CKM | July - August 2026
VOLUME 36 | ISSUE 04 | US$ 6,50

CKM CopperbeltKATANGA mining

THE DRC'S NEXT COPPER FRONTIER

Positioning Greater Kasai as the DRC's next major copper-cobalt mining & industrial hub

Inside this edition

Top Digital Mining News Platform for DRC & ZMB

ISSN 2380 060X

Contents

ADVERTISERS INDEX

Join over 99K CKM Newsletter Subscribers TODAY!

Publisher
Biju Makelele

Editor
Constance M
news@copperbeltkatangamining.com

Associate Editor
Pierre Kadimba

Editorial Contributor(s)
Johansen
Majory

Graphics, Layout and Production
Arnold's Designs
designer@arnolds-designs.com

Advertising
advertising@copperbeltkatangamining.com

Kitwe Office
Near ECL Mall, Freedom Avenue
Kitwe, Zambia

Lubumbashi Office
Quartier Industriel 2,
Lubumbashi,
Democratic Republic of Congo

Vedanta Pursues **New York** Listing to Accelerate **KCM Expansion**

Vedanta Resources is evaluating a potential listing of Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) on the New York Stock Exchange as part of its strategy to raise capital for a large-scale expansion of its Zambian operations.

The proposed listing would help finance ongoing investments aimed at increasing KCM's annual copper production while modernising underground mining, processing facilities and supporting infrastructure. The initiative follows Vedanta's return as KCM's majority shareholder and aligns with Zambia's broader objective of significantly expanding national copper output over the coming decade.

The company has already committed substantial investment toward rehabilitating key mining assets, including the Nchanga and Konkola operations. Access to international capital markets would strengthen Vedanta's ability to accelerate project development while enhancing KCM's competitiveness in meeting rising global demand for copper, a critical mineral essential for renewable energy systems, electric vehicles and power infrastructure.

Mission 300 Initiative Targets Electricity Access for **50 Million Africans**

The Mission 300 initiative aims to expand electricity access to 50 million people across Africa, supporting economic growth and strengthening infrastructure critical to the continent's mining and industrial sectors.

The programme brings together governments, development finance institutions and private-sector partners to accelerate investment in reliable and sustainable energy systems. Improved electricity access is expected to enhance mining productivity, encourage mineral processing, support manufacturing and improve living standards in communities surrounding major mining operations.

Energy remains one of the biggest constraints to mining expansion across many African countries, making investment in power generation and transmission essential for unlocking future mineral development. Industry stakeholders believe the initiative will help create a more resilient energy landscape capable of supporting Africa's growing role in supplying critical minerals required for the global transition to low-carbon technologies, including electric vehicles and renewable energy infrastructure.

Alphamin Resources Reports Strong **Q1 Earnings Growth** Driven by Higher Tin Prices

The Democratic Republic of Congo has officially designated lithium as a strategic mineral, strengthening government oversight of a resource expected to play a central role in the global transition to clean energy.

The policy recognises lithium's growing importance in rechargeable batteries used in electric vehicles, renewable energy storage systems and advanced technologies. By granting the mineral strategic status, authorities aim to encourage greater domestic value addition, attract responsible investment and maximise long-term economic benefits from future lithium developments.

The move aligns with broader government efforts to diversify the country's mining industry beyond its dominant copper and cobalt sectors while positioning the DRC as a key supplier of critical minerals. Industry analysts believe the decision could accelerate exploration activity and encourage downstream processing investments, supporting industrialisation, job creation and increased export revenues as global demand for battery materials continues to rise.

DRC Moves to Classify **Lithium** as Strategic Mineral Ahead of **Manono Production** Boom

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is moving to classify lithium as a strategic mineral ahead of large-scale production at the Manono project, reinforcing its position in the global critical minerals sector.

Already a major supplier of copper and cobalt, the DRC aims to become a significant player in the lithium supply chain, which is vital for electric vehicle batteries, energy storage systems, and advanced technologies. The new classification will increase royalties on lithium from 3.5% to 10%, potentially generating substantial additional government revenue over the life of major projects.

Beyond taxation, the policy reflects a broader strategy to strengthen economic sovereignty, improve bargaining power with investors, and encourage local value addition through processing and industrial development. While higher royalties could affect investment decisions, the move aligns with global efforts by resource-rich nations to secure greater benefits from critical minerals and ensure that resource wealth supports sustainable long-term economic development.

REDRILZA

WE ARE SPECIALIZED IN:

- EXPLORATION DRILLING
- CORE DRILLING
- DIRECTIONAL DRILLING & WEDGING
- DE-WATERING DRILLING
- PRESSURE GROUTING
- CEMENTATION DRILLING
- PIEZOMETER SUPPLY & INSTALLATION

Mobile: +260 965 845 870
Tel: +260 212 273 924

Email: redrilza@yahoo.com
dtucto@redrilza.co.zm

Website: www.redrilza.com

Critical Minerals Strategy Accelerates Shift Toward Supply Chain Security

The Group of Seven (G7) nations are strengthening efforts to secure reliable supplies of critical minerals through coordinated strategies designed to diversify global supply chains and reduce dependence on single-source producers.

The initiative is expected to increase investment in exploration, mining, processing and recycling of essential minerals, including copper, cobalt, lithium and nickel. African producers, particularly Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, are well positioned to benefit from the growing demand for responsibly sourced critical minerals required for electric vehicles, battery manufacturing and renewable energy infrastructure.

Industry experts believe the strategy will encourage stronger partnerships between resource-rich African nations and international investors while promoting higher environmental, social and governance standards across mineral supply chains. As global competition for critical minerals intensifies, the policy is expected to reshape investment flows and create new opportunities for mining projects across the African continent.

DRC Reviews Mining Export Regulations to Boost Transparency

The Democratic Republic of Congo is reviewing its mining export regulations as part of ongoing reforms aimed at improving transparency, strengthening regulatory oversight and increasing revenue collection from the country's mineral sector.

The proposed measures seek to streamline export procedures while reinforcing compliance requirements for mining companies and mineral traders. Officials say the reforms are intended to improve traceability throughout the mineral supply chain and ensure exports comply with international standards governing responsible sourcing.

The review forms part of the government's broader strategy to modernise the mining sector, enhance investor confidence and maximise the economic contribution of the country's vast mineral resources. As the world's leading producer of cobalt and Africa's largest copper producer, the DRC continues to implement policy reforms designed to balance investment attractiveness with stronger governance, environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

Zambia Extends Copper Concentrate Export Duty Suspension

The Zambian government has extended the suspension of export duties on copper concentrates and selected mineral products in a move aimed at improving the competitiveness of the country's mining sector and encouraging continued investment.

The policy extension is expected to lower operating costs for producers, particularly companies that export concentrates for further processing, while supporting production growth during a period of expanding mining investment. Government officials said the measure forms part of broader efforts to achieve Zambia's ambitious target of producing 3 million tonnes of copper annually by 2031.

Industry stakeholders have welcomed the decision, noting that a predictable fiscal environment is essential for attracting long-term capital into new mine development and expansion projects. The extension reinforces Zambia's commitment to maintaining a competitive mining investment climate while balancing revenue generation with policies designed to stimulate growth, employment and increased mineral exports.

KCM Advances **Nchanga Smelter** Upgrade Programme

Konkola Copper Mines has commenced a comprehensive upgrade of its Nchanga Copper Smelter as part of a broader investment programme designed to improve operational efficiency, increase processing capacity and reduce environmental emissions.

The modernisation project forms part of Vedanta Resources' long-term strategy to restore KCM as one of Zambia's leading copper producers following its return to operational control. Upgrading the smelter will enable the company to process larger volumes of copper concentrate while improving metal recovery rates and supporting higher production from its expanding mining operations.

The investment also aligns with Zambia's objective of promoting greater domestic mineral beneficiation and value addition rather than exporting raw materials. Once completed, the upgraded facility is expected to strengthen KCM's competitiveness, improve production reliability and contribute to increased export earnings while supporting employment and economic growth across the Copperbelt.

Kipushi Mine Delivers Record **Zinc Production** as **Ivanhoe** Ramps Up Operations

Ivanhoe Mines has reported record production at its recently recommissioned Kipushi Mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo, highlighting the operation's rapid progress toward becoming one of the world's highest-grade zinc producers.

The milestone follows the successful restart of the historic mine after extensive redevelopment and commissioning activities. Increased output reflects improving operational performance and the company's strategy to optimise mining and processing systems as production ramps up. Ivanhoe expects Kipushi to play an increasingly important role in supplying zinc to global markets, where demand remains supported by infrastructure development, galvanised steel manufacturing and renewable energy projects.

The achievement also reinforces the DRC's growing reputation as a diversified producer of critical minerals beyond copper and cobalt. As production continues to increase, Kipushi is expected to contribute significantly to export earnings, employment and regional economic development while strengthening Ivanhoe Mines' expanding African portfolio.

Virtus Minerals Acquisition Signals New Chapter for **Chemaf** Assets

The proposed acquisition of Chemaf's copper and cobalt assets by Virtus Minerals has been welcomed by industry stakeholders as a significant development for the Democratic Republic of Congo's critical minerals sector.

The transaction is expected to facilitate renewed investment in the assets while supporting continued production of minerals essential to the global energy transition. Chemaf operates some of the DRC's important copper and cobalt projects, and the ownership transition is anticipated to strengthen operational performance and unlock additional growth opportunities.

Analysts believe the acquisition reflects sustained international interest in the DRC's mineral resources despite evolving regulatory and geopolitical challenges. If completed, the deal could reinforce the country's position as the world's leading supplier of cobalt and one of the largest producers of copper, while contributing to employment, export revenues and the development of more resilient global supply chains for battery metals.

THE DRC'S NEXT COPPER FRONTIER

Positioning Greater Kasai as the DRC's next major copper-cobalt mining & industrial hub

For decades, the Democratic Republic of Congo's mining industry has been synonymous with the Copperbelt provinces of Lualaba and Haut-Katanga, home to some of the world's richest copper and cobalt deposits. Today, however, the Congolese government is setting its sights on a new frontier.

A proposed large-scale copper-cobalt development in Greater Kasai, backed by China Railway Resources Universal Limited (CRRU), has the potential to reshape the country's mining geography while opening a new chapter in regional economic development. More than simply another mining investment, the proposal reflects Kinshasa's broader ambition to diversify mineral production, stimulate industrialization beyond the traditional Copperbelt, and unlock the largely untapped mineral potential of central DRC.

A Strategic Shift Beyond the Copperbelt

The initiative gained momentum on Thursday, May 7, 2026, when Minister of Mines Louis Watum Kabamba met with officials from China Railway Resources Universal Limited (CRRU) to discuss the proposed investment in the territories of Miabi and Kabeya-Kamwanga in Kasai-Oriental Province.

According to the Ministry of Mines, the proposal envisages the project being developed in partnership with state-owned mining company Minière de Bakwanga (MIBA), historically known for its diamond operations in the Kasai region. The initiative forms part of MIBA's broader diversification efforts while supporting the government's objective of unlocking the region's critical mineral potential.

If implemented, the project could establish Greater Kasai as an emerging mining corridor beyond the DRC's traditional Copperbelt, broadening the country's industrial footprint and creating new centres of economic growth.

One of Africa's Most Ambitious Proposed Copper Projects

According to the Ministry of Mines, the proposed operation is designed to produce between **200,000 and 500,000 tonnes of copper annually**.

The project has been presented as an integrated **copper-cobalt mining complex**, although projected cobalt production has not yet been publicly disclosed.

If developed at the upper end of its proposed production range, the operation could rank among Africa's largest copper mining projects, significantly strengthening the Democratic Republic of Congo's position as one of the world's leading copper producers.

Global demand for copper continues to accelerate, driven by investments in renewable energy, electric vehicles, electricity transmission networks, digital infrastructure, and data centres. At the same time, cobalt remains a strategic mineral for battery manufacturing and other advanced technologies, ensuring sustained international interest in the DRC's vast mineral resources.

Building More Than a Mine

One of the proposal's distinguishing features is its integrated infrastructure approach.

Alongside the mining complex, developers are proposing the construction of a hybrid hydroelectric and solar photovoltaic power facility with an estimated generating capacity of between **250 and 500 megawatts**.

Reliable electricity remains one of the greatest barriers to industrial development across many parts of the DRC. By combining renewable energy generation with mining operations, the project aims not only

to power its own facilities but also to contribute to regional electrification and support future industrial development.

If realised, the energy infrastructure could stimulate new business activity, manufacturing, agro-processing, and public services across Greater Kasai, extending the project's economic impact well beyond the mining sector.

Why This Matters

The proposal comes at a time when global competition for critical minerals is intensifying.

Governments and manufacturers worldwide are seeking secure, diversified supplies of copper and cobalt to support the global energy transition. For the Democratic Republic of Congo, developing a major mining project outside the traditional Copperbelt would not only expand national production capacity but also diversify regional economic development and reduce reliance on a single mining region.

For investors, equipment suppliers, engineering firms and service providers, Greater Kasai represents one of the country's most significant emerging mining opportunities.

Unlocking Greater Kasai's Mineral Potential

Greater Kasai has historically been recognised for its diamond resources, particularly through MIBA's operations. However, the government's latest initiative reflects its confidence that the region also possesses considerable potential for copper and other critical minerals capable of supporting large-scale industrial mining.

Developing Greater Kasai as a new mining province would complement existing operations in Lualaba and Haut-Katanga while creating a more geographically balanced mining industry capable of delivering broader economic benefits across multiple provinces.

Economic Opportunities for the Region

The potential economic benefits extend well beyond mineral production.

Government officials believe the project could generate thousands of direct and indirect jobs during both construction and operations. Increased demand for engineering services, logistics, construction, equipment maintenance, transport, accommodation, security, and professional services could create significant opportunities for local businesses and suppliers.

Large-scale mining investments also frequently accelerate the development of supporting infrastructure, including roads, electricity networks, telecommunications, water systems, and housing. Such investments often leave a lasting economic legacy by improving connectivity and attracting additional private-sector investment.

If successfully implemented, the project could become one of the largest mining investments proposed for the Greater Kasai region in recent years.

Challenges Ahead

Despite its considerable potential, several important milestones remain before construction can begin.

No official investment value has yet been disclosed, and project financing arrangements have not been made public. Likewise, the government has not announced a construction schedule or expected production start date.

Further geological evaluation, environmental and social impact assessments, regulatory approvals, infrastructure planning, financing, and community engagement will all be essential before full-scale development can proceed.

As with any major mining investment, successful execution will ultimately determine whether the project's ambitious vision can be translated into long-term economic and social benefits.

A New Chapter for Congolese Mining

President Félix Tshisekedi has identified the Greater Kasai project as a strategic national priority, underscoring its importance within the government's broader economic transformation agenda.

Minister Louis Watum Kabamba has also assured the Chinese delegation of the government's commitment to facilitating implementation, reflecting Kinshasa's determination to accelerate mining investment beyond the country's traditional mining heartland.

If successfully developed, the Greater Kasai copper-cobalt project could represent one of the most significant developments in the DRC's mining sector in recent decades. Beyond increasing national copper production, it has the potential to establish a new industrial growth corridor, strengthen regional energy infrastructure, diversify economic development, and reinforce the Democratic Republic of Congo's position as the world's leading producer of cobalt and one of the world's largest producers of copper.

For investors, mining companies, equipment manufacturers and policymakers alike, Greater Kasai is no longer simply a region known for diamonds—it is emerging as one of Africa's most closely watched mining frontiers.


ZAMBEZI
PORTLAND
CEMENT
High Strength Super Quality
ZAMBEZI
PORTLAND
CEMENT
ZPC
LTD
2015
High Strength Super Quality
CEM II B-L 42.5 N
50kg
Packed
ZAMBEZI
PORTLAND
CEMENT
ZPC
LTD
High Strength Super Quality
CEM II / B-L 32.5R
Proudly
Zambian
Zambezi Portland Cement Ltd / 0961 692 611
Plot No. 1468, Ndola Lime Road / P.O. Box 70942, Ndola - Zambia
Email:info@zpcltd.net www.zambeziportland.co.zm

Kansanshi Mining Empowers 17 SMEs with Equipment to Boost Local Enterprise in Solwezi

By Constance Makungu

K17.6 million SME Accelerator Programme strengthens entrepreneurship, jobs, and inclusive growth in North-Western Province

In a tangible demonstration of its commitment to local economic transformation, Kansanshi Mining PLC has handed over productive equipment and machinery to 17 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Solwezi under its SME Accelerator Programme, a flagship initiative aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship and expanding participation in value chains across North-Western Province.

The initiative, valued at approximately K17.6 million, represents more than an equipment transfer. It signals a deliberate investment in building sustainable local enterprises capable of driving job creation, improving livelihoods, and contributing to Zambia's broader economic diversification agenda.

Held on 25th June 2026, the handover ceremony brought together government officials, traditional leaders, development partners, beneficiaries, and Kansanshi Mining leadership in a shared acknowledgment of the growing importance of SME development in the region's economic future.

A partnership model for economic transformation

Speaking at the event, Kansanshi Mining PLC Assistant General Manager Axel Kottgen described the initiative as part of a long-standing commitment to building economic resilience beyond mining operations.

“Our journey to support local enterprise development and create sustainable economic opportunities for the people of North-Western Province and Zambia as a whole started a long time ago, and we remain committed to this cause,” he said.

He emphasized that sustainable development is not limited to resource extraction but must include deliberate investment in local business ecosystems.

“At Kansanshi Mining PLC, we firmly believe that sustainable development extends beyond mining. It includes empowering local businesses, building entrepreneurial capacity, creating jobs, and fostering economic resilience within our communities,” he added.

The SME Accelerator Programme is structured to do exactly that identifying high-potential local entrepreneurs and supporting them through a combination of business development training, mentorship, market linkages, and provision of productive assets.

According to the company, 17 SMEs were selected following rigorous assessment based on their potential for growth, sustainability, and job creation.

These enterprises operate across diverse sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, water bottling, cleaning services, metal fabrication, leather production, food processing, poultry farming, and community services.

The Assistant General Manager noted that the impact of the programme goes beyond immediate support.

“This is not merely about delivering equipment. It is about unlocking opportunities helping businesses increase production, improve quality, access larger markets, create employment, and

contribute meaningfully to economic growth within our communities," he said.

Government applauds inclusive economic growth

North-Western Province Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr. Luckson Kanyaka Mulumbi, commended Kansanshi Mining PLC for what he described as a clear demonstration of effective partnership between the public and private sectors in driving local empowerment.

"What we are witnessing today is a clear demonstration of the power of meaningful partnerships that deliver empowerment to our people through entrepreneurship and enterprise growth for sustainable economic development," he said.

He noted that the initiative aligns with broader national development priorities that prioritize private sector-led growth and position SMEs as central drivers of economic transformation and inclusive development.

"SMEs play a vital role in expanding economic opportunities, reducing poverty and improving household incomes across the country," he said.

He further emphasized that North-Western Province continues to experience significant economic activity driven by mining, agriculture, commerce, and infrastructure development.

However, he noted that long-term sustainability depends on ensuring that local enterprises are fully integrated into these growth sectors.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary also highlighted the practical impact of the equipment provided, which includes a block-making machine, generator, compressor, and 24 sewing machines, among other production tools.

The block-making machine is expected to strengthen participation in the construction sector, while sewing machines will support tailoring and garment production enterprises.

The generator and compressor will improve productivity and operational efficiency across multiple businesses.

"These assets will contribute to employment creation, especially among young people and women who are the key drivers of enterprise development within our communities," he said.

From support to structured empowerment

A key feature of the SME Accelerator Programme is its structured and sustainability-focused design. Kansanshi Mining PLC has adopted a returnable grant model, which ensures that support provided to beneficiaries is eventually recycled to empower additional entrepreneurs.

Under this model, SMEs receive equipment and support under agreed terms, with an obligation to return the value over time. The approach is designed to promote accountability, financial discipline, and long-term sustainability of the programme.

"This model ensures accountability, promotes responsible business management, and allows the programme to remain sustainable by enabling future entrepreneurs to benefit from the same opportunity," the Assistant General Manager explained.

Rather than being a traditional grant, the structure is intended as a revolving empowerment mechanism one that continuously feeds back into the ecosystem to support new entrants into the SME space.

Building competitive local enterprises

Beyond equipment distribution, the programme is focused on strengthening the capacity of SMEs to become competitive players in local and national supply chains.

By investing in operational capacity and business development, Kansanshi Mining PLC aims to help local enterprises move from informal or small-scale operations into structured businesses capable of meeting market demand.

The Assistant General Manager noted that this approach reflects the company's broader vision for sustainable development within its host communities.

"We are proud to invest in local entrepreneurship because thriving local businesses are essential for inclusive and sustainable development," he said.

The programme also acknowledges the role of technical teams, mentors, trainers, and evaluators who have supported the selection and development of beneficiary enterprises, ensuring that support is targeted and impactful.

Responsibility and long-term sustainability

While the handover of equipment marks a major milestone, both Kansanshi Mining PLC and government officials stressed that success ultimately depends on how beneficiaries utilize the support provided.

"You are expected to utilize this equipment productively, maintain it properly and apply sound business management practices," the Deputy Permanent Secretary said.

He encouraged beneficiaries to view the intervention as an opportunity for transformation one that requires discipline, commitment, and entrepreneurial focus.

The Assistant General Manager echoed this sentiment, urging SMEs to treat the support as a partnership rather than a handout.

"Your success will not only benefit your families and employees but will also contribute to stronger local supply chains and a more diversified economy," he said.

A shared vision for inclusive growth

The SME Accelerator Programme reflects a broader shift toward inclusive economic development models that prioritize local participation in economic growth.

With 17 SMEs supported and a multi-sectoral approach spanning agriculture, manufacturing, and services, the initiative is expected to generate long-term ripple effects across Solwezi and surrounding communities.

It also aligns with national priorities focused on expanding SME participation, reducing poverty, and promoting economic diversification.

As the beneficiaries begin to deploy the equipment, expectations are high that the programme will translate into increased production, job creation, and stronger local enterprise ecosystems.

For Kansanshi Mining PLC, the initiative represents an ongoing commitment to ensuring that economic development in North-Western Province is not only driven by mining, but also by empowered, competitive, and sustainable local businesses.

Tenke Fungurume Mine Moves to Restore Operations After Brief Strike Disruption in **DRC**

DRC's Tenke Fungurume Mine Ends Strike, CMOC Warns of Dismissals and Offers Bonuses to Non-Striking Workers

The Democratic Republic of Congo's largest copper mine, Tenke Fungurume Mining (TFM), has warned it will dismiss employees who refuse to end strike action that briefly disrupted production this week, while offering financial incentives to workers who did not participate.

The strike began on June 1 at the vast operation, which is operated by China's CMOC Group Ltd. TFM is one of the world's largest copper-producing sites, with output reaching approximately 519,000 tons in 2024 accounting for about 15% of the DRC's total copper production.

Dispute Over Labor Agreement

According to reports, including Radio Okapi, workers protested a newly negotiated collective bargaining agreement between TFM management and a union delegation.

Employees claim they were not properly consulted and are demanding improved working conditions, including higher wages, a housing allowance, and better healthcare benefits.

Company Response and Disciplinary Measures

In a letter addressed to employees and contractors, TFM described the strike as "illegal" and stated that it had significantly disrupted operations and production.

The company issued an ultimatum requiring workers to return to their posts by the end of the previous Wednesday.

Those who complied would not face disciplinary action, while those who refused risked "immediate dismissal proceedings."

TFM also announced incentive payments for staff who continued working during the strike.

Non-striking employees are set to receive a $500 "loyalty bonus," while workers who were reportedly subjected to intimidation for refusing to join the strike would receive $1,000 in recognition of their "courage and dedication."

The company added that employee grievances would be reviewed "with the utmost seriousness" as part of ongoing internal assessments.

Production and Operational Impact

TFM confirmed that the strike caused temporary disruptions but stated that operations have now returned to normal.

The company has also launched an internal investigation into incidents of violence and alleged damage to equipment, with findings expected to be shared with Congolese authorities.

Strategic Importance of TFM

Tenke Fungurume is one of the world's most significant copper and cobalt producers. Alongside CMOC's Kisanfu mine, the company produced nearly 750,000 tons of copper in 2024.

The surge in Chinese investment in the DRC's mining sector over the past decade has played a key role in boosting national copper output, positioning the country as the world's second-largest supplier of the metal.

Copper demand is expected to continue rising, driven by electric vehicles, renewable energy systems, power infrastructure expansion, and emerging AI-related technologies.

Vinmart Opens Three Manufacturing Facilities in DR Congo to Boost Local Production and Industrial Growth

The Vinmart Group has expanded its industrial footprint in the Democratic Republic of Congo with the inauguration of three new production facilities in Lubumbashi, aimed at increasing local manufacturing capacity and supporting the domestic supply of industrial equipment.

The facilities were officially opened on Monday, July 6, 2026, during a ceremony attended by government officials, business leaders and representatives of the Vinmart Group.

The event was co-chaired by Justin Kalumba Mwana Ngongo, Acting Minister of Industry and Minister of Entrepreneurship and SME Development, and Julien Paluku Kahongya, Minister of Foreign Trade.

The new facilities include the country's first square tube production plant, operated by the Société de Transformation de Fer (SOTRAFER), with a production capacity of 1,500 tonnes per month.

Vinmart also inaugurated a manufacturing unit for armoured electrical cables operated by Mining Engineering Services (MES).

The plant has the capacity to produce between 100 and 120 kilometres of smaller-section cables and 130 to 150 kilometres of larger-section cables.

A third facility will manufacture electrical transformers, supporting demand from the energy, infrastructure and industrial sectors.

Supporting Local Industrial Development

Speaking at the ceremony, Justin Kalumba Mwana Ngongo praised Vinmart Group's investment in local processing and manufacturing, saying the projects align with the government's broader strategy to promote industrialisation, economic diversification and greater domestic value creation.

Julien Paluku Kahongya highlighted the economic contribution of the group's activities, noting their role in employment creation and industrial development.

He also called for continued efforts to strengthen the business environment, support local industries and promote Congolese-made products in domestic and international markets.

The minister said expanding manufacturing capacity would help increase the value generated from the country's resources, reduce reliance on imported goods and encourage job creation across different sectors.

Strengthening DR Congo's Manufacturing Base

The launch of the three production units reinforces Vinmart Group's role in the DRC's industrial sector and comes as the country seeks to accelerate local processing, improve supply chains and develop a stronger manufacturing base.

By producing steel components, electrical equipment and industrial materials locally, the new facilities are expected to contribute to the development of domestic industries and support ongoing efforts to increase the competitiveness of the Congolese economy.

Sponsored Content

CrossBoundary Energy's Kamoa Project Signals a New Era for Renewable Power in DRC Mining

By Constance Makungu

The Democratic Republic of Congo's mining industry is entering a new chapter in its energy transition, with CrossBoundary Energy (CBE) delivering what it describes as one of Africa's largest renewable energy baseload projects for Kamoa Copper.

Speaking to Copperbelt Katanga Mining during DRC Mining Week, Gracia Munganga, DRC Development Director at CrossBoundary Energy, said the project demonstrates that renewable energy at scale can reliably power large-scale mining operations.

"Kamoa has an estimated baseload demand of around 240 MW, with more than half traditionally supplied by diesel," Munganga explained. "The mine made the strategic decision to source a significant portion of their growing power demand from renewable energy, and CBE were selected as one of two independent power producers to deliver the first phase."

Under the first phase, CrossBoundary Energy will supply 30 MW of guaranteed renewable baseload power, with an installed capacity of 234 MWp and 526.

Delivering at Record Speed

Beyond its scale, Munganga believes the project's execution timeline sets it apart.

"We were awarded the project in April, and within less than a year we're already preparing to supply electricity to Kamoa," she said. "We've never delivered a project of this size within such a short period."

The solar PV and BESS facility combines 234 MWp of solar PV with 526 MWh of battery energy storage, enabling continuous power delivery throughout the day and night.

To achieve this, CrossBoundary installed more than 357,000 solar panels alongside approximately 180 battery storage containers, each capable of storing around 2.93 MWh of energy.

According to Munganga, declining battery prices have fundamentally changed the economics of renewable energy.

"Ten years ago, this wouldn't have been commercially viable. Battery costs have fallen dramatically, allowing us to oversize both the solar array and storage system and still provide baseload power competitively.

Navigating DRC's Operating Environment

Delivering such a project in the DRC was far from straightforward.

Munganga outlined several challenges, including disruptions caused by the collapse of the Kakoso Bridge in Chililabombwe linking Zambia and the DRC, and rising transport costs following from the cobalt export ban.

"The bridge closure forced trucks to be rerouted, increasing both costs and delivery times," she explained. "At one stage, freight prices increased by around at least 30 percent because trucks returning from the DRC couldn't recover their operating costs."

Delays in in securing renewable energy fiscal incentives required equipment to be temporarily stored in Durban before shipment into the DRC, creating complex sequencing challenges for construction teams.

Regulatory compliance also demanded close collaboration with government authorities. "The legislation provides the framework but understanding how to practically implement each licensing step required direct engagement with authorities. That collaboration proved extremely valuable."

A Model for Africa's Mining Industry

Munganga believes the Kamoa project represents far more than a single power plant.

She estimates that the DRC mining industry will require approximately 2 GW of additional electricity by 2030, creating significant opportunities for independent power producers.

"Mining companies need reliable energy, but their capital is better invested in expanding mining operations than building power plants," she said.

Under CrossBoundary's Independent Power Producer (IPP) model, the company finances, builds, owns and operates the power infrastructure, while mining companies simply purchase electricity through long-term power purchase agreements.

"It allows us to take the development and operational risk while guaranteeing energy availability to our clients."

CrossBoundary is already in discussions with several additional mining companies considering similar renewable energy projects in the region, and is excited for the future.

Positioning Kamoa as a Sustainability Leader

Munganga credits Kamoa Copper for pioneering renewable baseload power at this scale in the DRC.

"Kamoa took the first step. They were willing to back an innovative project and demonstrate that it can be done in the DRC."

The facility will reduce carbon emissions by more than 68,000 tonnes annually, while significantly improving the mine's long-term energy security.

"This isn't only about sustainability," she said. "It's about ensuring reliable power for mining operations. I believe this project is the beginning of what could become a new standard across the region."

With additional development phases already being considered, CrossBoundary Energy sees the Kamoa project as proof that large-scale renewable energy can successfully support one of Africa's fastest-growing mining sectors.

Zimbabwe's Ministry of Energy and Power Development Endorses SAEIS 2026, Positioning the Summit as Southern Africa's Premier Eco-Infrastructure Investment Platform

Zimbabwe's Ministry of Energy and Power Development has officially endorsed the upcoming Southern Africa Eco-Infrastructure Summit (SAEIS) 2026, scheduled to take place from 15–17 July 2026 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Held under the theme "Reimagining Southern Africa's Future: AI-Driven Eco-Infrastructure for Sustainable Real Estate and Development," and the sub-theme "Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy as Enablers of Sustainable Infrastructure and Real Estate Development," the three-day summit will convene government leaders, municipalities, investors, development finance institutions, utilities, real estate developers, technology providers, sustainability experts, academia, and private sector leaders from across Africa and beyond to accelerate investment and collaboration in sustainable infrastructure and green development.

The summit will feature high-level panel discussions, exhibitions, networking sessions, project showcases, investment matchmaking, and strategic deal signings, focusing on critical issues including decarbonisation, capital mobilisation, public-private partnerships, smart infrastructure, digitalisation, climate resilience, sustainable urban development, and the future of AI-enabled infrastructure across the region.

The Ministry of Energy and Power Development's endorsement aligns with Zimbabwe's Vision 2030 agenda, which seeks to accelerate infrastructure development, energy security, industrialisation, and sustainable economic growth. As the Lead Policy Ministry and Co-Host, the Ministry will play a central role in shaping discussions and facilitating engagement between government, investors, financiers, and project developers to unlock strategic infrastructure opportunities across Zimbabwe and the wider Southern African region.

One of the defining highlights of SAEIS 2026 will be the launch of the SAEIS Investment Arena Challenge—Southern Africa's first live eco-infrastructure investment pitching platform. Often described as a "Shark Tank for Infrastructure," the initiative will provide ten shortlisted projects from across Southern Africa with the opportunity to pitch live before a distinguished panel of investors, development finance institutions, corporate leaders, government ministers, and infrastructure specialists seeking bankable projects for investment, strategic partnerships, and implementation support.

The Investment Arena Challenge is expected to become one of the summit's flagship attractions, showcasing innovative, investment-ready projects spanning clean energy, energy-efficient infrastructure, climate-resilient development, smart cities, digital connectivity, water and sanitation systems, and sustainable real estate. Beyond capital raising, the platform has been designed to accelerate project implementation by connecting developers directly with decision-makers and funding partners in one venue.

Complementing the Investment Arena Challenge is a dedicated Future Leaders Track, providing universities, research institutions, start-ups, innovators, and young entrepreneurs with a prestigious platform to present transformative ideas, technologies, and solutions that will shape Africa's sustainable future and inspire the next generation of infrastructure leadership.

The significance of SAEIS 2026 is further strengthened by the participation of regional and international stakeholders as speakers, panellists, judges, investors, and strategic partners. The summit will bring together policymakers, development finance institutions, infrastructure developers, utilities, corporate executives, academia, and sustainability organisations from across Africa and beyond.

Among the distinguished panellists is Caroline Adriaensen who has covered several positions in East Africa as Head of Development Cooperation at the European Union. She will be joined by representatives from Greenpeace Africa, who will contribute an independent accountability perspective to discussions on investment, climate action, environmental sustainability, and responsible infrastructure development. Their participation underscores SAEIS 2026's commitment to fostering balanced, transparent and solutions-driven dialogue that brings together governments, investors, development partners and civil society to accelerate sustainable infrastructure across Southern Africa.

The formal endorsement and active participation of Zimbabwe's Minister of Energy and Power Development, Deputy Minister, and Permanent Secretary position SAEIS 2026 as one of the region's most strategically aligned eco-infrastructure investment platforms. Their support reinforces the summit's role in advancing Zimbabwe's Vision 2030 objectives while promoting regional collaboration, increasing capital flows into infrastructure projects, and accelerating sustainable economic transformation throughout Southern Africa.

SAEIS 2026 is expected to attract delegates from across Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, further strengthening Victoria Falls' reputation as a leading destination for international investment dialogue, innovation, and sustainable development. By combining high-level policy engagement with live investment opportunities, the summit aims to catalyse new partnerships and position Southern Africa as a globally competitive destination for eco-infrastructure investment.

For more information about how to participate as an exhibitor, sponsor, speaker or partner at SAIES, please contact info@southernafricaeco-infra.com or visit www.southernafricaeco-infra.com

Event Details -

Dates: 15-17 July 2026

Location: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Website: www.southernafricaeco-infra.com

Media Enquiries: Contact Shelley Gwese

Shelley@southernafricaeco-infra.com
+27 65 245 7512

Stakeholder Engagement:

Lindah Mbidzo lindah@southernafricaeco-infra.com

+263772275786

ETG Curechem Strengthens Its Position in Zambia's Mining and Explosives Sector

By Constance Makungu

Strengthening mining productivity through dependable supply, technical expertise and a growing regional presence

As mining activity grows across Zambia's Copperbelt and the Democratic Republic of Congo's Katanga region, mining companies require reliable partners that can supply quality products, maintain availability and provide technical support.

ETG Curechem Zambia Limited is responding by strengthening its offering across the mining value chain, particularly mining explosives, blasting accessories and specialised mineral-processing chemicals.

Operating under the wider ETG Curechem network and backed by the regional capabilities of Export Trading Group, the company is positioning itself as an integrated supply partner for mines, contractors, processing plants and industrial operations across Zambia.

Known as "The Chemical People," ETG Curechem combines chemical-distribution expertise with a growing portfolio of explosives and accessories designed to support safer blasting, improved fragmentation and operational efficiency.

Expanding Mining Explosives and Accessories

Drilling and blasting remain fundamental to surface and underground mining, with the quality and availability of explosives and initiation accessories directly affecting fragmentation, loading efficiency, equipment productivity and mining costs.

ETG Curechem Zambia has expanded its presence in the mining explosives sector, supplying products for mining, quarrying and civil blasting applications.

Its portfolio includes explosives, cast boosters, detonating cord, delay detonators, shock-tube initiation systems and related blasting accessories.

The company is strengthening availability, storage capacity, compliance and distribution infrastructure to ensure timely delivery.

Rather than treating explosives as a stand-alone category, ETG Curechem aims to provide broader support covering product selection, supply planning and responsive service.

"Mining customers require more than products. They need dependable supply, technical understanding and responsive support.

Our focus is to provide quality explosives, accessories and chemical solutions that help customers operate safely, efficiently and competitively," said the Business Development and Branch Manager at ETG Curechem Zambia.

Safety remains central to the company's approach, with explosives and accessories handled according to applicable regulatory, storage, transportation and operational requirements, with emphasis on quality, traceability and responsible supply.

Integrated Mineral-Processing Solutions

Alongside its explosives portfolio, ETG Curechem Zambia supplies chemicals for mineral processing and hydrometallurgical operations involving copper, cobalt, gold and other minerals.

Its portfolio includes flotation reagents, collectors, depressants, dispersants, flocculants, coagulants, leaching agents and water-treatment chemicals, as well as sulphur, sodium metabisulphite, magnesium oxide, caustic soda flakes and lye, industrial acids and processing inputs.

For gold operations, the company supplies reagents used in extraction, recovery and refining, including sodium cyanide, activated carbon, borax and hydrogen peroxide.

By supplying products used from rock excavation through downstream processing, ETG Curechem provides an integrated value proposition covering blasting, fragmentation, flotation, leaching, recovery and water management.

The company works with mining, metallurgical and processing teams to understand requirements and recommend solutions aimed at improving chemical performance, controlling

Sponsored Content

Strengthening mining productivity through dependable supply, technical expertise and a growing regional presence

As mining activity grows across Zambia's Copperbelt and the Democratic Republic of Congo's Katanga region, mining companies require reliable partners that can supply quality products, maintain availability and provide technical support.

ETG Curechem Zambia Limited is responding by strengthening its offering across the mining value chain, particularly mining explosives, blasting accessories and specialised mineral-processing chemicals.

Operating under the wider ETG Curechem network and backed by the regional capabilities of Export Trading Group, the company is positioning itself as an integrated supply partner for mines, contractors, processing plants and industrial operations across Zambia.

Known as "The Chemical People," ETG Curechem combines chemical-distribution expertise with a growing portfolio of explosives and accessories designed to support safer blasting, improved fragmentation and operational efficiency.

Expanding Mining Explosives and Accessories

Drilling and blasting remain fundamental to surface and underground mining, with the quality and availability of explosives and initiation accessories directly affecting fragmentation, loading efficiency, equipment productivity and mining costs.

ETG Curechem Zambia has expanded its presence in the mining explosives sector, supplying products for mining, quarrying and civil blasting applications.

Its portfolio includes explosives, cast boosters, detonating cord, delay detonators, shock-tube initiation systems and related blasting accessories.

The company is strengthening availability, storage capacity, compliance and distribution infrastructure to ensure timely delivery.

Rather than treating explosives as a stand-alone category, ETG Curechem aims to provide broader support covering product selection, supply planning and responsive service.

"Mining customers require more than products. They need dependable supply, technical understanding and responsive support.

Our focus is to provide quality explosives,

Beyond Generation: **Petrodex's Integrated Energy** Model Powering **Southern Africa**

The region's energy gap will not be closed by generation alone. It calls for a more integrated approach, one that moves electrons across borders, builds the lines that carry them, and generates new supply where it counts.

Across the Copperbelt and Haut-Katanga, the binding constraint on growth is no longer the ore in the ground. It is the electricity needed to extract and process it.

The region sits atop some of the world's richest copper and cobalt deposits, and global demand for both is climbing as electrification, electric vehicles and AI-driven data centres reshape the metals market.

The pressure on the grid, however, is not coming from industry alone. The Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia have two of the fastest-growing populations in the world, and both are urbanising rapidly.

More people, more cities and more enterprise mean a demand curve that climbs relentlessly. Yet the same operations positioned to meet that demand routinely find their output capped not by geology or markets, but by an unreliable power supply.

The roots of this are structural rather than accidental. Much of Southern Africa's grid was built around hydropower, especially in Zambia's case, where it constitutes over 80 percent of installed capacity.

It is a clean and low-cost foundation in a normal year, but it leaves the system dangerously exposed to drought.

The 2024-2026 dry spell made this painfully clear: water levels at Kariba fell so far that national generation was cut by close to a third, and at the worst of it load-shedding stretched beyond twenty hours a day. The shock rippled across the region.

The Southern African Power Pool was carrying a capacity deficit of around 4,200 MW by late 2025, and in the DRC, where barely one in five people has access to electricity, the mining grid in the south is estimated to fall short by around 1,000 MW, a gap that could double before the decade is out.

This deficit is a function of structural realities that no single government budget cycle can resolve.

State utilities across the region carry heavy debt and have long sold power below the cost of supplying it, which leaves little capital to reinvest when tariffs are only now being brought toward cost-reflective levels.

The legacy single-buyer model, in which one state utility purchased and resold all power, was never designed for the scale or speed of today's industrial demand. Building new capacity takes years — transmission lines longer still, given the land, permitting and environmental work involved. The consequence is a problem that is easy to describe and hard to fix: even where bulk power exists somewhere in the system, it frequently cannot be offtaken by factories or mines, because the distribution network in between is congested, ageing or simply absent.

The region's governments recognise this and have responded by opening the door, deliberately, to private partners. Zambia's Electricity (Open Access) Regulations, enacted in 2024, began dismantling the single-buyer model, allowing independent producers and large consumers to move power across the network for a fee.

The Ministry of Energy cut the approval time for solar projects from more than six months to forty-eight hours, and the government set a target of adding 1,000 MW of solar to the grid. This is an invitation by the state to share the load.

The investment required is simply beyond what public balance sheets can carry alone; the International Energy Agency puts Africa's

annual energy investment need at over US$200 billion by 2030, with close to half of it expected to come from the private sector.

This is where the nature of the problem matters. The energy gap facing a mine or an industrial plant is not one problem but four, layered on top of one another: not enough generation, not enough transmission to move it, a last-mile distribution network that cannot deliver it reliably, and cross-border supply that swings with the rains.

A company that addresses only one of these layers leaves its clients exposed to the other three.

A pure independent power producer can build a plant but cannot guarantee the electrons reach the gate.

A pure trader can source power but cannot fix the line that keeps tripping. Closing the gap, in practice, means working across all four layers at once.

Petrodex: An Integrated Model in Action

That integrated approach is the model a small number of energy companies are now pursuing in the region, and Petrodex offers a clear illustration of how this works in practice. As one of the most active traders in the region, the company moves around 230 MW daily across Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and the DRC, drawing on a mix of solar and hydro to keep supply flowing to industrial clients even when any single source falls short, a direct answer to the volatility that drought and seasonality impose.

But Petrodex recognised early that trading alone does not solve the last-mile problem. So through its Zambian subsidiary, **Zampower,** it designs, builds, and operates dedicated distribution lines, or reinforces existing ones, that run power straight to a client's site, bypassing the congested shared network that is so often the real point of failure.

To date this dedicated solution has been implemented with more than twenty-five industrial and mining clients, including several fully dedicated lines, with more in construction.

The third layer is generation. Under a Memorandum of Understanding with ZESCO to develop 400 MWac of solar capacity, Petrodex energised the first 25 MWp phase of its Mailo Solar plant in Serenje in 2025, to be followed by Phases 2 and 3, to reach a total 108 MWp capacity planned for end of 2026.

Its significance lies less in the megawatts than in the speed of execution, with first power flowing less than a year after the agreement was signed, in a market where many projects stall at the financing stage.

None of this substitutes for the work that governments and state utilities are doing to reform their power sectors; it complements it.

The reforms open the market, and integrated private players step into the gaps the state cannot close quickly enough on its own, such as moving power across borders, building the lines that carry it the final stretch, and adding new generation where the grid is thin.

As copper demand accelerates and the region presses toward its production ambitions, the partnership between reforming governments and private players like Petrodex willing to work across the whole chain is, increasingly, what will determine whether the lights stay on. For the region, that is no longer a question of comfort. It is the question of growth.

CAMINEX

Copperbelt · Agricultural · Mining
Industrial · Networking · Enterprise

CACSS

Thank you!

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our **exhibitors, partners and sponsors** for your incredible support and contribution to the success of **CAMINEX 2025.** Your partnership, commitment, and belief in our vision continue to drive growth, innovation, and impact across the Copperbelt. We truly value your role in making **CAMINEX 2025** a remarkable success.

The next **CAMINEX** will be held on

18th to 20th May 2027.

We look forward to even greater collaboration and success together!

+260 979 367 7766 +260 973 374939

ADMIN@CACSS.CO.ZM

CONNECT. NETWORK. GROW.

WWW.CAMINEX.ORG

Sponsored Content

CAMINEX 2026 RECORDS **STRONG GROWTH** AND INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION

CAMINEX 2026 was successfully held from 19–21 May 2026 at the Kitwe Showgrounds under the theme, "Collaboration for Growth: Developing Talent, Trust and Trade." The exhibition further cemented its position as Zambia's leading Copperbelt-based business-to-business platform, bringing together stakeholders from the mining, agriculture, manufacturing, industrial, financial services and technology sectors.

The event recorded significant growth, attracting 136 commercial exhibitors compared to 102 in 2025, representing a 33.3% increase. CAMINEX 2026 also welcomed 68 new entrant exhibitors, demonstrating growing confidence in the exhibition as a platform for trade, investment, networking and business development.

A major highlight of this year's edition was the targeted stakeholder engagement which strengthened participation from financial institutions and other strategic sectors.

The event was officially opened by His Excellency Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, represented by Dr. Denny H. Kalyalya, Governor of the Bank of Zambia, as Guest of Honour.

CAMINEX 2026 attracted high-level participation from government and industry, including Permanent Secretaries from the Ministries of Mines and Minerals Development, Commerce, Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, and the Copperbelt Provincial Administration, alongside members of the diplomatic corps, mining executives and captains of industry. Among the notable attendees was Mr Anthony Malenga, President of the Zambia Chamber of Mines.

The exhibition showcased a diverse range of sectors, including mining and industrial supplies, manufacturing, agriculture, ICT, consumer goods, banking and finance, investments and regulatory organisations. The growth achieved was driven by strong stakeholder engagement, enhanced marketing efforts, improved exhibitor experience and renewed confidence in Zambia's mining and industrial sectors.

The success of CAMINEX 2026 was made possible through the support of sponsors and partners including Barrick Lumwana, Mopani Copper Mines, Copperbelt Energy Corporation (CEC), Lusemfwa Hydro Power Company , Zanaco, FNB Zambia, Mansa Sugar, KoBold Metals, ZESCO Limited, Madison Life Insurance, Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), Sigenergy Africa, Knight Piésold Consulting , K-Solutions ltd, Infratel, Northwold Investments ltd, Dulux paints, Perfect Five cleaning, Dream home, Netone, Creative touch branding, Etcetera, Strongpak , ABSA Bank Zambia, Liquid Intelligent Technologies, Saloba, MTN Zambia, Paratus, Kitwe teaching hospital, Kitwe city council and several other valued partners.

Building on the success of the 2026 edition, CAMINEX continues to strengthen its role as a catalyst for collaboration, investment and business growth in Zambia and the region.

CAMINEX 2027, is scheduled to take place from **18–20 May 2027** at the Kitwe Showgrounds.

18 - 20 May 2027 | Showgrounds, Kitwe | www.caminex.org

CAMINEX
Copperbelt · Agricultural · Mining
Industrial · Networking · Enterprise

Organised by:
THE COPPERBELT AGRICULTURAL & COMMERCIAL SHOW SOCIETY

Barrick Advances Lumwana Super Pit Expansion as Copper Output Rises

Construction of the Lumwana Super Pit copper expansion project in Zambia remained on schedule and within budget during the first quarter of 2026, mining giant Barrick Gold announced on Monday, 11 May.

The company confirmed that the first lift of the mill building wall was successfully completed during the quarter.

Mill shells have already been delivered to the site, while the first shipments of structural steel are expected before the end of June.

Barrick expects 2026 capital expenditure for the project to fall at the lower end of its guidance range of $750 million to $850 million.

Total capital investment for the Lumwana expansion is projected at approximately $2 billion.

The company said first copper production from the expanded operation remains on track for the end of the first quarter of 2028.

Copper Production and Costs

Barrick reported first-quarter copper production of 49,000 tonnes, representing an 11% increase year-on-year and aligning with company targets.

However, higher operational expenses pushed production costs upward. Copper cost of sales rose 17% to $3.41 per pound, while copper cash costs increased 14% to $2.57 per pound.

All-in sustaining costs (AISC) climbed 20% to $3.67 per pound, largely due to higher royalties linked to stronger copper prices and rising site operating costs.

Despite the cost increases, Barrick maintained its 2026 copper production guidance at between 190,000 and 220,000 tonnes.

The company also reaffirmed its cost guidance, projecting copper cost of sales between $3.05/lb and $3.35/lb, cash costs between $2.20/lb and $2.45/lb, and AISC between $3.45/lb and $3.75/lb.

Barrick president and CEO Mark Bristow said copper continues to play a critical role in the company's long-term growth strategy.

Strong Gold Performance Boosts Earnings

Barrick also delivered strong gold production results during the quarter, producing 719,000 ounces, exceeding guidance due to improved output from the Loulo-Gounkoto complex in West Africa, as well as strong performances at NGM and Veladero.

The company generated $5.22 billion in revenue during the quarter, alongside $2.55 billion in operating cash flow and $1.21 billion in attributable free cash flow.

Barrick said stronger gold prices, increased production, and lower operational costs significantly boosted earnings and cash generation compared to the same period last year.

Net earnings reached $1.60 billion, while adjusted net earnings came in at $1.65 billion. EBITDA rose 103% year-on-year to $2.76 billion, with the EBITDA margin improving by 66%.

Gold cost of sales averaged $1,922 per ounce during the quarter, while total cash costs stood at $1,327 per ounce and AISC at $1,708 per ounce. Barrick attributed the improved cost performance to greater mining and processing efficiencies.

The company expects gold production to continue increasing throughout 2026, forecasting second-quarter output between 730,000 and 770,000 ounces.

Shareholder Returns and Outlook

Barrick's 2026 cost guidance is based on an assumed oil price of $70 per barrel. The company noted that every $10 change in oil prices impacts diesel-related costs by approximately $12 per ounce across gold operations and $0.04 per pound at copper sites.

The company declared a quarterly dividend of $0.175 per share as part of its policy to distribute 50% of attributable free cash flow annually to shareholders.

In addition, Barrick's board approved a share repurchase programme of up to $3 billion in outstanding common shares at prevailing market prices.

Kobold Metals' Benjamin Katabuka Calls for Greater Geological Knowledge to Accelerate Mineral Discovery

Kobold Metals Highlights AI-Powered Exploration and Long-Term Mining Opportunities in the DRC

Speaking during the panel discussion titled "Mining Exploration: From Geological Uncertainty to Strategic Planning" at DRC Mining Week 2026, Benjamin Katabuka, Managing Director of Kobold Metals DRC, outlined the company's vision for the future of mineral exploration in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Addressing participants gathered at the Pullman Lubumbashi Grand Karavia conference venue, Katabuka emphasized that one of the country's biggest challenges remains the lack of detailed geological data across large parts of the DRC.

Despite this limitation, Kobold Metals has leveraged available geological information to identify and invest in areas with significant mineral potential.

According to Katabuka, the Manono region stands out as one of the most promising exploration areas in the country.

The region is home to the Roche Dure deposit, widely recognized as one of the world's largest known lithium and tin deposits.

The geological data available for the area played a key role in Kobold Metals' decision to launch exploration and research programs there.

"There are still dozens of potential exploration targets within this region, which is why we continue to advance our research efforts," Katabuka said.

He also sought to dispel a common misconception surrounding the mining industry that mineral exploration automatically leads to rapid resource development and mine construction.

Katabuka explained that mining projects are inherently long-term investments that require years of geological research, technical studies, and economic assessments before production can begin.

"Many people believe that a mine can be built shortly after exploration starts. In reality, it often takes several years to confirm the existence of a deposit that is economically viable to develop," he noted.

According to Katabuka, the exploration phase alone can last between two and four years before a significant discovery is confirmed.

Once a viable deposit has been identified, additional years are required to complete feasibility studies, secure financing, develop supporting infrastructure, and construct mining facilities.

As a result, the full timeline from initial exploration to commercial production can easily span a decade.

The Kobold Metals DRC Managing Director also highlighted the advanced technologies being deployed by the company to accelerate exploration activities. By combining artificial intelligence, sophisticated geological data analysis, and modern exploration techniques, Kobold Metals aims to improve the identification of mineral resources buried deep below the surface.

For the company, the DRC remains one of the world's most prospective regions for discovering new strategic mineral deposits, particularly as the global energy transition drives rising demand for lithium, copper, cobalt, and other critical minerals.

Through its exploration investments, Kobold Metals aims to expand the country's geological knowledge base while laying the groundwork for future mining projects that could further strengthen the DRC's position in global critical minerals supply chains.

Prospect Resources Advances Mumbezhi Copper Exploration as Drilling Expands Resource Potential

Prospect Resources Reports Progress at Zambia's Mumbezhi Copper Project as Drilling Targets New Deposits

Australian-listed Prospect Resources says its Phase 3 exploration programme at the Mumbezhi copper project in Zambia is progressing on schedule and within budget, with drilling activities continuing to identify potential extensions to existing mineral resources.

The company reported that approximately 20% of planned diamond drilling and 35% of the budgeted aircore drilling programme have been completed.

At the flagship Nyungu Central deposit, diamond drilling has focused on the southern section, where ten resource extension holes have been completed.

Several holes have intersected visible copper mineralisation outside the current mineral resource estimate (MRE) area.

One of the notable results came from hole NCDD026, which intersected about 40 metres of visible copper sulphide mineralisation from a depth of approximately 271 metres.

Portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF) analysis indicated an estimated copper grade of 0.5% copper over a 4.5-metre interval within the broader intersection.

Prospect Resources said two diamond rigs are continuing to test shallow extensions of Nyungu Central before moving to other targets within the Nyungu Hub, including Nyungu West and Nyungu South.

New Copper Targets Identified

Aircore drilling at the West Mwombezhi deposit has also identified additional shallow copper mineralisation outside the existing inferred resource area.

The programme completed 81 holes covering 1,480 metres, identifying two north-south trending copper zones extending over about one kilometre of strike.

The company said these zones represent targets for future deeper diamond drilling to determine the continuity and scale of the mineralisation.

Further exploration is also underway across regional targets, including Chipimpa and Sharamba, where geophysical surveys and drilling are being used to investigate copper anomalies and other mineralisation targets.

At Sharamba, the company reported that initial diamond drilling intersected a 20-metre-wide zone of visible mineralisation at approximately 140 metres vertical depth, with assay results pending.

Scoping Study Progress

Prospect Resources said work on an initial scoping study for Mumbezhi remains on track for completion between the fourth quarter of 2026 and the first quarter of 2027.

The company has approved additional resource-focused drilling at Nyungu Central to improve confidence in inferred resources and potentially upgrade them to indicated resources.

Development scenarios under consideration include a potential 12-million-tonne-per-year open-pit mining operation.

The study is being supported by engineering firm Lycopodium, with the aim of assessing development options and providing a foundation for future expansion decisions.

Prospect Resources Managing Director and CEO Sam Hosack said the ongoing drilling programme could add additional resources at Nyungu Central, while recent aircore results have highlighted new exploration opportunities at West Mwombezhi and other regional targets.

MMG Sets Course for World-Class Khoemacau Copper Operation

MMG Khoemacau Targets Over 200,000 Tonnes of Annual Copper Production Through Major Botswana Expansion

MMG is advancing an ambitious long-term growth strategy for its Khoemacau copper mine in Botswana, with plans to increase annual copper production to more than 200,000 tonnes through phased expansion, operational optimisation and continued exploration.

Speaking at the 2026 Future of Mining Summit, MMG Integrated Asset Strategy Manager Xiaoliang Liu outlined the company's vision to transform Khoemacau into a world-class copper operation capable of meeting growing global demand for the metal, which is critical to the energy transition.

According to Liu, the company's development roadmap will be implemented in stages, beginning with optimisation initiatives designed to improve efficiency and throughput at the existing operation.

These efforts will be complemented by infrastructure upgrades and ongoing technical studies aimed at unlocking additional production capacity.

The expansion programme builds on MMG's current investment in the mine and reflects confidence in the quality and scale of the Khoemacau orebody.

The company believes further exploration will identify additional mineral resources capable of supporting higher production levels and extending the mine's operating life.

MMG has already commenced expansion works designed to lift copper concentrate production, with the longer-term objective of exceeding 200,000 tonnes of copper annually.

Achieving this milestone would position Khoemacau among Africa's leading copper producers.

The company also sees the project as playing an increasingly important role in Botswana's mining industry, strengthening the country's position as an emerging supplier of critical minerals needed for renewable energy technologies, electric vehicles and modern infrastructure.

As global copper demand continues to rise, driven by electrification and decarbonisation, MMG's investment strategy underscores the strategic importance of expanding high-quality copper assets while creating long-term economic opportunities for Botswana.

Anglo American Advances Copper Exploration in **Angola's Moxico Leste Province**

Anglo American has presented a copper prospecting project in Angola's Cazombo Salient, highlighting new opportunities for the country's mining sector.

The presentation took place on Tuesday in the commune of Calunda, in the municipality of Muconda, Moxico Leste province, and was disclosed by the Ministry of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas in a statement.

According to the ministry, Anglo American Angola introduced the Copper Prospecting Project in the Cazombo Salient as a strategic initiative aimed at strengthening Angola's mineral exploration potential.

During the presentation, the company's general manager, Benvindo Calunga, noted that the extension of the Copperbelt stretching across Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola over approximately 300 kilometres represents a significant opportunity for Angola to position itself as a key destination for mining investment in Africa.

The company also outlined several operational challenges affecting project implementation.

These include poor road infrastructure, logistical constraints due to the distance from major supply hubs, and limited access to healthcare facilities in the project area.

On the social responsibility front, Anglo American Angola reported ongoing engagement with twelve local communities, each represented by traditional leaders.

The company stated that it maintains continuous dialogue aimed at promoting cooperation and supporting sustainable local development.

It further emphasized that community requests are being converted into social investment projects designed to benefit the wider population.

The presentation was delivered to a government delegation led by the Secretary of State for Mineral Resources, Jânio Corrêa Victor, who was accompanied by the Vice Governor of Moxico Leste, Camilo Supula.

The delegation reviewed project progress and discussed broader developments in Angola's mining and petroleum sectors.

According to the Ministry of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas, Jânio Corrêa Victor is currently conducting a working visit to Moxico Leste, which includes meetings with provincial authorities and site visits to Anglo American's copper exploration activities.

Zimbabwe's Dokwe Gold Project Surges Past 1.1 Million Ounces as Gold Boom Accelerates Economic Growth

Zimbabwe's gold sector is entering a new phase of rapid expansion, driven by rising global prices, stronger investor appetite, and national efforts to increase output to 50 tonnes this year.

At the centre of this momentum is a major new development in Matabeleland North, where UK-listed Ariana Resources has significantly upgraded its Dokwe Gold Project, strengthening its position as one of the country's most important undeveloped gold assets.

The company has announced a 42% increase in ore reserves at Dokwe, bringing total estimated resources to 1.13 million ounces of gold.

The revision substantially enhances the project's economic outlook, with its projected pre-tax net present value now exceeding $1 billion, reinforcing Zimbabwe's growing status as a competitive global gold investment destination.

Gold has become the backbone of Zimbabwe's foreign currency earnings. In 2025, the sector generated a record $4.61 billion, making it the country's largest source of external revenue and a central pillar of economic stability.

The metal's importance has further increased following the introduction of the Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) currency, which is partially backed by gold and foreign reserves.

A major new mining asset in Matabeleland North

The Dokwe Gold Project, located roughly 110 kilometres west-northwest of Bulawayo, consists of the Dokwe North and Dokwe Central deposits. First identified in 2002, the site is now emerging as one of Zimbabwe's most promising large-scale gold developments.

Under updated feasibility work, Dokwe is expected to produce more than one million ounces of gold over an estimated 20-year mine life.

The development plan includes a 12-year open-pit mining phase followed by an eight-year processing period using stockpiled ore.

Annual production is projected at around 80,000 ounces, with peak output potentially reaching 100,000 ounces.

At full capacity, this would place Dokwe alongside some of Zimbabwe's leading producers, including Caledonia Mining Corporation's Blanket Mine, which produces roughly 75,000–80,000 ounces per year.

At peak output, Dokwe could contribute more than three tonnes of gold annually, equivalent to around 6% of Zimbabwe's national production target.

The company estimates total lifetime earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) could approach $2 billion. Based on a gold price assumption of $4,250 per ounce, the project's pre-tax net present value is estimated at $1.06 billion, with development costs projected at approximately $164 million.

Ariana also expects that initial capital investment could be recovered within about one year of production beginning, reflecting strong projected margins under current gold price conditions.

Zimbabwe's expanding gold pipeline

The Dokwe upgrade comes amid a broader acceleration in Zimbabwe's mining sector, particularly gold.

National production reached a record 46.7 tonnes in 2025, prompting authorities to raise the 2026 target to 50 tonnes.

Several large-scale projects are advancing in parallel. Among them, Caledonia Mining Corporation is developing the Bilboes Gold Project, which could eventually produce around 200,000 ounces annually, potentially becoming the country's largest gold operation.

In addition, exploration activity from firms such as Kavango Resources has reported promising drilling results in Matabeleland South, further signalling renewed investor confidence in Zimbabwe's mineral sector.

Rising global gold prices have significantly improved project economics across the industry, strengthening incentives for new development and expansion.

For Zimbabwe, this trend aligns closely with national priorities to increase export earnings, stabilise foreign exchange inflows, and attract long-term mining investment.

Financing interest builds around Dokwe

Ariana Resources attributes the improved reserve estimate to optimisation work carried out with Whittle Consulting, which recommended increasing processing capacity from 1.5 million to 2.5 million tonnes annually.

This adjustment has materially increased the volume of economically recoverable gold.

The company has begun discussions with potential financiers and advisers, exploring funding structures that could include debt financing, equity investment, and royalty-based arrangements.

Ariana's Managing Director Kerim Sener described the reserve upgrade as a key milestone ahead of a definitive feasibility study expected in early 2027.

Further drilling at Dokwe North and Dokwe Central is ongoing, with the potential to further expand the resource base.

If developed as planned, Dokwe could become one of Zimbabwe's most significant new mining projects in decades, delivering investment, employment, infrastructure development, and export revenue to Matabeleland North.

More broadly, the project reflects a structural shift in Zimbabwe's economy: gold is no longer just an export commodity, but a central instrument of monetary stability and long-term economic strategy.

Zijin Mining's Delayed **Allied Gold** Acquisition Signals a New Era in **China's** Mining Strategy

The postponement of Zijin Mining's planned acquisition of Canadian-based Allied Gold is more than a routine procedural delay.

The three-month extension reflects deeper strategic calculations linked to China's evolving mining policy, intensifying global competition for gold assets, and rising regulatory and political considerations in Africa.

Amid record-high global gold prices and increasing efforts by major economies to secure critical mineral supplies, Beijing's cautious stance highlights a shift toward greater scrutiny of overseas mining investments by Chinese firms.

Strategic Importance of the Deal for Zijin Mining

For Zijin Mining, the Allied Gold acquisition represents a major step in its global expansion strategy.

The company has set an ambitious target of increasing its annual gold production to 140 tons by 2028, nearly doubling its current output of approximately 73 tons.

Industry analysts note that organic growth alone will not be sufficient to achieve this objective.

Large-scale acquisitions are therefore essential to rapidly expand production capacity and reserve portfolios.

Allied Gold offers such an opportunity. The company operates key assets including the Agbaou and Bonikro mines in Côte d'Ivoire, the Sadiola mine in Mali, and the Kurmuk project in Ethiopia.

Collectively, these operations are expected to produce close to 800,000 ounces of gold annually by 2029 equivalent to more than 22 tonnes.

If completed, the transaction would rank among the most significant overseas gold acquisitions ever undertaken by a Chinese mining company in Africa.

Regulatory Scrutiny from Beijing

According to reports, including those cited by the Financial Times, Chinese regulators such as the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) are closely reviewing the financial structure and strategic implications of the deal.

Two key concerns appear to be driving the delay.

1. Valuation concerns

The transaction, estimated at around USD 4 billion, carries a significant premium compared to Allied Gold's historical valuation. Chinese authorities are increasingly wary of overseas acquisitions that may involve overpayment, particularly when long-term profitability is uncertain due to geopolitical instability or regulatory changes.

This reflects a broader shift in Beijing's approach. Unlike the aggressive outbound investment strategy of the 2000s and early 2010s, Chinese policy now prioritizes financial discipline, risk control, and return on investment.

2. Country risk in Mali

A second concern relates to Mali, where the Sadiola mine accounts for a substantial share of Allied Gold's production.

Mali's mining sector has undergone significant regulatory reforms following the adoption of a revised Mining Code in 2023.

The changes have increased state participation requirements and raised fiscal obligations for foreign operators.

Recent tensions between the Malian authorities and international mining companies have further heightened perceived investment risk, raising questions about the stability of future cash flows from key assets.

For Beijing, the central question is whether projected returns from Sadiola justify the current valuation under evolving regulatory conditions.

Africa's Growing Role in the Global Gold Market

The Allied Gold transaction also reflects a broader structural shift: the resurgence of Africa as a core region in global gold strategy.

Since 2023, surging gold prices driven by geopolitical uncertainty, inflationary pressures, and sustained central bank purchases have reignited investor interest in African gold deposits.

The continent is estimated to hold nearly 30% of the world's untapped gold reserves, making it a critical frontier for future production growth.

Countries such as Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Tanzania, and Ethiopia have become focal points for global mining investment.

For China, Africa remains strategically important due to comparatively open investment conditions in several jurisdictions, especially when contrasted with tighter regulatory environments in countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United States.

A Shift in China's Resource Acquisition Doctrine

The Allied Gold case underscores a broader evolution in China's overseas investment strategy.

In recent years, Beijing has increased oversight of outbound acquisitions by domestic firms, aiming to:

Prevent excessive capital outflowsReduce exposure to speculative or overpriced deals

Mitigate geopolitical and regulatory risks

Prioritize assets aligned with long-term strategic value

This more disciplined approach now extends across multiple critical minerals, including copper, lithium, cobalt and increasingly, gold.

China continues to support the international expansion of its mining champions, but under stricter conditions emphasizing profitability, sustainability, and risk management.

Implications for African Mining Economies

The outcome of this transaction will be closely watched across Africa's mining sector.

A successful acquisition would reinforce China's role as a dominant investor in African gold assets and signal continued strong appetite for large-scale mining projects on the continent.

Conversely, delays, renegotiations, or a potential withdrawal could raise concerns about perceived political and fiscal risks in certain jurisdictions, potentially influencing future investment decisions.

African governments are therefore navigating a delicate balance: maximizing fiscal returns from natural resources while maintaining an attractive environment for foreign capital and long-term investment.

Beyond the specifics of the Zijin-Allied Gold deal, the situation reflects intensifying global competition for gold resources amid rising economic uncertainty.

Gold is increasingly reasserting itself as a strategic asset, prompting both corporations and states to secure supply chains and strengthen resource sovereignty.

While the postponement to late July does not necessarily threaten the deal's completion, it underscores a new reality: large-scale overseas mining investments particularly by Chinese firms are subject to far greater scrutiny than in previous decades.

For Africa, this may mark the beginning of a more selective investment cycle, characterized by slower deal-making but potentially more stable, structured, and strategically aligned capital inflows.

Caterpillar Acquires Skycatch to Expand AI-Powered Mining Technology Platform

Caterpillar Inc. has acquired mining technology company Skycatch as part of its strategy to expand digital solutions, artificial intelligence capabilities and real-time data tools for mining operations.

The terms of the transaction were not disclosed. The acquisition follows Caterpillar's recent purchase of RPMGlobal and strengthens its portfolio of mining technologies designed to improve operational efficiency, optimise material movement and support both conventional and autonomous mining fleets.

Skycatch specialises in capturing and processing high-resolution spatial data using artificial intelligence.

Its technology provides mine operators with near-real-time digital representations of mine sites, helping them monitor changing conditions, improve planning and make faster operational decisions.

Caterpillar said integrating Skycatch's technology with its RPM and MineStar platforms will enhance the accuracy and availability of operational data, allowing mining companies to improve safety, productivity and overall site performance.

Denise Johnson, Caterpillar's group president for Resource Industries, said the acquisition supports the company's goal of helping customers address complex mining challenges through advanced technology and data-driven solutions.

Richard Mathews, CEO of RPMGlobal, said Skycatch's platform enables mining companies to process large volumes of spatial information more efficiently, helping operators better connect mine planning with daily execution.

Skycatch founder and CEO Christian Sanz said the acquisition will expand the company's ability to support customers while bringing its technology into a broader mining ecosystem.

The acquisition reflects the growing role of artificial intelligence, automation and digital twins in the mining industry as companies seek to improve efficiency, reduce operational risks and optimise resource management.

DRC–Zambia Battery Partnership Faces Crucial Test as Copperbelt Eyes Industrial Transformation

DRC and Zambia Push EV Battery Value Chain Plans as Investors Scrutinise Copperbelt Industrial Ambitions

As policymakers, executives and investors gathered for the annual DRC Mining Week in Lubumbashi, attention once again turned to one of Africa's most ambitious industrialisation initiatives: the effort by Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to develop an integrated electric vehicle (EV) battery value chain in the Copperbelt region.

Four years after Presidents Félix Tshisekedi and Hakainde Hichilema signed the cooperation agreement in 2022, stakeholders increasingly assessed whether the initiative had moved from political commitment toward practical industrial implementation.

From raw exports to value addition ambitions

The partnership was originally designed to transform both countries from exporters of raw minerals into active participants in global battery manufacturing supply chains.

Zambia and the DRC collectively hold some of the world's largest reserves of copper and cobalt, minerals essential for EV batteries, renewable energy storage systems and advanced electronics.

The strategy aimed to develop an integrated regional ecosystem covering mineral processing, precursor materials production and, in the long term, battery component manufacturing for international markets.

At the time of the agreement, both governments framed the initiative as a structural shift in Africa's resource economy, with leaders emphasising the need to retain greater value within producing countries rather than exporting unprocessed raw materials.

Strategic positioning in global critical minerals markets

The Copperbelt remained central to global supply chains for copper and cobalt, with demand continuing to rise due to the expansion of electric mobility and global energy transition policies.

Industry analysts noted that while full-scale battery manufacturing required substantial long-term investment, the most immediate opportunities lay in midstream segments such as refining, cathode precursor production and chemical processing.

These areas generated significantly more value than raw mineral exports while requiring less capital than complete battery manufacturing ecosystems.

Institutional coordination and investment requirements

To support implementation, the two governments established the DRC–Zambia Battery Council, mandated to coordinate policy alignment, infrastructure development and investment promotion across both countries.

The effectiveness of the initiative depended on several structural factors, including access to reliable electricity, development of transport and logistics infrastructure, regulatory certainty and the ability to attract international technology partners.

For investors attending DRC Mining Week, the central question was no longer the availability of mineral resources, but whether the region could develop the industrial and institutional capacity required to compete in the global battery value chain.

Regional industrialisation outlook

If fully implemented, the initiative had the potential to become one of the most significant industrial development projects in sub-Saharan Africa, linking mining and manufacturing hubs across Lubumbashi and Kolwezi in the DRC with Kitwe and Ndola in Zambia.

Such an outcome would have aligned with the African Mining Vision adopted by the African Union, which called for mineral resources to serve as a foundation for industrialisation, economic diversification and sustainable development rather than export dependency.

The DRC–Zambia battery partnership remains one of the most closely watched industrial initiatives in the global critical minerals sector.

Its trajectory depended on sustained political commitment, investment mobilisation and the development of competitive industrial infrastructure over the long term.

As discussions took place in Lubumbashi, the Copperbelt continued to be repositioned not only as a major source of raw materials, but also as a potential future hub for battery materials processing and clean energy manufacturing.

DRC Cracks Down on **Illegal Mining Activities** Near **Maiko National Park** Amid Environmental Concerns

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo has intensified its crackdown on mining operations deemed irregular in environmentally sensitive areas.

In a statement issued on June 2, 2026, the Minister of Mines, Louis Watum Kabamba, ordered the immediate and precautionary suspension of activities carried out by two companies holding exploration permits near Maiko National Park.

The decision concerns exploration permits No. 16591 and No. 16594, granted respectively to Stone Mining SARLU and Xin Hong Kuan Ye SARL.

Regulatory and Environmental Concerns

According to the Ministry of Mines, the suspension follows alerts issued by the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN), which notified authorities in April of potential breaches of both environmental and mining regulations within the protected zone.

The government accuses the two companies of serious violations, including the alleged misuse of exploration permits.

Although authorized only for exploration, the companies are reportedly engaged in extraction activities, which is prohibited under the DRC Mining Code unless a valid exploitation permit has been granted.

Authorities also cite possible breaches of environmental protection laws governing activities near protected areas.

The sites in question are located close to Maiko National Park, one of the country's most important biodiversity reserves.

Security and Field Risks

More concerning for authorities is the reported presence of unidentified armed individuals operating in the area.

This raises additional security risks in a region already affected by instability and the activity of armed groups.

Government Investigation Launched

To clarify responsibilities and verify the allegations on the ground, the government has announced the deployment of an interministerial investigative mission.

The team will include representatives from the Ministries of Mines, Environment, Interior, and Defense.

Depending on the findings, the authorities may impose stronger sanctions, including the permanent withdrawal of mining titles and possible legal proceedings against those found responsible for violations.

Environmental Pressure on a Protected Ecosystem

This case highlights the ongoing tension between mineral exploitation and environmental protection in eastern DRC.

Established in 1970, Maiko National Park covers more than 10,800 km² across the provinces of Tshopo, Maniema, and North Kivu. It is home to several endangered species, including the Okapi, the Congo peacock, and the Eastern lowland gorilla.

Despite its protected status, the park continues to face significant pressure from illegal mining, poaching, deforestation, and insecurity linked to armed groups.

Since assuming office in August 2025, Minister Louis Watum Kabamba has introduced measures aimed at strengthening governance in the mining sector, with a focus on transparency, traceability of minerals, and enforcement of environmental standards.

The suspension of Stone Mining SARLU and Xin Hong Kuan Ye SARL is seen as an early and tangible demonstration of this policy shift, as the government seeks to balance resource development with the protection of the country's natural heritage and ecological assets.

Zambia and US Expand $491 Million Grant Programme to Support Lobito Corridor Infrastructure

Zambia has reached an agreement with the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to expand the scope of a $491 million grant programme, allowing part of the funding to support infrastructure linked to the country's critical minerals sector and the strategic Lobito Corridor.

The grant, signed in 2024 under the MCC's "farm-to-market" initiative, was initially designed to strengthen agricultural development and improve rural transport networks in Africa's second-largest copper producer.

According to a statement issued by Zambia's Ministry of Finance and National Planning on Thursday, the revised framework will support both agricultural growth and critical minerals development.

"The realignment will support both Zambia's agricultural and critical minerals economy in the Lobito Corridor, a key economic corridor for Zambia," the ministry said.

Strategic importance of the Lobito Corridor

The Lobito Corridor has emerged as one of Africa's most significant trade and logistics projects.

The corridor is centered on a railway network linking the mineral-rich regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia to Angola's Atlantic port of Lobito.

The route is considered strategically important for exporting copper, cobalt, and other critical minerals to international markets, particularly as Western countries seek to diversify supply chains and reduce dependence on China for minerals essential to the global energy transition.

Zambia plans to connect its Copperbelt and North-Western Province mining regions to the corridor, enhancing export capacity and regional trade integration.

The African Finance Corporation (AFC), the lead developer of the Lobito Corridor railway project, has indicated that it is targeting financial close by the fourth quarter of 2027.

Funding to support key transport infrastructure

Under the revised agreement, a portion of the MCC funding will be redirected toward infrastructure projects that support both agricultural logistics and mining-related economic activity along the corridor.

The Ministry of Finance said priority road rehabilitation projects have already been aligned with the Lobito Corridor development strategy.

"Priority road segments identified for rehabilitation have been aligned with the Lobito Corridor in the North-Western and Copperbelt provinces one of Africa's most significant emerging trade and logistics corridors," the ministry stated.

The move reflects Zambia's broader strategy of leveraging infrastructure investments to support economic diversification, strengthen agricultural value chains, and capitalize on growing global demand for critical minerals.

By integrating agricultural and mining infrastructure planning, the government aims to maximize the economic impact of the MCC grant while positioning Zambia as a key player in regional and global supply chains.

Investor Confidence Surges in **Zambia**'s Mining Sector Amid **Copper Boom** and **Economic Stabilisation**

Investor interest in the mining sector of Zambia has increased significantly as the country's fiscal consolidation strengthens following its exit from sovereign default status.

The improvement in macroeconomic stability is beginning to reshape investor sentiment across key sectors.

According to a senior executive at Citi, confidence in the Zambian economy has improved as reforms and stabilisation efforts take hold.

The bank has observed rising investor engagement, particularly in mining, energy, and agriculture.

Zambia's vast copper reserves remain central to its investment appeal. The country is strategically positioned to benefit from rising global demand for copper, driven by the energy transition, electric vehicle production, and expanding data centre infrastructure linked to artificial intelligence.

In the mining sector, corporate activity has already begun to reflect renewed confidence.

Vedanta Resources has moved to restructure parts of its portfolio, including plans to divest a minority stake in its U.S.-based subsidiary CopperTech Metals Inc as part of broader capital realignment linked to its operations in Zambia.

Market sentiment has also been supported by strong commodity pricing. Copper prices have remained elevated, reinforcing Zambia's long-term export potential.

The country is currently one of Africa's leading copper producers, ranking second on the continent.

Economic outlook improvements have been reinforced by credit rating developments from S&P Global, which upgraded Zambia's foreign-currency sovereign ratings from selective default status to CCC+/C with a stable outlook. This marked a significant milestone in the country's post-restructuring recovery.

Beyond mining, new categories of investors are entering Zambia's market, including interest from Middle Eastern capital as well as exploratory moves into sectors such as pharmaceuticals and technology. Some mining entrants are also first-time operators in the country, reflecting broader diversification of the investor base.

Copper remains a cornerstone of Zambia's economy and a primary source of export revenue.

The country recently recorded its highest copper production level in years, underscoring the sector's central role in its economic recovery and growth trajectory.

Lualaba Mining Cooperatives Vote in **Kolwezi** to Strengthen Governance of **Artisanal Mining Sector**

Mining cooperatives in Lualaba province are heading to the polls this Thursday, June 4, 2026, in Kolwezi to elect their representatives to two newly established bodies under the Ministry of Mines.

The announcement was made by the Service for Assistance and Support of Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (SAEMAPE).

In an official statement, SAEMAPE/Lualaba Provincial Director Georges Nyembo Kitungwa invited all cooperatives to participate in the vote, which is aimed at strengthening their role in the governance of the artisanal mining sector.

The elected representatives will serve in two key structures: the Commission responsible for preparing the draft allocation of mining cooperatives within Artisanal Mining Zones (ZEAs), and the Monitoring Committee overseeing the "Group Protection" insurance scheme for artisanal miners organized in cooperatives.

These bodies were created through Ministerial Orders No. 00235 of April 3, 2026, and No. 00279 of May 5, 2026, as part of broader efforts to professionalize and better structure artisanal mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The electoral process will take place at the multipurpose hall of the Lualaba Provincial Government building, in the presence of national and provincial authorities.

Expected participants include SAEMAPE Director General Jean-Paul Kapongo Kadiobo, representatives of the Minister of Mines, Governor Fifi Masuka Saini, members of the provincial government, security services, and cooperative leaders.

The program includes candidate presentations, voting, ballot counting, and the official proclamation of results.

Through this initiative, the Ministry of Mines aims to improve governance, social protection, and organization within the artisanal mining sector, while promoting greater inclusion of cooperatives in the management of mining zones.

The reform is part of a broader strategy to formalize artisanal mining and enhance its contribution to local economic development in the DRC.

Sandvik and Rio Tinto Partner to Advance Autonomous Surface Drilling Technology in Pilbara

Sandvik and Rio Tinto have signed a joint development agreement aimed at integrating Sandvik's i-series surface drill rigs with Rio Tinto's proprietary Autonomous Drilling System (ADS), marking a significant step forward in the evolution of autonomous mining technology.

The collaboration combines Sandvik's AutoMine® automation platform with Rio Tinto's extensive expertise in remote autonomous operations to create an advanced solution for open-pit drilling.

The partnership is expected to enhance safety, productivity, and operational efficiency across large-scale mining operations.

Initially, the project will focus on improving autonomous open-pit drilling capabilities. Over the longer term, the companies aim to enable remote operation of multiple drill rigs across multiple mine sites from Rio Tinto's Perth Operations Centre in Western Australia.

Development work and on-rig testing will begin at Sandvik's Test Pit facility in Finland before progressing to field trials at Rio Tinto's Pilbara iron ore operations in Western Australia.

Petri Virrankoski, President of Surface Drilling at Sandvik, highlighted the strategic value of the partnership:

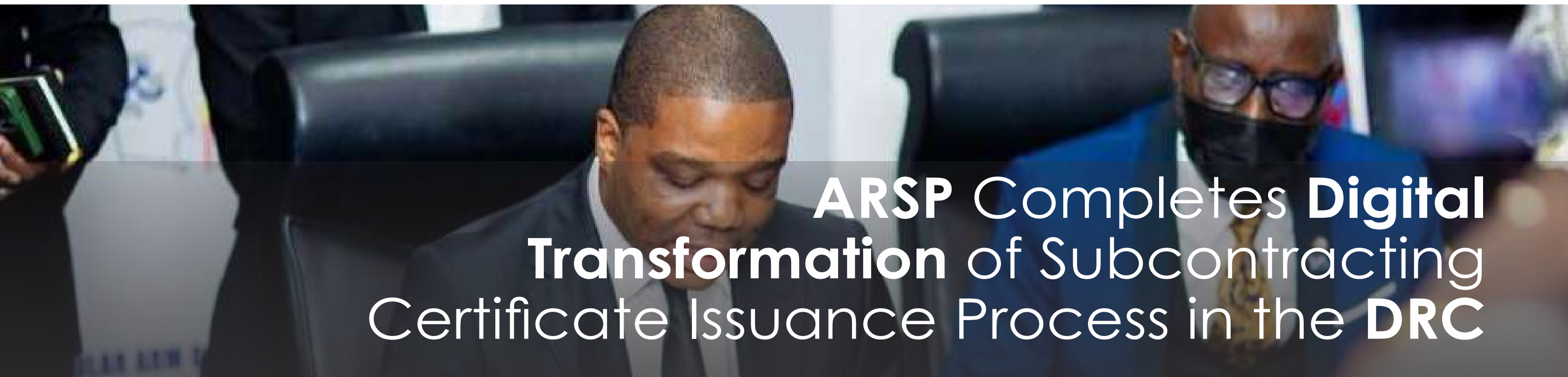
"This collaboration reflects our commitment to improving safety and productivity through open, interoperable automation.

Building on AutoMine® and our i-series platform, we are proud to strengthen our long-standing relationship with Rio Tinto and support the continued advancement of autonomous drilling in the demanding conditions of the Pilbara."

Rio Tinto's Perth Operations Centre already oversees one of the world's largest autonomous mining networks, managing fleets of autonomous trucks, trains, and drill rigs across its iron ore operations.

The company's Gudai-Darri mine is among the most technologically advanced sites in the sector, operating with a fully autonomous mobile fleet.

By combining Sandvik's leading automation technologies with Rio Tinto's operational experience, the partnership aims to establish new industry benchmarks for autonomous drilling, delivering greater safety, efficiency, and scalability for the future of mining.



ARSP Completes Digital Transformation of Subcontracting Certificate Issuance Process in the DRC

The Regulatory Authority for Subcontracting in the Private Sector (ARSP) has officially launched the full digitalization of the subcontracting company registration certificate process.

Announced in press release No. 001 of June 15, 2026, this reform represents a major milestone in the modernization of public services led by ARSP Director General Juan-Ted Beleshayi Kasanda.

Previously, companies were required to wait between three and six months to obtain their registration certificates.

These delays were largely caused by manual administrative procedures, including the printing of certificates on secure paper and the physical signing requirements of senior officials, which created significant processing bottlenecks.

A streamlined and faster approval process

With the new system, the entire procedure from application submission to final issuance is now fully digital.

All steps are processed electronically, significantly improving efficiency and reducing administrative delays.

The Director General can now sign documents remotely using digital devices such as a computer or tablet, enabling faster approvals and reducing reliance on physical documentation.

As a result, ARSP aims to reduce issuance times to less than seven days in the initial phase, with a long-term target of just 72 hours.

Fully digital certificates with enhanced security

Under the reformed system, certificates are now issued exclusively in digital format. Once approved, they are sent directly to applicants, who can print them as needed for administrative use, eliminating the need to wait for physical copies.

To strengthen security and authenticity, each certificate now includes a QR code that allows primary companies and stakeholders to instantly verify its validity through the ARSP database. Valid certificates are also accessible via the institution's official website.

Extended validity period for businesses

The reform also introduces a longer validity period for registration certificates, which has been extended from three to five years for both new issuances and renewals.

This change reduces the frequency of administrative procedures required from businesses and improves operational continuity for subcontractors.

First companies receive digital certificates

To mark the official rollout of the system, ARSP issued its first digital certificates to seven companies: MASKAN SERVICES SARL, PANAFRIVA SARLU, NKAEL SERVICES SARL, MAG CONTRACTOR SARL, ENTREPRISE GÉNÉRALE INVEST SARL, LIELE GLOBAL INVESTMENT CORPORATION SARL, and PERCEVE SARL.

Strengthening transparency and the business environment

This digital transformation is part of ARSP's broader strategy to modernize administrative services, simplify procedures, and improve efficiency for economic operators in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Beyond reducing processing times, the reform enhances transparency and traceability in subcontracting certification.

These improvements are expected to strengthen trust between principal companies and subcontractors while contributing to a more secure and competitive business environment in the country.


CopperbeltKATANGA


CopperbeltKATANGA
Zambia Pushes for Mineral Processing to Drive Industrial Growth