

# MICC to review mining contracts

By [Mary Grace Padin](#) (The Philippine Star) | Updated February 20, 2017 - 12:00am

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MANILA, Philippines - The Mining Industry Coordinating Council (MICC) is set to convene again today to iron out the details of the multi-stakeholder review on the existing contracts of all mining companies in light of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' recent actions against the mining industry.

"The technical working group, (that is) the one going to do the reviews. That was part of the board resolution, so they're going to implement it on Monday. They will decide what to do," Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, who co-chairs the MICC, said.

Dominguez and Environment Secretary Gina Lopez issued on Feb. 9 a resolution in relation to the closure and suspension orders announced by the DENR which sparked criticism from the mining sector.

A total of 23 mining firms were ordered close, while five others were suspended. Another 75 mineral production sharing agreements (MPSAs) were cancelled.

"Pursuant to EO (Executive Order) 79, the MICC shall create a multi-stakeholder review and advise the DENR on the performance of existing mining operations in consultation with local government units," the resolution read.

"The review shall be based on the guidelines and parameters set forth in the specific mining contract and in other pertinent laws, taking into account the valid exercise of the State's police power to serve the common good, especially the poor," it added.

The heads (or their authorized representatives) of the Departments of Finance, Environment and Natural Resources, Interior and Local Government, Trade and Industry, Budget and Management, Energy, Agriculture, Agrarian Reform, Justice, Labor and Employment, and Social Welfare and Development are expected to attend the meeting.

Also invited are the chiefs of the Office of the Executive Secretary, National Economic and Development Authority, Presidential Management Staff, Office of the Solicitor General, Office of the Cabinet Secretary, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, and Office of the Chief Presidential Legal Counsel.

Meanwhile, Dominguez also reassured mining firms they can dispute the DENR ruling by filing for motions for reconsideration with the agency or appealing to the Office of the President.

The Finance chief also reminded Lopez to follow due process in proceeding with the closure and suspension of mining firms and the cancellation of mining contracts.

He responded to the statement of Lopez, who said the MICC review is merely "recommendatory" and therefore cannot affect the ruling.

<http://www.philstar.com/business/2017/02/20/1673907/micc-review-mining-contracts>