

EN

P-004850/2025

Answer given by Mr Síkela
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.3.2026)

The EU-Rwanda Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Sustainable Raw Materials Value Chains¹ is a non-binding framework for dialogue and cooperation to support responsible value chains, with a focus on transparency, traceability and the fight against illegal trafficking. Implementation of the MoU has not started and no roadmap has been developed.

On 24 February 2025 the High Representative/Vice-President announced the decision of the Foreign Affairs Council to put the MoU under review. The Commission assessed the MoU and found its objectives still relevant, in particular as regards the need to promote transparency, traceability and responsible sourcing. The Commission found that the MoU should only be implemented once there is tangible progress on transparency and traceability. The EU fully applies the Conflict Minerals Regulation² that lays down supply chain due diligence obligations for EU importers of Tin, Tantalum, Tungsten and Gold (3TG). Imposing supply chain due diligence obligations on companies helps ensure that EU imports from the region do not contribute to conflict and human rights abuses, while also promoting sustainable development and preventing business disengagement from the area.

The MoU is compatible with the provisions of the Regulation, which sets binding due diligence obligations for EU importers, including imports that would originate from Rwanda. The MoU does not impact those obligations. At the same time, MoUs such as those with Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo provide a framework for cooperation to improve upstream conditions, including governance issues.

The Commission is working to improve upstream conditions, including through EU funding for the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals³. Responsible sourcing and alignment with environmental, social and governance standards are central to the MoUs. The Commission is also providing support to the Regional Certification Mechanism of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

Increasing the incentives for peace will be crucial for overcoming the current zero-sum logic around the region's mineral resources in line with the EU strategy for the region and recent Washington Accords. Accordingly, EU engagement in the mineral sector should be strengthened, not limited.

The Foreign Affairs Council has not yet taken a decision on the end of the MoU review.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/58035>.

² Regulation (EU) 2017/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 laying down supply chain due diligence obligations for Union importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas, OJ L 130, 19.5.2017, pp. 1–20 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/821/oj/eng>.

³ <https://europeanpartnership-responsibleminerals.eu/>.