**The public gets more transparency in Mining and petroleum sector**

**With the execution of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) standard, the public will get more transparency in the mining sector and petroleum sector in Suriname. Dave Abeleven, Director of Natural Resources (NR) stated that with the EITI standards there will be more openness between Government and the companies. Currently there are several advantages, once Suriname becomes a member of the EITI, namely: strengthening the budget monitoring, annual analysis about aforementioned sectors, anti corruption and confidence among the public is strengthened.**

**As a member State Suriname has to prove by means of reports what the companies in the mining sector are paying the Government in i.a. royalties and taxes and what the Government receives from these companies. In addition to the revenues and expenditures, the reports also include information on licenses and contracts, government stocks, production statistics, income and investment spending. The companies which are included in these sectors are i.a. Staatsolie Maatschappij Suriname and Offshore operations (oil companies), IamGold and Surgold (large scale gold sector), small-scale gold sector and bauxite and alumni are also mentioned despite the fact that the production has stopped.**

**To become a member of EITI one has to go through a process. Today the first step was made towards selecting a Multi-Stakeholders Group (MSG) during the workshop ' Extractive Industries Transparency in Suriname ', and organized in the Conference Hall of the Lala Rookh building. The workshop was intended for representatives of the Government, other companies and social organizations.**

**From the categories Government, companies and civil society, three persons are appointed. The MSG is expected to present a work plan in October, on how the standards will be carried out in Suriname. On behalf of the Government Valerie Refos-Lalji gave a presentation, V. Gangram Panday of State Oil on behalf of the companies and Rayah Bhattacharji on behalf of the civil society. During the workshop proposals were handed in regarding the Term of Reference of the MSG, the Memoranum of Understanding between stakeholders and the aforementioned stakeholders (Government, companies and social organisations) about the processes.**

**On 5 August next, a second meeting will be convened, in which the Term of Reference, Memoranum of Understanding and issues regarding MSG will be finalized. On 7 October a national EITI Conference will be organized with the aim of officially installing the MSG and the request for the candidacy of Suriname will be submitted to the EITI board.**

***By Kimberley Fräser***