

Public Statement

Reconsideration of Conflict Minerals Rule Implementation

Acting Chairman Michael S. Piwowar

Jan. 31, 2017

Today, I directed the staff to reconsider whether the 2014 guidance on the conflict minerals rule is still appropriate and whether any additional relief is appropriate.

Since May 2014, the Commission has partially stayed compliance with the rule, after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit found that the rule violated the First Amendment. This partial stay has done little to stem the tide of unintended consequences washing over the Democratic Republic of the Congo and surrounding areas.

While visiting Africa last year, I heard first-hand from the people affected by this misguided rule. The disclosure requirements have caused a *de facto* boycott of minerals from portions of Africa, with effects far beyond the Congo-adjacent region. Legitimate mining operators are facing such onerous costs to comply with the rule that they are being put out of business. It is also unclear that the rule has in fact resulted in any reduction in the power and control of armed gangs or eased the human suffering of many innocent men, women, and children in the Congo and surrounding areas. Moreover, the withdrawal from the region may undermine U.S. national security interests by creating a vacuum filled by those with less benign interests.

Given these facts on the ground, I believe that it is essential to hear from interested persons on all aspects of the rule and guidance.

A comment page regarding reconsideration of the conflict minerals rule and guidance has been created — [submit detailed comments](#).

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More Information:

- [Statement of Acting Chairman Piwowar on the Commission's Conflict Minerals Rule](#)

Comments Received

Modified: Jan. 31, 2017