

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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AU COMMISSIONER AND CEN-SAD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY MEET TO FAST-TRACK RATIFICATION OF THE AMDC STATUTE AND STRENGTHEN REGIONAL MINERALS COOPERATION



N'DJAMENA, REPUBLIC OF CHAD (January 21, 2026) – On the sidelines of the International Mining, Quarries and Hydrocarbons Conference & Exhibition (SEMICA Tchad), **H.E. Ms. Francisca Tatchouop Belobe**, the African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals (ETTIM), held a high-level bilateral meeting with **H.E. Amb. Ado Elhadji Abdiu**, Executive Secretary of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD).

The discussions centered on leveraging the current political momentum to close the 11-country ratification gap required for the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) Statute to enter into force. Both leaders emphasized that the AMDC is a critical pillar for Africa's economic sovereignty, designed to ensure that the continent's vast mineral wealth—particularly critical minerals, essential for the global energy transition—translates into sustainable development for its people.

Closing the Ratification Gap: Commissioner Belobe underscored that while the AMDC is already operational, its full legal authority and capacity to serve Member States depend on the formal ratification of its establishing instrument. *"Africa can no longer afford to lose*

potential wealth due to inadequate management instruments and fragmented strategies," stated Commissioner Belobe. "The AMDC provides the technical framework to harmonize policies, but we need the final 11 ratifications to unlock its full potential. Our partnership with CEN-SAD is vital to mobilizing political will across the Sahel-Saharan region."

A Strategic Regional Approach: The meeting outlined a new organizational strategy for the AMDC, which envisions a centralized headquarters in Conakry, Guinea supported by regional offices. This "regional approach" aims to bring the Centre's expertise closer to Member States, addressing specific local needs and enhancing the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision (AMV).

Key outcomes and action items from the meeting include establishing a strategic roadmap focused on strengthening Africa's mineral sector through joint advocacy for the ratification of the AMDC Statute and significant capacity building to expand the Centre's technical expertise. To ensure long-term sustainability, the partnership will prioritize self-financing models, such as geological monitoring services, to reduce reliance on external donors. Furthermore, a coordinated critical minerals strategy will be implemented to safeguard African interests and resources amidst intensifying global industrial competition.

About African Minerals Development Centre

The main objectives of the Centre is to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the [Africa Mining Vision](#) and its Action plan to enable the minerals resource sector play its role in the social and economic transformation, inclusive growth and sustainable development of African economies, in conjunction with Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the private sector, civil society organizations including women and youth organizations, collaborating institutions and other key stakeholders. The Statute establishing the [African Minerals Development Centre](#) (AMDC) was adopted by the Twenty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly in January 2016 ([Assembly/AU/Dec.589\(XXVI\)](#)). As of January 2025, four Member States (Guinea, Mali, Zambia and Nigeria), had ratified the Statute and eight member states have signed, include Chad, Comoros, Ghana, Mauritania, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Togo. The Assembly further urged the AU Member States to expedite the ratifications of its Statute. A minimum of fifteen (15) ratifications are required for entry into force of the Statute and full operationalization of the Centre.

About Community of Sahel-Saharan States

Established on February 4, 1998, in Tripoli, Libya, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) is a Regional Economic Community dedicated to fostering political and social integration among its 25 member states across the Sahara and Sahel. Through strategic cooperation with regional and international organizations, CEN-SAD prioritizes economic unity, the free movement of people and goods, and sustainable development. Beyond economic goals, the organization actively enhances educational, cultural, and scientific collaboration to strengthen regional bonds and collective progress.

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