes by 2026 and aims to reach three million tonnes by 2031.

This expansion is supported by efforts to attract foreign investment and modernize mining operations.

Globally, copper reserves remain highly concentrated, with Chile holding the largest share at approximately 180 million tonnes nearly double that of the next leading country. In total, just five countries control more than half of global copper reserves, estimated at around 980 million tonnes.

In Africa, the DRC and Zambia form the backbone of the Central African Copperbelt, a region that is becoming increasingly important to global supply chains due to its scale and resource quality.

Copper demand is rising rapidly as its use expands

beyond traditional construction. It is now a critical material for electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, power transmission infrastructure, and advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence data centers.

This structural shift in demand is expected to continue as global electrification accelerates.

At the same time, new supply is becoming harder and more costly to develop, as many high-grade deposits are depleted or increasingly complex to extract.

This tightening supply outlook is elevating the strategic importance of producers like the DRC and Zambia, positioning them at the centre of both Africa's mining growth and the global energy transition.

DRC Revokes AVZ Minerals' 79-Block Lithium Exploration Permit Amid Ongoing Regulatory Disputes

The Democratic Republic of Congo has revoked a 79-block lithium exploration permit held by the Congolese subsidiary of Australian mining firm AVZ Minerals.

The Mining Registry (CAMI) issued the forfeiture order on March 19, 2026, citing non-payment of annual surface fees for permit PR 4029, located in the Manono territory of Tanganyika province. Under Congolese mining law, AVZ has 30 days to appeal the decision.

PR 4029 is part of AVZ's Manono Extension Project, which spans roughly 242 km² around the main Manono lithium deposit.

The extension was intended to explore new mineralized zones southwest and northeast of the core deposit. AVZ has not publicly commented on the revocation or its plans to challenge the ruling.

A Years-Long Dispute Intensifies

This latest cancellation adds a new chapter to a

protracted dispute over AVZ's Manono projects.

The company's original main Manono permit was revoked in 2023 by the DRC Mines Ministry for insufficient progress and awarded to a unit of Chinese group Zijin Mining.

AVZ challenged that earlier decision through the International Court of Arbitration (ICC) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), temporarily suspending proceedings in May 2025 following U.S. mediation efforts.

The 2026 cancellation of PR 4029, covering 79 exploration blocks, intensifies regulatory pressure on AVZ and underscores the ongoing risks faced by foreign miners in the DRC amid tighter enforcement and resource nationalism policies.

Rising Regulatory Pressure in Africa

The permit revocation reflects a broader African trend where governments, including in the DRC,

Ghana, and Zambia, are strengthening mining regulations and promoting local participation in strategic mineral projects.

Measures include contract renegotiations, local content requirements, and permit cancellations for non-compliance.

For foreign mining companies, these policies increase operational risks, compliance costs, and potential legal disputes, which can delay project development and raise investment uncertainties.

Manono Lithium Development Continues

Despite the regulatory challenges, the Manono project is progressing under Manono Lithium SAS, a joint venture between Zijin Mining and the state-owned Cominière. The first phase, with an investment nearing \$1 billion, is expected to be commissioned by June 2026, highlighting the strategic importance of the Manono deposit for the global battery supply chain.

Zambia Launches Major Environmental Remediation at Sino-Metals After Tailings Dam Collapse

The Government of Zambia has officially launched a large-scale environmental remediation program at Sino-Metals Leach Limited following the collapse of Tailings Dam Number 15 in February 2025, which led to widespread contamination of local waterways.

Water and Sanitation Development Minister Collins Nzovu officiated the launch in Chambishi, emphasizing that the clean-up is not a routine corporate exercise but a critical national effort to protect water resources and safeguard the health and livelihoods of affected communities.

The 2025 dam failure released highly acidic waste into the Chambeshi Stream, the Mwambashi River, and ultimately the Kafue River, prompting a science-driven government response.

Authorities mobilized a coordinated assessment involving the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA), the Water Resources Management Authority, and the Minerals Regulation Commission, alongside independent experts.

On December 19, 2025, ZEMA received a detailed Environmental and Social Impact Assessment conducted by Applied Science and Technology Associates Limited.

The report found no radiological threat from uranium but highlighted significant localized

pollution, including:

Heavy-metal contamination in water, soils, and sediments

Contaminated agricultural produce in hotspot areas

Severe ecological damage to aquatic life and riparian vegetation

The assessment recommended urgent remediation measures such as dredging, soil stabilization, ecosystem restoration, and water treatment, forming the basis of the government-led clean-up program.

Immediate Emergency Measures

Minister Nzovu noted that Sino-Metals had already taken emergency steps under ZEMA's supervision prior to the launch. Measures included:

Constructing catch drains and silt traps

Stabilizing the damaged tailings dam

Installing real-time water and tailings monitoring systems

Desludging the Mwambashi Stream

Liming contaminated agricultural fields and planting trees to prevent erosion

Neutralizing acidic tailings as required by the Minerals Regulation Commission

"These initial interventions mitigated immediate

risks and laid the groundwork for the comprehensive remediation program we are initiating today," Nzovu said, highlighting the extensive environmental and social impacts of the spill.

The minister added that heavy-metal concentrations remain above safe levels, aquatic biodiversity has been disrupted, and communities particularly in Kalusale have lost crops, fishing grounds, and access to clean water.

Commitment from Sino-Metals

Wang Jingjun, Chairman of Sino-Metals Leach Zambia, reiterated the company's commitment to full environmental restoration. "Since the incident, we have worked closely with the government to implement all directives.

This clean-up program reflects our dedication to restoring the environment in line with independent scientific assessments and regulatory requirements," he stated.

The initiative marks a significant step in Zambia's environmental management and mining oversight, combining government oversight, scientific guidance, and corporate responsibility to address one of the most serious mining-related environmental incidents in the country in recent years.

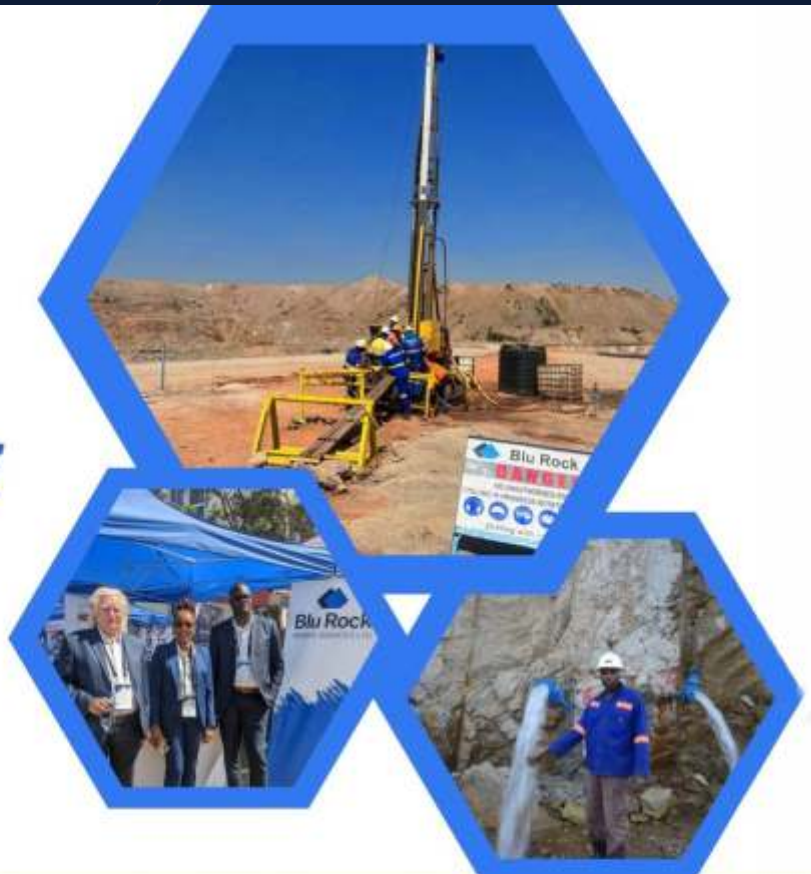


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DRC Advances Battery Minerals Strategy Through Partnership Talks with ITC

DR Congo Seeks ITC Support to Boost Battery Mineral Processing and Integrate into Global EV Supply Chain

Prim Minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka convened a high-level working session with representatives of the Congolese Battery Council (CCB) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) to structure a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening the Democratic Republic of the Congo's capacity to process minerals used in electric vehicle (EV) batteries.

The initiative signaled Kinshasa's determination to accelerate industrialization and move up the global battery value chain.

Technical Support to Target Global Markets

Under the proposed framework, the ITC was expected to provide technical assistance focused on compliance with international standards, certification requirements, and export readiness.

The objective was to enhance the competitiveness of Congolese mineral products and facilitate access to high-value international markets.

The challenge for the Democratic Republic of the Congo was clear: enable domestic firms to integrate more effectively into a global battery supply chain dominated by major industrial economies.

With rising demand for cobalt, lithium, and other strategic minerals driven by the global energy transition, Congolese authorities sought to position the country not merely as a supplier of raw materials, but as a competitive player in value-added processing.

Coordinated, Multi-Sector Strategy

Officials described the program as a cross-sectoral initiative requiring strong interministerial coordination. Key ministries involved included Mines, Energy, Industry, Infrastructure, and Trade.

Discussions emphasized the need to avoid fragmented initiatives and instead implement a coherent industrial policy aligned with national development objectives.

Participants noted that effective coordination would be essential to ensuring that infrastructure development, regulatory frameworks, and investment promotion efforts reinforced one another.

The Congolese Battery Council was expected to play a central operational role, facilitating public-private partnerships, supporting industrial project development, and identifying viable commercial outlets for locally processed battery materials.

Shifting from Raw Exports to Value Addition

The talks reflected a broader policy shift championed by Prime Minister Suminwa Tuluka: transitioning from an economic model centered on raw mineral exports toward domestic processing and higher value capture.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was the world's leading producer of cobalt and held substantial reserves of other critical minerals used in battery technologies.

By strengthening local processing capabilities, the government aimed to capture a greater share of global battery industry revenues while fostering job creation, technology transfer, and industrial diversification.

As global demand for electric vehicles and energy storage systems accelerated, Kinshasa positioned its mineral wealth as the foundation of a more resilient and industrialized economy.

RISING DEMAND FOR STRATEGIC METALS BOOSTS AFRICA'S ROLE IN THE GLOBAL TECH SUPPLY CHAIN

Prices of ruthenium and tantalite, two strategic metals widely used in electronics, aerospace systems, and advanced computing technologies, have climbed to multi-year highs as global demand accelerates while supply remains constrained.

This market shift is strengthening the strategic position of African producers, particularly South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which play key roles in supplying these critical minerals to the global technology industry.

Ruthenium Prices Rise as Supply Remains Limited

Ruthenium, a lesser-known member of the platinum group metals (PGMs), has seen a sharp price increase, reaching about \$1,750 per ounce in March, compared with roughly \$560 a year earlier.

The metal is primarily produced as a by-product of platinum and other PGM mining, which limits the ability of producers to quickly increase supply. Because most PGM mining occurs in South Africa, global ruthenium output remains highly concentrated geographically.

Demand for the metal has been rising steadily due to its growing use in electronics, semiconductors, data storage technologies, and chemical processing.

The rapid expansion of artificial intelligence infrastructure, particularly cloud computing and data centers has further boosted consumption.

Market analysts expect the global ruthenium

market to face a significant supply deficit in the coming years, reflecting the difficulty of expanding production in the short term.

Tantalite Prices Reach Two-Decade High

At the same time, the market for tantalite, the main ore used to produce tantalum, is experiencing strong price growth. European market prices have recently climbed to around \$200–\$210 per pound, marking the highest levels seen in more than two decades.

Tantalum derived from tantalite is a critical material used in electronic capacitors, aerospace components, industrial turbines, and nuclear technology. As demand for high-performance electronics and advanced computing infrastructure grows, consumption of tantalum-based components is also increasing.

Supply Disruptions in Central Africa

Recent supply concerns have been amplified by disruptions at the Rubaya columbite tantalite mining area in eastern DRC, where a landslide temporarily halted activity at one of the region's key production sites.

Although much of the mining activity in the area operates outside formal industrial structures, the site plays an important role in the global supply chain.

A large portion of the material extracted from the region is exported to China, the world's leading consumer of tantalum for electronics manufacturing.

The DRC has become the world's dominant producer of tantalum, accounting for more

than half of global output in recent years, while Rwanda also remains a significant supplier.

Declining PGM Output Tightens Ruthenium Supply

In the ruthenium market, supply pressure is also being reinforced by declining production of platinum group metals in South Africa.

Limited investment in new mining projects over the past two decades has slowed output growth, tightening the availability of by-product metals such as ruthenium.

Because ruthenium is not mined directly, any slowdown in platinum production directly affects its global supply.

Africa's Strategic Position in the Tech Minerals Market

As demand for artificial intelligence infrastructure, advanced electronics, and aerospace technologies continues to expand, both ruthenium and tantalum are becoming increasingly critical to the global technology supply chain.

With vast mineral resources and a dominant share of global production, African countries particularly the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa are positioned to play a decisive role in the supply of next-generation technology minerals.

If demand from AI, cloud computing, and advanced manufacturing continues to accelerate, analysts expect prices for both metals to remain elevated, further strengthening Africa's importance in the global digital economy.



KoBold Metals

KoBold Metals Launches Massive AI-Driven Lithium Exploration in DRC

KoBold Metals, a mining company backed by US billionaires Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates, has launched what it describes as the largest lithium exploration campaign in history across the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The company plans to deploy artificial intelligence and advanced sensor technologies to assess one of the world's richest yet least-explored regions for critical minerals.

KoBold Metals will initially explore 13 licences covering more than 3,000 square kilometres, with plans to expand operations to 5,000 square kilometres by the end of the year.

The focus will be on the mineral-rich Manono region, where some of the highest-grade lithium pegmatite deposits in the world have been identified, according to the company.

The exploration programme includes approximately 30,000 square kilometres of airborne geophysical surveys, the drilling of thousands of boreholes, and the collection of more than 30,000 geochemical samples.

The initiative is supported by funding exceeding \$50 million, with operations planned through early 2027.

"A year ago, KoBold had no employees and no land in the DRC," Chief Executive Officer Kurt

House said in a statement. "Today we are the largest American investor in the country, and we are launching the most ambitious mineral exploration programme ever attempted."

The campaign highlights strengthening strategic and economic ties between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Congo, while underscoring the country's growing importance as a frontier for critical minerals.

Despite decades of mining activity, vast portions of the DRC's geological potential remain largely untapped, particularly for minerals essential to the global energy transition.

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Epiroc Secures **USD40.7 Million** Order for Autonomous Electric Drill Rigs in Africa

Global mining technology company Epiroc has secured a major order valued at approximately **USD 40.7 million** for a fleet of autonomous, electric-powered surface drill rigs to be deployed at an undisclosed mining operation in Africa. The contract marks another significant milestone in the mining industry's accelerating transition toward automation, electrification, and lower-carbon production systems.

The order comprises a fleet of **Pit Viper 275 E** blasthole drill rigs, Epiroc's cable-electric surface drilling platform designed for large-scale open-pit mining applications. The machines will operate fully autonomously, enabling remote and driverless drilling operations while delivering zero exhaust emissions at the point of use. The contract was booked during the **first quarter of 2026**, with deliveries expected to commence shortly and continue through to **the end of 2027**.

Although the identity of the customer and the specific mining location have not been disclosed, the deal highlights growing confidence among African mining companies in advanced mining technologies aimed at improving safety, operational efficiency, and environmental performance. Across the continent, mining operators are under increasing pressure to modernise as global demand rises for critical minerals such as **copper, cobalt, lithium, nickel, and iron ore**, all of which are essential to the global energy transition.

According to Epiroc, the Pit Viper 275 E is the cable-electric version of one of the world's most established rotary blasthole drilling platforms. The rig is widely recognised for its high drilling capacity, durability, and ability to operate efficiently in demanding mining environments. By replacing conventional diesel-powered systems with electric-driven rigs, mining operators can significantly reduce fuel consumption, lower maintenance requirements, and minimise greenhouse-gas emissions associated with mining activities.

The autonomous capability of the rigs represents a major advancement in mine safety. Autonomous drilling systems reduce the need for personnel to remain in hazardous pit environments where they may be exposed to dust, vibration, noise, and potential slope instability. Operators are instead able to oversee drilling operations remotely from integrated control centres, improving workforce safety while enhancing operational consistency and precision.

Commenting on the order, **Helena Hedblom**, President and Chief Executive Officer of Epiroc, said the agreement demonstrates how mining companies are increasingly prioritising automation and electrification as central pillars of future mining strategies.

"Epiroc is on the forefront of mining automation and electrification, and this major order is another significant step forward in our journey to support customers to operate in the safest, most productive, and most climate-friendly manner possible," she said.

The African contract follows several high-profile international orders underscoring the rapid global adoption of autonomous and electric mining fleets. Earlier, Epiroc secured its largest-ever contract, valued at approximately **USD 235 million**, with Australian mining company **Fortescue**. That agreement covers around 50 fully autonomous and electric surface drill rigs that will be remotely operated from Perth, more than 1,500 kilometres away from the mine sites.

Industry analysts note that the latest African order signals that mining automation is moving beyond pilot projects and becoming fully integrated into mainstream industrial mining operations. By the end of **2025**, more than **3,900 machines worldwide** were operating using Epiroc's automation technologies, reflecting growing acceptance of autonomous systems across both surface and underground mining environments.

Electrification is also emerging as a central pillar of the mining industry's decarbonisation agenda. Epiroc has stated its ambition to offer a full range of emissions-free mining products by **2030**, including battery-electric, cable-electric, and trolley-electric solutions.

For Africa, the deployment of autonomous electric drill rigs represents an important step in positioning the continent's mining sector for the future, supporting safer working conditions, improved productivity, and reduced environmental impact as global demand for responsibly sourced minerals continues to grow.

DRC Prepares for First Lithium Production at Manono Deposit

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is preparing to enter the global lithium market, with authorities indicating that the country's first lithium production could begin in the near future.

Mines Minister Louis Watum Kabamba told international investors that initial production from the Manono lithium project could start as early as the second quarter of 2026, positioning the country as a new supplier of one of the world's most strategic minerals.

Lithium is a key component in rechargeable batteries used in electric vehicles, smartphones and large-scale energy storage systems, making it a critical resource in the global transition to clean energy.

One of the World's Largest Lithium Deposits

The Manono deposit is located in Manono territory in Tanganyika Province in southeastern Congo and is widely considered one of the largest undeveloped lithium resources in the world.

A feasibility study by Rio Tinto estimated that the site contains around 45 million tonnes of mineral reserves, with the potential to produce approximately 700,000 tonnes annually.

Geological estimates suggest that the area could hold around 6.6 million tonnes of lithium in the subsoil.

The project comes as global demand for lithium continues to rise sharply. Rapid growth in electric vehicles and renewable energy technologies is driving expansion in the lithium-ion battery market, with industry forecasts projecting strong growth over the coming years.

A Long-Awaited Project

Despite its strategic importance, the Manono project has faced repeated delays since it was

first announced.

Local communities have expressed growing frustration as development has progressed more slowly than expected.

Residents had hoped the project would bring jobs, infrastructure and economic opportunities to the region, which continues to face significant socio-economic challenges.

Civil society organizations in Manono have also raised concerns about the slow pace of development and the need for mining projects to deliver tangible benefits for local populations.

Civil Society and Community Preparedness

Some organizations have begun initiatives aimed at helping local communities prepare for the potential impacts of lithium mining.

These programs focus on ensuring communities understand their rights and can benefit from future economic opportunities linked to the project.

The African Natural Resources Observatory has been among the groups working to strengthen community engagement and promote responsible resource governance around the Manono deposit.

Disputes and Project Challenges

The project has also been affected by legal disputes, governance concerns and allegations of financial irregularities involving companies linked to the development of the site.

In addition, disagreements over the implementation of community development commitments and the distribution of mining royalties under the country's 2018 Mining Code have contributed to delays.

These challenges have slowed progress toward full-scale production and increased scrutiny of how mining revenues will be shared with local

communities.

Companies Involved in the Project

The Manono project is led by AVZ Minerals in partnership with the Congolese state-owned mining company Cominière.

In 2021, Chinese battery giant Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Limited invested about \$240 million to acquire a 24% stake in the project.

Meanwhile, US-based exploration company KoBold Metals, backed by investors including Jeff Bezos, has also shown interest in developing lithium resources in the DRC.

Another major Chinese mining group, Zijin Mining, has previously been linked to the project but has faced criticism related to governance issues and community commitments.

A Strategic Opportunity for the DRC

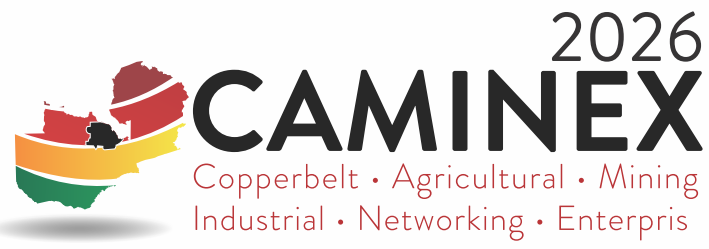
If successfully developed, lithium mining in Manono could transform the economy of Tanganyika province and strengthen the DRC's role in global critical mineral supply chains.

Beyond mining revenues, the project has the potential to support infrastructure development, improve electricity access, expand water supply and stimulate local entrepreneurship in a region that currently lacks many basic services.

For the DRC, entering the lithium market could mark a significant step toward diversifying its mining sector, which is already globally dominant in cobalt production.

Whether the projected production timeline will be achieved remains uncertain, but the project has revived expectations that Manono could become a major hub in the global battery minerals industry.

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Regional Infrastructure Development and Build Economy Leadership Gathering Convenes in **Victoria Falls** | **15-16 July 2026**

The Southern Africa Eco-Infrastructure Summit (SAEIS) 2026 is a high-level regional conference and exhibition convening leaders shaping the future of sustainable infrastructure development and green investment across the Southern African region. The Summit will take place from 15-16 July 2026 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

While Victoria Falls will host the 2026 edition, SAEIS is a Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional summit, designed as a collaborative platform for the entire region, with the long-term vision of rotating across SADC member states in future editions. This regional approach aims to strengthen cross-border collaboration, regional ownership, investment alignment, and sustainable economic development throughout Southern Africa.

Advancing Regional Infrastructure and Investment

Over two days, SAEIS 2026 will focus on positioning the SADC region as a leading destination for sustainable infrastructure investment and build-environment innovation through strategic engagement with international and regional stakeholders.

The Summit aims to:

- Mobilise public and private sector capital investment
- Support and accelerate the development of bankable infrastructure projects
- Strengthen regional collaboration through practical partnerships that advance sustainable economic growth
- Create meaningful partnerships between governments, investors, private sector leaders, innovators, and development institutions

“The Summit is not about theory, it is about enabling bankable projects, accelerating approvals, and de-risking investment. Our objective is to make the financial case for sustainability undeniable,” said Lindah Mbidzo, SAEIS Stakeholder Director

“SAEIS is designed to connect policy, private capital, and innovation to turn ambition into implementation and investment into impact.”

Who Will Attend?

SAEIS 2026 will convene more than 350 senior delegates under one roof in Victoria Falls, including:

- **Ministers, policymakers, regulators, and captains of industry**
- **Development finance institutions and multilateral agencies**
- **Private equity firms, institutional investors, and banks**
- **Infrastructure developers, EPC contractors, and engineering firms**
- **Green technology, PropTech, and construction solution providers**
- **NGOs, industry associations, and civil society leaders**
- **ESG leaders, sustainability professionals, and innovators**
- **Corporate executives and strategic advisors**

Attendee Benefits Include:

- **Direct access to decision-makers and investors**
 - **Exposure to investment-ready projects**
 - **Deal rooms and curated B2B matchmaking opportunities**
 - **Strategic networking and partnership development**
 - **Market intelligence on policy, finance, sustainability, and innovation trends**
- Investment, Innovation, and Collaboration at the Core**

A major highlight of SAEIS 2026 will be the VIP Exhibition Walkthrough, where captains of industry, investors, policymakers, and senior executives will engage directly with solution providers showcasing cutting-edge

technologies, materials, and infrastructure innovations.

The programme will also feature the key feature of the Investment Arena at SAEIS 2026 will be the SAEIS Deal Tank Challenge a high-impact project funding platform designed to identify, evaluate, and connect innovative infrastructure and sustainable development projects with potential funders, investors, and strategic partners.

The SAEIS Deal Tank Challenge creates a unique opportunity for developers, entrepreneurs, SMEs, innovators, and infrastructure developers to present investment-ready projects directly to a network of development finance institutions, private investors, banks, infrastructure funds, and corporate stakeholders attending the Summit.

Selected projects will undergo an independent due diligence and project assessment process conducted by an external corporate advisory and evaluation partner to ensure credibility, feasibility, scalability, and investment readiness before participating.

International Thought Leaders Confirmed

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To secure your participation, kindly contact us on info@southernafricaeco-infra.com

Yahua Secures Lithium Export Quota from Zimbabwe After Suspension

China's Sichuan Yahua Industrial Group said on Tuesday that it had secured a six-month export quota for lithium concentrates from Zimbabwe, two months after Africa's largest lithium producer suspended exports of the key battery material.

The quota is expected to be sufficient to maintain normal production levels at the company's Kamativi Mine, Yahua said in response to a question on an investor online Q&A platform affiliated with the Shenzhen Stock Exchange.

The company added that it is currently completing the necessary procedures to resume exports under the new regulatory framework.

The announcement follows reports that Zimbabwe

has begun granting export quotas to selected Chinese mining firms producing lithium concentrates.

According to state media, the companies include Chengxin Lithium and Sinomine Resource Group, both of which operate lithium mining facilities in the country.

Zimbabwe suspended exports of all raw minerals and lithium concentrates in February, citing concerns over alleged malpractice, revenue leakage and the need to strengthen regulatory oversight across the mining sector.

Earlier this month, the government indicated it would introduce a quota-based export system for lithium concentrates, with conditions requiring producers to commit to increased domestic processing and value

addition.

In 2025, Zimbabwe exported approximately 1.13 million tonnes of lithium-bearing spodumene concentrate to China, accounting for about 15% of China's lithium concentrate imports during the year.

Meanwhile, Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt said it had not yet received formal notification from the Zimbabwean government regarding export quotas.

Huayou remains one of the largest Chinese investors in Zimbabwe and a dominant player in the country's rapidly expanding lithium mining industry.

Zambia Calls on Global Investors to Unlock Opportunities in Critical Minerals and Energy

The Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) has called on global investors to seize emerging opportunities in Zambia's critical minerals and energy sectors, positioning the country as a leading investment destination in Africa.

Speaking at the 21st Shanghai Metals Market Copper Industry Conference and Expo (SMMCCIE), ZDA Director General Albert Halwampa highlighted Zambia's strong policy framework, stable macroeconomic fundamentals, peaceful political environment, and the leadership of President Hakainde Hichilema as key drivers underpinning the country's growing global competitiveness.

Mr. Halwampa emphasized that Zambia is targeting an increase in copper production to 3 million metric tonnes per annum by 2031, up from the current output of approximately 890,000 tonnes.

He noted that this growth will be supported by progressive policies such as the National Mineral Resource Development Policy and the National Critical Minerals Strategy.

He further stated that Zambia currently contributes about 5 percent of global copper supply and ranks as the second-largest copper producer in Africa.

In addition, the country accounts for roughly 38 percent of Africa's manganese production, positioning it as a strategic hub for critical raw materials.

"Zambia is not only rich in critical minerals such as copper, cobalt, manganese, lithium, and nickel, but is also focused on enhancing value addition and industrialisation to maximize the economic benefits derived from these resources," he said.

The Director General underscored the Government's commitment to maintaining a conducive investment climate through investor-friendly policies and competitive investment incentives designed to attract both local and international investors.

Mr. Halwampa also highlighted significant investment opportunities in the energy sector, noting that the Government is working to increase electricity generation capacity from approximately 3,800 megawatts (MW) to 10,000 MW by 2031.

This expansion will be driven by efforts to diversify the country's energy mix away from over-reliance on hydropower toward other renewable and alternative sources, including solar photovoltaic (PV), wind, waste-to-energy, geothermal, and thermal power generation.

He added that Zambia's strategic geographic location provides access to a combined market of more than 1.3 billion people under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), making the country an ideal hub for regional trade, manufacturing, and industrial development.

Mr. Halwampa concluded by inviting global investors to participate in the Invest Zambia International Conference (IZIC) 2026 and to explore opportunities in Zambia's expanding economy, particularly in mineral processing, renewable energy, and value chain development within Multi-Facility Economic Zones.

"Zambia offers stability, opportunity, and a clear vision for sustainable growth. Now is the time to invest," he said.

The ZDA Director General also pledged the Agency's support for the first-ever Shanghai Metals Market (SMM) Conference on Critical Minerals to be held in Lusaka in October 2026.

He further welcomed the company's decision to establish its first African office in Lusaka, describing the move as a strong vote of confidence in Zambia's growing role as a regional hub for trade and investment.



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