

Towards a 2030 vision of sustainable mining in Peru

“The mining sector needs a vision, one that is challenging but meets the aspirations of all its stakeholders”

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Every new government, like the one that got elected in Peru in June this year, has a window of opportunity to make a paradigm change, if required. I think, at this time, the mining sector does need such a change to fulfil the vision that mining and sustainable development can go hand-in-hand.

Today, we have a new government whose primary focus is that mining companies must be environmentally and socially responsible, promoting ‘shared value’ as the driving concept. It is in order to have such wish-lists, but to fulfil them it is necessary to have a vision and start working towards it.

This vision needs to be a challenging one and one that is shared by a significant group of stakeholders, not only by mining companies themselves. For this reason, the vision must be able to bridge our differences and encourage the beginning of dialogue between all stakeholders. Only through an open and honest dialogue can we start addressing the main concerns of communities and the wider public about the impact of mining (canon tax, water, environmental liabilities, informal and illegal mining, etc.).

I believe all stakeholders should commit towards a National Mining Agreement that not only promotes dialogue in Lima, but also in the main mining regions of Peru, where positions are often further apart than in the capital. The dialogue roundtable convened for the Quellaveco mining project in southern Peru is a good example of stakeholders working through their differences and reaching durable and sustainable agreements.

These types of initiatives are not new. Australia, Chile and Colombia have achieved a vision for sustainable mining. In Chile, this ‘vision’ was not only developed and defined, but a permanent dialogue was established between all the main stakeholders – the industry, communities, trade unions and government – to discuss and find compromises on the main issues surrounding mining.

For these reasons, I call upon all stakeholders in Peru to establish a dialogue roundtable where we can address the challenges facing the sector and arrive at a joint vision for the industry. In the communities where mining operates, the industry can be and should be the main driver of sustainable development.