Mine development

Byrnecut Underground Congo SARL (BUCS) completed the first blast at the twin declines on May 12, 2016, marking the beginning of underground mine development. The twin declines, incorporating both a service and a conveyor tunnel, each have advanced more than 130 metres since. Development of the underground mine is designed to reach the high-grade copper mineralization at the Kansoko Sud deposit during the first quarter of 2017. The development is ahead of schedule and within budgeted costs.

Kamoa and contractor teams are working closely and effectively to focus efforts and equipment on the necessary critical activities. The steel sets required for roof support were installed in each decline in June 2016 and ventilation fans recently were installed.

In parallel with the Kamoa 2016 PFS, an alternative mining method – controlled convergence room-and-pillar mining, developed by Poland-based KGHM – was investigated for its suitability for use on the Kamoa Kansoko deposits. The method has been successfully implemented by KGHM at its copper mining operations in Poland for the past 20 years. Given the thick, mineralized widths encountered to date in the Kakula drilling program, controlled-convergence room-and-pillar mining also will be investigated for its suitability for use at Kakula.

To help advance the ongoing exploration and delineation of the Kakula deposit, the Kamoa team is proceeding with the engineering and preparation of tender documents for the construction of a box cut at Kakula to accommodate decline ramps that will provide underground access to the deposit.

Four of six mine dewatering boreholes have been completed along the decline and flow testing has commenced. The project team at Kamoa has completed the construction of site offices, a workshop, stores, a vehicle wash-bay, a brake-test ramp and infrastructure for temporary supply of power and water. Upgrading of the contractor camp to meet the rising demand for accommodation is progressing well.

Figure 7. Conveyor decline sets.