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Brazil & China Refuse To Join Association Of Tin Producing Countries

by Barbara Khol

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On Sept. 30 in Cochabamba (Bolivia), delegates to the Association of Tin Producing Countries (ATPC) told reporters that the refusal of the Chinese and Brazilian governments to join the Association has threatened strategies to increase tin prices. Current member-nations are Australia, Bolivia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand and Zaire. Brazil is the world's top tin producer, at about 50,000 tons per year. China produces an average 30,000 tons annually. ATPC member-nations account for an aggregate 106,000 tons per year, of an annual global consumption of 190,000 tons. On Sept. 29 in La Paz, Bolivian Mining Minister Walter Soriano said production costs in Bolivia average \$3 per fine pound, hardly compensated by current world market prices that fluctuate between \$2.60 and \$2.80. According to delegates, reductions in output and exports by ATPC members would principally benefit illegal tin miners and smugglers in China and Brazil. Delegates from the two nations reportedly argued that internal reasons, believed to be concentrated on the illegal mining, prevented them from agreeing to controls on their tin output. (Basic data from AFP, 09/29/90, 09/30/90)

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