



26.11.2008

For immediate release

## **Commissioner Verheugen presents the Raw Materials Initiative at the European Minerals Forum 2008**

### **The minerals sector welcomes the initiative and outlines plans for the European Minerals Day 2009**

Brussels, 26 November 2008 – Today at the European Minerals Forum, Vice-President Verheugen, Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry presented the Executive's integrated strategy that aims to secure and improve access to raw materials for EU industry. IMA-Europe, the European Industrial Minerals Association, UEPG, the European Aggregates Association, CEMBUREAU, the European Cement Association, and EuroGeoSurveys welcome the move agreeing that the development of knowledge on geological resources and fair access are crucial for the sustainable development of the industry.

Minerals play an essential role in our lives, with 70% of EU manufacturing production depending on mined substances, as demonstrated by some key examples: Up to fifty percent of paint and paper are made up of minerals such as calcium carbonates, silica, plastic clay, talc, bentonite and mica; Ceramics and glass are 100 percent minerals (feldspar, wollastonite, clay, kaolin, talc, silica borate and dolomite); a family house contains up to 150 tonnes, and a car 150 kilograms, of minerals.

However, most people are unaware of how important raw materials are to the European economy. For this reason, the European industrial minerals, aggregates and cement sector – represented by IMA-Europe, UEPG, CEMBUREAU - and EuroGeoSurveys, have set up an initiative of their own: the European Minerals Day.

From 15-17 May 2009, various activities will be held across Europe to show case the minerals industries to the public. Quarry open days, guided plant and geological tours as well as presentations on nature protection projects are just some of the scheduled events. A special focus will be given to the protection of biodiversity whereby visitors can discover the unique biodiversity found in rehabilitated quarry and mine sites, which provide habitats for rare plant and animal species. The central launching event will be held on 14 May 2009 in the Czech Republic, coinciding with the country's Presidency of the European Union.

“The 2009 European Minerals Day is an excellent way to inform, educate and enthuse European citizens about the importance of the minerals sector in providing raw materials that are essential for so many everyday products. The sector is vital for Europe's competitiveness and its success is built on sound principles of sustainability and innovation,” said Commissioner Verheugen.

For Mr Salmons, IMA-Europe President, “The significance of raw materials to every industry and every aspect of life cannot be overstated. The construction, chemicals, automotive, aerospace and machinery sectors, which provide a total added value of € 1 324 billion and 30 million jobs all depend on access to raw materials. European Minerals Day 2009 will highlight their importance to students, government officials and the media across Europe.”

**ENDS**

## The European Minerals Day 2009 Partners:

### About IMA Europe

The European Industrial Minerals Association, IMA-Europe aisbl, was founded in 1993 to provide sector-based representation for industrial minerals and to promote the interests of its members: CCA-Europe (Calcium carbonates), EBA (borates), EuLA (limestone), ESMA (sepiolite, vermiculite & wollastonite), EUBA (bentonite), EUROFEL (feldspar), EUROGYSPUM (gypsum), EUROSIL (silica sand), EUROTALC (talc), IDPA (diatomite), KPC-Europe (kaolin & plastic clays). Under its umbrella, IMA-Europe represents about 500 quarries and 800 plants. IMA-Europe covers all issues related to industrial minerals except commercial ones. Health and safety at the workplace, environmental protection and product safety are some of IMA's top priority issues. IMA-Europe ensures that the industrial minerals industry at large benefits from the sharing of non-sensitive information and plays a supporting role in the promotion of best practices. The European Minerals Day was launched in 2006 at the initiative of IMA-Europe, as a multi-sectoral pan-European awareness raising event. For more information on IMA Europe, please consult: <http://www.ima-europe.eu>  
For more information on EU Minerals Day, please consult: <http://www.mineralsday.eu/>

### About UEPG

UEPG stands for "Union Européenne des Producteurs de Granulats" (European Aggregates Association). Since 1987, UEPG has promoted the interests of the European aggregates industry by representing its National Member Associations on economic, technical, environmental and health & safety policy. UEPG pro-actively identifies EU initiatives and policies that are likely to impact on European aggregates producers. It provides Members with brief and concise information through regular publications and ad-hoc updates, and ensures UEPG positions are considered by EU decision-makers. UEPG positively promotes the profile of the European aggregates industry and is the voice of 21 national associations, with 3.8 billion tons of aggregates produced yearly, more than 30.000 operating sites involving more than 350.000 employees. For more information on UEPG, please consult <http://www.uepg.eu>

### About CEMBUREAU

CEMBUREAU, the European Cement Association, based in Brussels, is the representative organisation of the cement industry in Europe. Today CEMBUREAU includes 28 Members (27 Full Members and 1 Associate Member). Currently, its Full Members are the national cement industry associations and cement companies of the European Union (with the exception of Cyprus, Malta and Slovakia) plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. Croatia is an Associate Member of CEMBUREAU.

- In 2007, the production of cement in the CEMBUREAU 27 Member Countries amounted to 323 Mio t, representing about 11.6% of total world cement production (2.77 billion tons).
- CEMBUREAU Members directly employ approximately 67 600 people.

For more information on CEMBUREAU, please consult: <http://www.cembureau.eu>

### About EuroGeoSurveys

EuroGeoSurveys, the Association of the European Geological Surveys is a legally registered non-profit association. Its Members are 33 national Geological Surveys. It represents the largest collective EU public geological and geology related data and expertise sources and research capacity, covering all the numerous domains of application of public geology, including in the mineral resources sector. EU Geological Surveys also have a long track record of cooperation with developing countries, including in the mineral resources domain, related to data acquisition/ processing/ dissemination; capacity building and institutional strengthening. EuroGeoSurveys provides the contribution of public geology to the EU policy making and implementation process in a number of sustainable development and competitiveness related EU policy sectors (health, development, civil protection, CO2 storage, soils, water, raw materials supply, research, INSPIRE, GMES ...). For more information on EuroGeoSurveys, please consult [www.eurogeosurveys.org](http://www.eurogeosurveys.org).

**Requests from the media should be directed to:**

**Tom O'Connell of OCPR - Mobile: +32 475 69 15 60 - Email: [oc.pr.eu@gmail.com](mailto:oc.pr.eu@gmail.com)**