



Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations
New York

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR GERT ROSENTHAL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
OPEN DEBATE ON “CONFLICT PREVENTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES”
19 JUNE 2013**

Mr. President,

We thank you for convening this open debate. We appreciate the presence of the Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson and the important contributions made by Caroline Anstey, Rebeca Grynspan and Kofi Annan. We would also like to thank you for the Concept Note circulated for this debate.

I will limit my comments to five points:

First: Certainly there are situations, in particular in the African continent, where the struggle over the control of natural resources can lead to conflict, even conflicts deep enough to constitute threats to international peace and security. However, there are other situations where the struggle over natural resources can create tensions that do not rise to the level of threatening international peace and security. That is to say, the jurisdiction of the Security Council in relation to this area is very limited.

Second: That said, we recognize that the exploitation of natural resources is a double-edged sword. It generates potential benefits to the host countries, but sometimes it becomes a source of adverse phenomena, including income concentration, high levels of corruption, displacement, environmental degradation, and grave violations of human rights. In extreme cases, their exploitation has been linked to internal conflicts or even regional conflicts associated with the control of those natural resources or their illegal trafficking. Diamonds and river-bed gold mining are cases in point.

Third: The Security Council must examine the potential link between the management of natural resources and the prevention of conflicts on a case- by- case basis, and only to the extent that may be relevant to the particular context. In many situations, the Security Council has adopted specific mechanisms, such as those envisaged by the Sanctions committees and their expert groups in addition to the mandates of peacekeeping operations. Currently, there are at least two countries that have export

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bans on a natural resource: Côte d'Ivoire and Somalia. In Somalia's case, the Monitoring Group states that the illegal exploitation of vegetable carbon continues to be about 10% of Al-Shabaab's financial backing, despite there being a prohibition on its exportation. This debate must strengthen our commitment so that sanctions that are currently imposed are fully implemented.

Fourth: the strategic nature of natural resources requires that cooperation frameworks need to be more effective and firm. We recognize current initiatives such as the Kimberley Certification Process System, the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), and the International Tropical Timber Initiative. We value tripartite initiatives between government, private sector and civil society that promote transparency and the responsible management of the extractive sector.

Finally: while discussing the role of natural resources, there is a wider context to consider and it is the collective legacy that we are leaving in the hands of the coming generations. There are some countries that are not on the agenda of the Security Council, but whose carbon emissions are causing the average global temperature to rise about 4 degrees and this can cause a calamity of global dimensions. The United Nations is currently reviewing its development agenda with the aim of agreeing on a set of global goals post 2015. Challenges such as climate change and water scarcity must be carefully considered so that these issues are not drivers of conflict for future generations.

Thank you.