Explanatory Notes to Postponing the Implementation of Eliminating the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes by the end of 2014

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) has recently issued the Circular of the National Development and Reform Commission on Postponing the Implementation of Eliminating the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes (F.G.C.Y. No. [2013] 1850), aiming to postpone the implementation of the requirements of the Catalogue of Products Subject to Industrial Restructuring (2011 edition, as revised) that the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes should be eliminated by the end of 2014. The circular was issued for the following reasons:

Gold plating materials and products are widely used in precision electronic instruments, precision meters, aviation and spaceflight, digitally controlled machinery and equipment, electronic components, circuit boards, connectors and plug-ins for line products. For a long time, the cyanide gold plating process remains the mainstream technique adopted in the domestic and foreign gold plating industry. But, cyanides are highly toxic, posing great potential threats to the operator safety and environmental safety during the plating process.

To accomplish clean production in the gold plating industry, and fundamentally address the problems of operator safety and environmental safety during the gold plating process, NDRC, based on the catalogue of products encouraged issued by relevant department, appraisal results of testing labs, and review and assessment conclusions of experts, and through soliciting comments from the parties involved, proposed eliminating the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes by the end of 2014 in the Catalogue of Products Subject to Industrial Restructuring (2011 edition, as revised) issued in February, 2013.

Since the release of the Catalogue of Products Subject to Industrial Restructuring (2011 edition, as revised), some industry associations have submitted their comments and recommendations on the requirement for elimination of cyanide gold plating processes within specified period. Some institutions having issued test reports for the gold potassium citrate gold plating technique, which will serve as an alternative for purpose of substituting the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes, and a number of experts supporting such technique, have changed their previous standing. The manufacturer of gold potassium citrate gold plating products was closed down by public security organs due to involvement in crimes.

Whereas the basic conditions for NDRC's previous adjustment of the Catalogue of Products Subject to Industrial Restructuring (2011 edition, as revised) have changed significantly, and in order to meet the normal production needs of gold plating enterprises, NDRC has recently issued a notice to postpone the implementation of the requirement for eliminating the Auric potassium cyanide gold electroplating and potassium aurocyanide gold plating processes by the end of 2014.