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Participants in the Voluntary Principles Initiative Gather for Discussions on Implementation and Outreach and Welcome Four New Participants and One New Observer

21 April 2016 (Bogotá, Colombia): Participants in the Initiative of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (the “Voluntary Principles Initiative”) convened for an Annual Plenary Meeting in Bogotá, Colombia on 20-21 April 2016. The Voluntary Principles Initiative is a multi-stakeholder initiative involving oil, gas, and mining companies, governments, and non-governmental organizations that is focused on security and human rights.

The Annual Plenary Meeting was co-hosted by the Government of the United States, which is the outgoing chair of the Initiative, and the Government of Colombia. This was the first Annual Plenary Meeting hosted in Latin America and in a country where many international extractive sector companies are working to implement the Voluntary Principles. This setting offered a unique opportunity to focus on challenges and opportunities related to Voluntary Principles implementation, as well as to conduct outreach within the broader Latin America and Caribbean region. Consistent with this regional focus, participants were very pleased to acknowledge a formal statement by the Government of Argentina announcing its intent to join the Initiative.

At the Annual Plenary Meeting, participants specifically discussed:

- The efforts of participants to engage governments around the world in discussions regarding the benefits of Voluntary Principles participation and implementation, including the Governments of Angola, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Nigeria, and Indonesia, all of which attended the meetings as guests of the Plenary;
- Participant initiatives to implement the Voluntary Principles in countries around the world, with presentations on ongoing activities in Colombia, Ghana, Peru, and other countries;
- The strengthening of the role of civil society within the Voluntary Principles Initiative;
- Revisions to the guidelines for participants’ annual reports to the Initiative;
- Revisions to the frameworks that guide applications to join the Initiative by prospective participants;
- Model clauses for agreements with security providers; and

- The alignment of the Voluntary Principles and the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

During the two days of meeting, participants were also honored to hear remarks from:

- Philip Laidlaw, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Colombia;
- Diana Mendieta Duran, Office of the Presidential Advisor for Human Rights, Government of Colombia;
- Scott Busby, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State;
- Alexandra Guaqueta, Director for Post-Conflict at Ministry for Post-Conflict, Human Rights, and Security, Government of Colombia;
- Carmen Sylvain, Canadian Ambassador to Colombia; and
- Marcelo Juan Alberto Stubrin, Argentine Ambassador to Colombia.

The Plenary Meeting offered participants the opportunity to welcome five entities that had joined the Voluntary Principles Initiative since the 2015 Annual Plenary Meeting:

- Alphamin Bisie Mining SA, a mining company operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- Goldcorp, a Canadian mining company with operations throughout Latin America;
- Seven Energy, a Nigerian oil and gas company;
- Woodside Energy, an Australian oil and gas company; and
- International Code of Conduct Association for Private Security Contractors (admitted as an Observer).

Finally, participants welcomed the Government of Canada as the new Government Chair for the Voluntary Principles Initiative. Canada will serve as the Government Chair until the 2017 Annual Plenary Meeting. Participants offered their thanks to the Government of the United States for its service as Government Chair from March 2015 to April 2016.

Background on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

Participants in the Voluntary Principles Initiative include representatives from three pillars: governments, companies, and NGOs. There are currently thirty participant companies, nine participant governments, and ten participant NGOs.

The Voluntary Principles provide guidance to extractive companies on ensuring the safety of their personnel and the security of their installations while also respecting human rights. Implementation of the Voluntary Principles entails steps to:

- Conduct comprehensive assessments of the human rights risks associated with security, with a particular focus on complicity.
- Institute proactive human rights screenings of and trainings for public and private security forces.
- Ensure that the use of force is proportional and lawful.

- Develop systems for reporting and investigating allegations of human rights abuses.

The Voluntary Principles were established in 2000 in an initiative launched by the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the U.S. Department of State. Since their inception, the Voluntary Principles have been used by extractive companies to strengthen their capacity to address complex security and human rights issues in their operations around the world. By ensuring that human rights are upheld, the Voluntary Principles aim to mitigate potential tensions between extractive companies and the communities within which they work.

The Corporate Social Responsibility practice of Foley Hoag LLP serves as the Secretariat for the Voluntary Principles. For questions on how to participate, contact the Secretariat at VoluntaryPrinciples@foleyhoag.com.

For more information about the Voluntary Principles, visit www.voluntaryprinciples.org.

Participants in the Voluntary Principles Initiative include:

Governments:

Australia
Canada
Colombia
Ghana
The Netherlands
Norway
Switzerland
United Kingdom
United States

Companies:

Alphamin Bisie Mining SA
Anglo American
AngloGold Ashanti
Barrick Gold Corporation
BHP Billiton
BP
Chevron
ConocoPhillips
ExxonMobil
Freeport-McMoRan
Glencore
Goldcorp
Hess Corporation
Marathon Oil
Newcrest Mining Limited
Newmont Mining Corporation
Norsk Hydro

Occidental Petroleum Corporation
Pacific Exploration & Production
PanAust
Premier Oil
Repsol
Rio Tinto
Seven Energy
Shell
Sherritt International
Statoil
Total
Tullow Oil
Woodside Energy

NGOs:

Fund for Peace
Human Rights Watch
International Alert
LITE-Africa
New Nigeria Foundation
Pact
Partners for Democratic Change International
Partnership Africa Canada
Pax
Search for Common Ground

Observers:

Colombian Mining and Energy Committee on Security and Human Rights (CME)
DCAF (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces)
International Code of Conduct Association for Private Security Contractors
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
International Council on Mining & Metals (ICMM)
International Finance Corporation (IFC)
IPIECA
Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB)