



## PRESS RELEASE

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### CHANNEL RESEARCH STRENGTHENS AUDIT TEAM FOR iTSCi DUE DILIGENCE PROGRAMME

Now benefiting from over a years' experience as independent evaluator and auditor to the iTSCi programme, the Brussels-based consultancy Channel Research has boosted its team of consultants working on this important project.

Channel Research, alongside other experts, contributed to the development and testing of different auditing and governance assessment tools relating to conflict minerals due diligence and management since early 2011. Hannah Koep, Channel Research's new Team Leader says: "With more companies joining the iTSCi programme and a potential expansion into more countries in the region, it is important that we are now taking on board lessons-learnt from the trial audits carried out in late 2011 and improving the reporting process."

The Channel Research team is carrying out the three types of independent evaluations, which are integral to the iTSCi Programme:

- **Company pre-audits** are preliminary documentary audits when companies apply to join the programme, evaluating the company history, ownership, management policies and procedures and possible links to conflict or illegal minerals trade in the region;
- **Company field audits** are field-based audits of member companies as a regular occurrence to track companies' performance against international due diligence standards, in particular the OECD and UN guidance;
- **Governance Assessments** involve field visits to examine and report on key challenges relating to the governance of regional mineral sectors and the implementation of the iTSCi programme.

Recommendations and actions for progressive improvement of due diligence procedure are provided after each evaluation by the Channel Research team, which includes experts with significant experience in public and corporate governance, the mining sector and the Great Lakes region:

**Hannah Koep, Project leader, Channel Research France:** Hannah joined Channel Research in April 2012 and manages the company's involvement in the iTSCi scheme. She has more than seven years experience in analysis and consulting, having previously worked for the International Crisis Group in Senegal and the business risk consultancy Control Risks in London. Hannah is based in Paris but travels to the field regularly.

**Cecile Collin, Consultant:** Cecile has led the project from Channel Research's side over the past year and is now working on iTSCi field missions as an external consultant. Cecile has more than seven years experience working on public and private sector evaluations and consulting projects around the world. She has in-depth knowledge of the 3Ts mining sector, and related conflict and governance issues in the Great Lakes region.

**Nynke Douma, Consultant:** Nynke is an independent consultant who regularly works for Channel Research on research and evaluation assignments. For the past ten years she works extensively in the Great Lakes region, particularly in DR Congo, on a wide range of consultancy assignments. Her expertise lies in conflict prevention, development, land-conflicts, mining, sexual and gender-based violence, organisational capacity building and media and awareness raising. Her first field mission for iTSCi was to Maniema in June 2012.

**Justine Elakano, Channel Research Tanganyika:** Justine lives in Burundi, and works at Channel Research's Bujumbura office. Justine has many years of experience working in the DRC and Great Lakes region on a range of projects and has deployed on a number of iTSCi missions already, most recently to Maniema.

**Andre Kahlmeyer, Channel Research Belgium:** Andre is Channel Research's Area Manager for projects related to peace-building, fragility and conflict. He has worked for NATO, GIZ and the EU before joining Channel in July 2011. Andre has extensive experience in the evaluation of projects and has been involved in the iTSCi scheme since 2011, with field missions to Rwanda and Katanga.

**Judith Kunert, Channel Research Tanganyika:** Judith also works in Channel Research's Bujumbura office and has substantial experience working on private and public sector projects in the Great Lakes region, particularly in Katanga province. She has a background in peace and conflict studies, transitional justice, humanitarian aid, DDR and gender.

**Benjamin Nenot, Channel Research France:** Benjamin joined Channel Research in May 2012 and works with Hannah in Paris. He is particularly involved in the preliminary company audits but is scheduled to take part in field missions and audits.

**-ENDS-**

**About iTSCi:** The iTSCi Programme provides a robust, verifiable system to address 'conflict minerals' concerns in the tin, tantalum and tungsten '3T' minerals industry, from mine to smelter (the 'upstream supply chain'), which incorporates actions recommended by the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas, taking into account the recommendations of the UN Panel of Experts on the DRC, as well as the procedures developed by the ICGLR. It provides the 'downstream' supply chain with the required assurances that only 'conflict free' minerals are entering the supply chain, a key element in the Conflict Free Smelter audit programme that addresses the requirements of US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registered companies to conform to the due diligence requirements of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.



**About ITRI:** ITRI is the world's foremost authority on tin with over 75 years' experience in tin related technologies. It is a membership based organisation representing major tin producers and smelters and is the premier source of tin related information. ITRI has specialist knowledge of tin use in all the major sectors as well as groups responsible for technology, statistical and market information, regulatory affairs and sustainability. It provides links to the main tin consuming sectors through a substantial network of industry contacts. The organisation hosts seminars, conferences and industry-specific group meetings. It also provides marketing and technical support to its members and the tin industry in general. ITRI is the tin representative to the iTSCi programme Steering Committee and Secretariat of the programme. Further information can be obtained from ITRI <http://www.itri.co.uk>



**About Channel Research:** Channel Research is a consultancy operating in fast changing, difficult environments. Based on its experience in unstable contexts and knowledge of the latest assessment methodologies, it assists public and private sector clients to implement tailored monitoring and evaluation systems, and to mitigate risks related to their activities. Channel is headquartered in Brussels with an office in Burundi and Paris and has worldwide activities. Our core team of professionals in Brussels, Paris and Burundi is complemented by a base of trusted associates and consultants in all parts of the world. [www.channelresearch.com/](http://www.channelresearch.com/)



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