



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

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Mozambique hosts Australian mining alumni forum

Mozambique's Tete province will this week play host to an Australian mining alumni forum involving 80 participants from 29 African countries – including a minister, members of parliament and senior government officials working in the mining sector.

The forum, sponsored by the Australian Government, is for alumni of the 'Mining for Development' study tour program. Since 2011, more than 300 officials from 28 African countries have participated in mining study tours to Australia, including 67 officials from Mozambique. The study tours have explored issues such as environmental management, social and community aspects of resource development, equitable benefit sharing and royalty regimes, and use of mining revenue for economic diversification.

The forum will be officially opened by Mozambique's Minister of Mineral Resources, Esperança Bias, together with Australian High Commissioner to Mozambique, Ann Harrap.

"The forum provides an opportunity for the alumni to follow up on what they have learnt on study tours, exchange ideas with fellow participants and provide valuable feedback on Australia's Mining for Development initiative in Africa", Ms Harrap said.

"As part of the forum, participants will have the opportunity to visit mine sites in Tete and to focus on technical issues such as skills development, local procurement and regional planning. Networking and exploring ways to strengthen alumni interaction and learning are also important aspects of the forum", Ms Harrap added.

Mozambique is a key partner for Australia's mining for development program in Africa. Australia has been supporting Mozambique's efforts to improve legislation and regulation, strengthen regional planning and build legal and negotiations skills for the resources sector. Nearly 30 per cent of the Australian scholarships awarded to Mozambicans in 2011-2013 were in natural resources management.

Mining has been a driving force for Australia's industrial, economic and social development. The mining sector accounts for approximately eight per cent of the Australian economy, 50 per cent of Australia's exports and the employment of approximately 320,000 Australians. Similarly, Mozambique is rich in mineral reserves and energy deposits.

"This translates to a unique opportunity for transformation and sustained growth - well managed exploitation of natural resources could be one of the most important sources of financing for economic and social development available to resource-rich countries in Africa", Ms Harrap said.

"Through our Mining for Development program, the Australian Government aims to support the efforts of partner governments in Africa to build the knowledge, skills and systems to manage their resource wealth in ways that promote equitable and sustainable economic development", she said.

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