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OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF URANIUM EXTRACTION IN MONGOLIA

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ABSTRACT

Mongolia has abundant uranium resources. Exploration activity has discovered identified resources of about 192 200 tonnes uranium which may potentially increase to 1 million tonnes uranium. These resources are spatially located across about 10 deposits, classified as sandstone and volcanic uranium deposits using the IAEA uranium deposit classification scheme.

Mongolia is focusing on the development of potential uranium projects that will lead the country to the world uranium market. To achieve this goal, the government is seeking solutions to some challenges which include intensive development of the safety infrastructure, improvement of the business environment, and other respective measures such as improving public acceptance of uranium mining and processing.

The government of Mongolia established state-owned Mon-Atom Limited Liability Company (LLC) as the national operator for all uranium mining activities, including export and trade of uranium ore concentrate. Mon-Atom LLC has the flexibility to operate as a sole corporation or joint venture with other legal entities in exploration and mining activities of uranium, other radioactive minerals and implementation of state representation in accordance with relevant legislation.

Mon-Atom LLC, on behalf of the Government of Mongolia, is currently participating in pilot testing of the in-situ recovery (ISR) uranium project of the joint-stock company Badrakh Energy LLC and advancing the project to recover and purify uranium from the Zuuvch-Ovoo sandstone uranium deposit in Dornogovi aimag, Mongolia. The economically viable uranium resources of the Zuuvch Ovoo deposit are currently 932 000 tonnes uranium, representing more than 50% of the official uranium resources of Mongolia.

Keywords: Uranium extraction, Piloting, New Project Development, Mongolia