

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



THE PRIME MINISTER

Keynote address by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister

Dr. Ngirente Edouard

At the East and Central Africa Mining Forum, 2019

Kigali Convention Center, October 28th, 2019

- **Honourable Ministers,**
- **Honourable Cabinet members, here present,**
- **Representative of the African Union Commission,**
- **Members of Diplomatic Corps,**
- **Business Leaders,**
- **Distinguished guests and participants,**

Good morning,

1. Let me start by welcoming you all to Rwanda and to the inaugural East and Central Africa Mining Forum. We are pleased to host you for the first time here in Kigali.
2. Africa's mining sector is one of the largest in the world and it plays a key role in development and economic growth of many African countries. In 2016, minerals accounted for an average of 70% of total African exports and about 28% of gross domestic product (GDP).
3. In terms of job creation, the mining sector is associated with 12 million jobs on our continent. It is also important to note that each direct mining job generates around 2 more indirect jobs through backward and forward linkages. Therefore, as a source of income, it is an important sector for our population.

Distinguished Guests,

4. To maximize the benefits of mining, African countries need to come together and think about how mining can contribute better to local development. This can be achieved by making sure workers and communities see real benefits from large-scale industrial mining and that their environment is protected.

It is equally important that nations negotiate contracts with mining multinationals that generate fair resource revenues and stipulate local inputs for operations. At regional level, it means integrating mining into industrial and trade policy.

5. Africa's own response to tackling the paradox of great minerals wealth existing side by side with pervasive poverty, was to implement the Africa Mining Vision (AMV) which was adopted by Heads of State at the February 2009 African Union (AU) Summit. The Africa Mining Vision (AMV) advocates the need for, "Transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to strengthen broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development".
6. It also aspires to leverage Africa's natural resources for the industrialization of Africa. This requires a commitment to add value instead of exporting raw minerals as it is commonly done today.
7. The recently adopted African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is a welcome additional support to the realization of the Africa Mining Vision. Through this Agreement, the private sector should leverage increased economies of scale and access to regional raw materials and intermediate inputs; to develop better conditions for regional value chains and integration into global value chains.

This will sustain the transformation of African economies towards greater utilization of technology for value addition of our mineral resources, thereby realizing the Africa Mining Vision (AMV).

Distinguished Guests,

8. The Government of Rwanda appreciates the vision of the East and Central Mining Forum to become an annual global mining event, which will effectively promote sustainable investment and trade in mining sector. This will also raise the investment profile of emerging mining countries in the East & Central Africa region.
9. In order to achieve this vision, this Forum is expected to develop a platform for governments, mining companies and investors to engage on investments and financing of projects across the mining value chain.

It is also expected to facilitate a discussion on improving and enhancing mineral trade and developing enablers for value addition projects in the region.

It should also engage stakeholders across the mining value chain on the issues of mining productivity, health and safety standards and environmental practices.

10. Rwanda's mineral exports, like other countries which export raw minerals continue to suffer from the global price fluctuations. Moreover, only negligible trade in minerals happens between African countries. I hope this forum will provide a platform to reflect on various ways to change that situation, and support the growing investments into mineral smelting and refining in our region.

11. There is still big productivity inefficiencies that waste revenue potential. Estimates show that over 60% of global minerals are in Africa. Yet revenues are still below 20%, and exploration investments under 15% annually. This situation needs to change.
12. In Rwanda, we have reviewed and streamlined the legal and regulatory framework to make Mining sector competitive, and attractive. We are consolidating high potential sights previously fragmented, to create large scale concession areas for big capital. The skill sets of our Labour market is also increasingly competitive, thanks to the University of Rwanda's School of Geology and Mining, as well as Technical Schools.
13. At the same time, the Government has continued exploration and development of geological and mineral information. This is captured on an online platform, accessible for free. All these efforts are to foster a more modern and professional mining sector. But to complete the process, we need private capital to invest, and that is where everyone in this room comes in, to play a role.

Distinguished guests,

14. As I conclude, over these two days, I hope mining companies, investors, financiers and government ministries and agencies can develop partnerships and work towards contributing to the rapid growth of the mining industry in the region and Africa as a whole.
15. I hereby declare the East and Central Africa Mining Forum officially open and wish you productive deliberations.

I thank you for your kind attention.