
Zimbabwe lifts ban on chrome ore and chrome fines exports

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Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe said that government has lifted the ban on chrome ore and chrome fines exports and may be the lifting of the ban will run for one and a half years before a further review. The move is intended to plug leakages, encourage value addition and to help miners re equip through chrome pledges.

MMCZ said that "The Minerals Marketing Corporation wishes to advise that the ban on export of chrome ore and chrome fines has been lifted for an 18 months window with effect from of November 1st 2009."

A senior official with the Ministry of Mines & Mining Development said that the government had lifted the ban to enable local miners to mechanize their operations. He added that government realized that most of its fledgling mining operations did not have resources to afford key but expensive machinery.

The source said that it was government understanding that miners could pledge their chrome for mining machinery, which is expensive to acquire. High grade chrome, which is found mostly in the Midlands province along the Great Dyke, is also found in Shurugwi, Mutorashanga, Lalapanzi and Guinea Fowl.

The source added that "Most of our people do not have resources and so lifting the ban will empower them as they would be able to marshal resources. They will be able to get external loans to buy machines."

The ban was temporarily lifted last year, but was restored as mining firms and individuals started abusing the waiver. Local miners would accrue debts that they could not settle creating problems for Government as the guarantor of some of the deals.

Mr Obert Mpofu mines and mining development minister said that the ban was effected as a loss control measure and to encourage value addition to the mineral. He added that "We have already spoken to some producers and exporters on the issue. The country is losing a lot of revenue through the unregulated sale of such high value minerals resources as chrome and chromite products, which would generate huge revenues if sold through the right channels."

Zimbabwe still has abundant buyers for its chrome products, mainly in South Africa, China and Europe who are willing to buy stockpiles of the mineral.

(Sourced from <http://allafrica.com>)

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