

## WELCOME REMARKS AND BACKGROUND TO THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICAN WOMEN IN MINING NETWORK, ACCRA, GHANA 7<sup>TH</sup> TO 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2003

The formation of the Associations of Women in Mining in different countries of the Southern African Development Communities came about through a catalytic role which was played by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) through funds which were raised by the SADC Gender Programme from CIDA Canada.

The aim of forming these Associations was to be able to mobilise women from both the formal and informal mining sectors of the mining industry. There was need to get women to participate in decision-making policies and make sure that gender is mainstreamed in the mining industry without discrimination.

### VISION

To see a vibrant and transparent mining sector where gender imbalances do not exist and access and control of resources from the mining industry are equally distributed .

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## MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance and make visible the participation of women in mining through gender mainstreaming, growth, innovation and increased productivity for the economic empowerment of women, poverty reduction and employment creation for all.

## OBJECTIVES

We would like to work together and be able to put the objectives of the Network together as a group.

## PARTICIPATION

Women in mining are participating in the industry as Professionals, Miners, Mine Owners, Lapidary owners, Manufactures and Traders.

They are involved in the exploitation of a number of minerals like Gold, Silver, Diamonds, Rubbies, Emeralds, Aquamarines, Tin, Malachite, Cobalt, Copper, Industrial minerals, Talc, Gypsum, Dimension Stones, Granite, Marble, Limestone etc.

They operate at different levels, others are just beginning and others are in the medium scale.

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### SADC WOMEN IN MINING TRUST (SADCWIMT)

In November, 1997 the SADCWIMT was formed in Harare and the organisation has been represented in many forums at National, Regional and International Levels.

In 1999 in Arusha, Tanzania the organisation was admitted on to the Committee of SADC Ministers of Mines, Minerals and Energy and is on the organigram or structure of the SADC Committee of Mining Ministers.

In November, 1999 at the six African Women Conference in Addis Ababa, during the Beijing Plus 5 (or review), we held the first African Women in Mining Workshop which was supported by the UNDP and UNECA where more than 15 african countries were represented.

In December, 2000 at a Special Meeting of the African Ministers of Mines, Minerals and Energy which was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, the Honourable Ministers resolved and recommended that the SADCWIMT expands

to cover the whole of the African continent in order to mobilise and work with all the other women in this industry.

These resolution were translated both in English and French.

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In 2002 the Network was registered in Zambia after a lot of difficulties especially to get signatures of all the members from different African countries from SADC, ECOWAS, COMESA and other North African countries.

## CASM

In March,2001, the CASM was created and Ms. Namakau Kaingu was elected after presentation of her CV to the governors to be part of the Expert Advisory Group looking at issues of Small Scale Miners, Women and Child labour.

Therefore the African Women in Mining Network members need to seize this opportunity to work out proposals and present them to CASM for support from the projects small grants.

The African Women in Mining Network has gained recognition and it is up to the women themselves in each country to work out programmes to benefit them.

## LAUNCH

Therefore today, we have gathered here to be able to launch and create a permanent structure for the Network and be able to chart the way forward on what we want to do, how

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we want to network and what means to use to be able to access finance for our projects.

## WAYFORWARD

I would like to take this opportunity to urge you all to now take your positions and be able to contribute and chart the way forward for the Network.

On behalf of the Women in Mining I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men who are here and willing to support and assist the women to come up with proposals both at country level and international.

Prof. Stephen Simukanga has been assisting the Women in Mining from its inception in 1997 to date and he is aware of all the constraints which are faced by women in mining at all levels.

## THANK YOU

Our thanks go to the Ashanti Goldfields for have accepted to pay for both food and accommodation for the

participants of this launch and the Worldbank Group for support us through the provision of \$5,000 which has enabled some of us to be at this conference through airtickets provision.

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We also would like to thank the Minerals Commission and Geoman Consultancy for their assistance to our group and hope that they will continue to assist us.

May the Lord be with you all.