

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001270/25  
to the Commission  
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D), Hilde Vautmans (Renew)  
(26 March 2025)**

*Subject:* European funds supporting illicit exploitation or trading of natural resources by Rwanda

During its meeting on 19 March 2025, Parliament's Committee on Internal Trade held an exchange of views with representatives of the Commission on the EU-Rwanda memorandum of understanding on sustainable raw materials value chains. During that discussion, Commission representatives stated that EU financing for mining projects in Rwanda is strictly limited to mines for non-conflict minerals. Since 2023, the EU has been co-financing a project with an estimated budget of EUR 4.15 million on the sustainable development of the Rwandese mining sector with the Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB). Given the fact that, in accordance with Council Implementing Regulation 2025/509, the EU has imposed sanctions on the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the RMB for his role in exploiting the armed conflict and instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including through the illicit exploitation or trading of natural resources, we would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Is it correct that the EU is funding mining activity with the RMB in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development?
2. How does the Commission guarantee that funds are not being misused by the RMB for trafficking minerals to Rwanda from DRC mines exploited by M23 rebels?
3. Will the Commission suspend funding for the project with the RMB now that the EU has imposed sanctions on the CEO of the aforementioned company?

Submitted: 26.3.2025

**Answer given by Mr Sikela on behalf of the European Commission  
(15 July 2025)**

A project funded by the EU and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is under implementation.

It aims to promote modernisation of the mining sector in Rwanda and specifically supports technical and vocational education training, skills training, improvement of safe working conditions based on international standards, and digitalisation of mining sector services.

The project was approved under the multiannual indicative programme for Rwanda, for 2021-2023. Project activities do not involve direct mining investments, nor the extraction, transformation or processing of minerals.

The project is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with the Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB) and the Integrated Polytechnic Regional College in Kigali, as the two main local partners.

The project is co-financed with BMZ and implemented by GIZ, with whom the Commission has signed a Delegation Agreement. The EU funds under this project are administered directly by GIZ, applying standard regulations in terms of justification of expenses. GIZ is a pillar assessed Member State organisation and project implementation is subject to GIZ contractual rules and internal controls

This means that it is GIZ and not the Commission, who has signed a contract with RMB according to their own pillar-assessed rules. Oversight is also ensured through the Project Steering Committee including the EU Delegation, which provides strategic guidance and oversight.

On 17 March 2025, the EU adopted restrictive measures against, among others, sanctions on the current RMB's chief executive officer <sup>(1)</sup>. RMB as an institution has not been sanctioned.

The Commission has requested that GIZ as the implementing partner put in place all possible measures to ensure that the RMB's chief executive officer does not benefit directly or indirectly, from any support provided to the RMB as an institution.

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<sup>(1)</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/03/17/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-eu-lists-further-nine-individuals-and-one-entity/>.