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L'Afrique et les défis du XXIème siècle
Africa and the Challenges of the Twenty First Century
A África e os desafios do Século XXI

إفريقيا وتحديات القرن الواحد والعشرين

**The new resource nationalism and challenges
to the mineral enclave in Africa**

Yao Graham

Third world Network-Africa

5 - 9 / 12 / 2011

Rabat Maroc / Morocco

This paper analyses the political and economic dynamics that underlie the growing convergence between key elements of the analysis and demands of African mining activists on one hand and sections of national elites and pan-African bodies such as the UN-ECA and the African Union on the other about the place and future of the mining enclave in African economies. The paper also examines the challenges to the realization of proposed alternative approaches to mineral development in Africa, away from an FDI driven raw material exporting model to one centred around industrialization and local linkages. A key aspect of these challenges is the increasing global competition for natural resources, illustrated by the EU's Raw Materials policy.

The new nationalist convergence represents a challenge to the logic of the Washington Consensus as expressed in African mining policy for two decades where the rehabilitation and expansion of the mining sector has been the principal result of economic liberalization in mineral exporting African countries. In the couple of decades preceding the global financial and economic crisis of 2008 liberal reform of Africa's mining regimes resulted in a surge of FDI into and expansion of mineral exports of Africa. State policy across Africa prioritized the needs of foreign mining capital amidst growing activism and struggles by mining affected communities and a range of organizations about the negative impacts of the mining boom on environment, rural livelihoods, human rights, as well as the marginal beneficial contributions of the mining enclave to public finances and overall development.

The surge in mineral prices in the period 2003-2008 during which mining company profits soared without a related increase in returns to mineral exporting African countries triggered an nationalist questioning within sections of elite in some mineral exporting African countries and also spurred policy debates within pan-African inter state organizations such as the UN-ECA and the African Union about the defects of the rent based model of mineral development. The collapse of mineral prices during the crisis devastated export earnings and public revenues in Africa. It also accentuated the questioning mineral raw material exporting model and boosted the legitimacy of critics of the dominant mining policies. These developments have resulted in the narrowing of the gap between the positions of mining activists and the reform agenda emerging out of some African capitals and the ECA and AU. This is exemplified by the African Mining Vision with its bold statement for an end to the enclave and for mining to be at the centre of an industrialization strategy.