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Press Release

Unions and employers call for a strong social dialogue and cohesive policies in the forthcoming Critical Raw Materials Act

With the European Commission set to present a Critical Raw Materials (CRM) Act in March 2023, the social partners of the extractive industries have endorsed a joint statement. They welcome the Commission's initiative to address the pressing issue of securing the necessary supply of raw materials for essential value chains and call for a cohesive policy framework and strong social dialogue.

Minerals and metals are crucial for the realisation of the EU's most urgent and ambitious goals, from the green and digital transition to the EU's renovation wave. However, Europe is currently highly dependent on other countries for strategic and essential raw materials. This calls into question Europe's autonomy, but also its ability to deliver on its promises.

The declaration highlights that social dialogue initiatives can contribute to securing responsible and sustainable raw materials from Europe and elsewhere and that they have a role to play in the just transition to a decarbonised economy. The presence of strong and independent social partners and collective bargaining will ensure sustainable extractive industries with good working conditions, a safer and healthier environment, job satisfaction, and decent wages.

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In their declaration, the social partners call for:

- Widening the scope from critical to strategic and essential raw materials and renaming to “EU Raw Materials Act” (EU RMA) to reflect the wider scope;
- Ensuring decent work and good working conditions;
- Favouring domestic supply through European deposits and circularity;
- A clear definition of sustainable and responsible raw materials, including a social pillar and a social partner perspective;
- Application of high internally applied and recognised environmental standards for domestic extraction;
- Improvement of the communication and effective dialogue around extractive industries activities in order to avoid negative effects on public opinion by all relevant stakeholders;
- Monitoring and data exchange through an EU Raw Materials Agency/Governance;
- Streamlining and speeding up permitting procedures by strengthening and improving administrative capacity, for example, through the digitalisation of permitting, increased staffing or one-stop-shops, and not by circumventing environmental and social standards or safeguards.

Note: The Social Partners of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Extractive Industry (SSDCEI) are:

- **APEP** – European Potash Producers Association
- **EURACOAL** – European Association for Coal and Lignite
- **Euromines** – European Metals and Minerals Mining Industry Association
- **IMA-Europe** – Industrial Minerals Association Europe
- **IndustriAll European Trade Union**
- **UEPG** – Aggrates Europe