

## **New EU rules on conflict minerals will help local communities**

Written by Iuliu Winkler on 19 May 2015 in Opinion  
Opinion

New legislation will help end the minerals trade being used to fund armed conflicts, while also helping local communities, explains Iuliu Winkler.



Profits made from the trade of minerals are being used to fund armed conflicts and this must be stopped. In an effort to put an end to this while promoting responsible sourcing from conflict-affected areas, parliament has drafted a report on setting up an EU system for supply chain due diligence self-certification of responsible importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten (3TG) originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

The compromise achieved in parliament's international trade committee is very important, providing an efficient and workable regulation capable of focusing on two priorities: empowering local communities in conflict-affected areas, and increasing the responsible behaviour of all stakeholders involved in trade.

As rapporteur on this file, I believe the agreement reached by the EPP, ECR and ALDE groups on the conflict minerals regulation fulfils the EU's core objective of breaking the link between conflict financing and minerals extraction. In this way, the deal provides an efficient and workable European mechanism for conflict minerals, in full respect of the EU's principles and values.

---

## RELATED CONTENT

- [Judith Sargentini: EU needs binding conflict minerals rules](#) [1]
  - [Seb Dance: Conflict minerals rules can promote both human rights and trade](#) [2]
  - [Maria Arena: EU blood minerals regulation is a voluntary sham that changes nothing](#) [3]
- 

As I continue work on this file, I have two priorities. First, to help and assist local communities affected by illegal mining and trade activities conducted or supervised by armed groups with the aim of illegally appropriating profits from economic activity.

Second, to increase the responsibility of all stakeholders - beginning with European industry - and promoting a common effort towards transparency and control of the use of 3TG from conflict areas.

The goal of breaking the link between minerals extraction, trade and the financing of armed conflicts can only be achieved through an efficient regulation, based on voluntary self-certification by the companies involved. The only way to create sustainable effects and educate stakeholders is through a responsibility-based voluntary approach.

Such a strategy, while based around the organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD), is designed to take on board several industry-initiated self-certification schemes which have already been implemented. They have already had positive effects, are compliant with OECD guidelines and will be audited and certified by the commission using clear criteria.

All EU smelters and refiners of 3TG will be required to participate in the European due diligence self-certification system. I fully support the strategy adopted by the commission and EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini, which was to craft an integrated EU approach and propose it to parliament.

It is built upon three main pillars. First, the plan suggests implementing trade regulations to set up a supply chain due diligence self-certification system for responsible EU importers of 3TG. This will be accompanied by measures to help EU companies adjust to the self-certification system, with a special focus on SMEs.

Further measures will be deployed through political, diplomatic and development cooperation on the ground in conflict-affected areas, specially designed to support capacity building, better governance and educate all stakeholders involved.

The antagonism between the mandatory and the voluntary approach in the regulation is a false dilemma; the real challenge is that of developing an efficient, workable regulation. While built on a responsibility-based approach, the new rules will consider previous experience and incorporate already functioning self-certification mechanisms by providing a recognition path for pre-established OECD-based schemes.

They will also respect the principles of prudent and proportionate legislating, avoiding unilateral imposition of obligations on EU companies, especially SMEs. Furthermore, they will include a strong

and clear review clause, capable of accommodating any developments in the OECD due diligence framework regarding additional minerals beyond 3TG.

The new regulation also avoids risks linked to trade diversion, disengagement from conflict areas, an unwanted - but de facto - embargo effect, and any surge in smuggling or illegal trade with a negative effect on prices.

## About the author

Iuliu Winkler (EPP, RO) is parliament's rapporteur on setting up a union system for supply chain due diligence self-certification of responsible importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas

## Tags

[Development](#) [4]

[Trade](#) [5]

[Foreign Affairs](#) [6]

## Categories

[Business and industry](#) [7]

[International Relations](#) [8]



## Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)

[MonitoringDods](#)

[ResearchDods](#)

[EventsDods](#)

[Training](#)

**Media & publishing titles**

[Politics HomeThe HouseThe Parliament MagazineHolyrood Total PoliticsPublic Affairs NewsCivil Service World PublicTechnology Training JournalDods Parliamentary CompanionVacher's Quarterly The European Union and Public Affairs Directory](#)

**Dods events**

[Westminster BriefingDigital Health & Care ScotlandMEP AwardsThe Skills SummitScottish Public Service AwardsPublic Sector Procurement SummitPublic Sector ICT SummitCyber Security SummitCyber Security 2017Training Journal Awards](#)

**Partnership events**

[The Health and Care Innovation ExpoCivil Service LiveCivil Service AwardsChief Nursing Officer for](#)

[England's SummitWomen into LeadershipThe Youth Justice ConventionSocitm Spring ConferenceNHSCC Annual Members' EventDods at Party Conference](#)

---

[Privacy PolicyTerms & ConditionsAdvertisingSponsorship Subscriptions](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/new-eu-rules-conflict-minerals-will-hel-local-communities>

#### **Links**

- [1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/eu-needs-binding-conflict-minerals-rules>
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/conflict-minerals-rules-can-promote-both-human-rights-and-trade>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/eu-blood-minerals-regulation-voluntary-sham-c-anges-nothing>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/development>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/trade>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/foreign-affairs>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/business-and-industry>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/international-relations>