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STATEMENT ON COMPLAINT BY WWF

Monday 7 October 2013

SOCO International plc is aware of the complaint raised by the WWF to The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (“OECD”). SOCO welcomes the scrutiny of such a well respected 3rd party organisation and takes this matter extremely seriously. SOCO would like to make it clear that all alleged breaches of the voluntary guidelines raised are absolutely ill-founded, tendentious and not supported by the facts.

For the record SOCO has not commenced any operational activities and would not consider doing so until all environmental studies were fully completed. This will leave a considerable amount of time to continue meaningful open engagement opportunities. SOCO has already conducted a locally dedicated communications campaign successfully reaching out to over 10 local villages during 2012.

SOCO has recently commenced environmental studies on Lake Edward. The environmental studies include fish and mollusc baseline studies and respond to concerns that have been expressed regarding the impact of potential future exploration activities in the region. These studies have been determined through close collaboration with the Congolese Wildlife Authority (also known as “Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature” or “ICCN”) who are the managers of the Virunga National Park and the Congo Environmental Studies Group (also known as “Groupe d’Etudes Environnementales du Congo” or “GEEEC”) and have been approved by the Government of the DRC. SOCO has also recently commenced social projects to help to improve the basic living conditions for the local population around Lake Edward; these projects, which include the provision of communications infrastructure and medical aid programmes, were determined after a period of engagement with the local communities and local and national government.

The OECD guideline’s state that abiding by domestic law is the first obligation of enterprises and the guidelines are not a substitute nor should they be considered to override domestic law and regulation. SOCO would like to make it clear that its operations abide by all the laws and regulations set out by the Government of the DRC

SOCO’s goal is to be a positive presence wherever it has operations and it has an excellent history of operating in Africa and in South East Asia. No oil exploration activities have commenced to date on Block V.

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