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Eurasian Resources Group in Africa

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MEDIA RELEASE

Eurasian Resources Group in Africa (ERG Africa) signs Community Development Plan Agreement at its COMIDE asset in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

COMIDE commits to community initiatives that will deliver sustainable socio-economic benefits to its host communities over the next five years

On 9 August 2023, ERG Africa's COMIDE asset, committed to its Community Development Plan Agreement (*Cahier des Charges*), which outlines sustainable development initiatives benefitting 16 communities.

The signing ceremony, which was held on COMIDE's site in the Lualaba Province, was attended by the Honorable Pierrot Mwimbi, Vice-President of the Lualaba Provincial Assembly; His Excellency Mr Deodat Kapenda Wa Kapenda, Provincial Minister of the Interior (representing His Excellency Mr Jacques Kaumba Mukumbi, Provincial Minister of Mines of the Lualaba Province); Mr Jean-Paul Laku Memba, Administrator of Lubudi Territory; Mr Polydor Lumuna, Representative of the Mwami Munongo Grand Chief of Bayeke Chiefdom; Mr Symphorien Mwilu Mujinga, Administrator of Mutshatsha Territory; Mr Ilunga Ngoie, Lulu Sector Chief; members of the Local Community Development Committee, Community representatives, civil societies; and other dignitaries.

In his address, Acting CEO, Mr Sergei Verbitckii, highlighted ERG Africa's commitment to the sustainable development of its impacted communities, while respecting the natural environment in which it operates. "Currently ERG Africa supports around 100 communities in the DRC. By investing in education, healthcare, infrastructure and projects that stimulate the local business environment, we aim to ensure that our host communities will prosper not only in the short term – but endure beyond our operations," he added.

The *Cahier des Charge* is the culmination of a year of participative dialogues and extensive consultations between the DRC government (through the Provincial Ministry of Mines), community members, COMIDE's community engagement team and external consultants. Together they identified and scoped the projects that will address the most pressing community challenges and stand to make a lasting impact. The projects captured in the finalised plan were

collectively agreed upon to ensure transparency, align expectations and establish collective ownership amongst all stakeholders.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr Deodat Kapenda Wa Kapenda remarked: “Drawing up the specifications [contained in the *Cahier des Charges*] is a process that involves several stakeholders with sometimes diverging and contradictory agendas. But thanks to the commitment of COMIDE on the one hand, and its communities on the other, these stakeholders – assisted by the EMIS consultancy firm and with the support of civil societies – have been able to produce the work for which we are gathered here. Today’s signing illustrates the frank collaboration between COMIDE and its communities.”

The projects outlined in the plan build on previous development activities, the requirements of the 2018 Mining Code, and community priorities.

“Our determination, as well as our commitment to contribute to sustainable development in the daily lives of our communities, is a response to the challenges of poverty, food insecurity and unemployment that prevail in rural areas. Our projects for this first five-year period will focus on agriculture, education, healthcare, access to clean drinking water, and the creation of job opportunities through vocational training”, said Ms Mimi Lukonde, ERG Africa’s Safety, Health and Sustainability Administrator.

The *Cahier des Charges* includes the construction of four new schools with equipped classrooms as well as the addition of equipped classrooms to existing schools in the area.

To create more job opportunities for people from its hosting communities, COMIDE also intends to establish a vocational training centre to equip future skilled workers with the tools to take advantage of diverse employment opportunities within the mining industry, including at COMIDE – once the asset is fully operational.

The community-identified need for sustainable food production and economic development, is addressed through the plan’s agricultural projects. These will focus on maize production and livestock farming. In addition to providing the means to farm higher-quality produce, capacity building programmes aim to increase farmers’ yields and move them from subsistence farming to becoming sustainable small enterprises.

“The specifications [in the *Cahier des Charges*] aim to achieve sustainable development, so that we can be independent even when the company is no longer there. We support the empowerment that is mentioned in the specifications, as it’s a very good deal for us,” remarked community representative, Ms Rose Mbeya.

In addition, four new healthcare centres will serve communities, while the construction of borehole systems will deliver reliable sources of clean water.

Mr Deodat Kapenda Wa Kapenda, congratulated all involved in the creation of the *Cahier de Charges*, and praised the COMIDE team for its concerted efforts to fulfilling its obligations, “I note that, in accordance with article 285 septies of the Mining Code, COMIDE is one of the mining

companies that does not breach the obligations of our legislation with regard to the social responsibility of mining and quarrying companies.”

The signing of the Community Development Plan Agreement only marks the start of COMIDE’s community development journey. Once COMIDE (which is currently in care and maintenance) becomes operational, communities will stand to benefit further through employment opportunities, the 0.3% endowment legislated in the Mining Code and the contribution of social mining royalties towards social development initiatives.

Works to prepare COMIDE for future operations are expected to begin in Q4, 2023.

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About Eurasian Resources Group in Africa:

Eurasian Resources Group (ERG) is a leading diversified natural resources group with integrated mining, processing, energy, logistics, and marketing operations. The Group operates in 16 countries and is a major employer in the industry.

ERG Africa combines the Group’s assets on the African continent and forms a key part of the Group’s long-term international growth strategy.

ERG Africa is a principal producer of cobalt and copper in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and has further assets and development projects in manganese, fluorspar, bauxite, platinum and coal in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mali, Zambia and Mozambique. SABOT, a leading cross-border road haulier in the Southern, Central and East African region, also forms part of its operations.