

## Press Release from the Atlas Copco Group

For further information please contact:

Björn Rosengren, Business Area President, Construction and Mining Technique  
+46 (0)8 743 8314 or +46 (0)70 417 8502

Daniel Frykholm, Media Relations Manager  
+46 (0)8 743 8060 or +46 (0)70 865 8060

### **Atlas Copco and Rio Tinto to explore advanced tunneling equipment for deep underground mines**

**Stockholm, Sweden, February 24, 2010: Atlas Copco has been selected by Rio Tinto to develop one of two rapid tunneling concepts for underground block cave projects. The new machine will enable fast and cost-effective construction of mines which are safe, productive and have a minimal impact on the environment.**

Rio Tinto's development of projects such as Resolution Copper in Arizona and Oyu Tolgoi in Mongolia will use an underground block cave mining method. This method requires construction of significant underground infrastructure prior to the production of ore. In anticipation of this need, Rio Tinto Technology and Innovation began investigating alternative construction methods to further improve both safety and speed of constructing underground block cave infrastructure such as shafts and tunnels.

The Atlas Copco Modular Mining Machine (MMM) is a new tunneling machine that utilizes the learnings of the Atlas Copco Robbins Mobile Miner. This mechanical rock excavation system is anticipated to be able to achieve more than twice the performance of normal tunneling methods in the expected ground conditions. The cooperation between Rio Tinto and Atlas Copco on the development of this machine has been underway for some time and is approaching reality. The Rio Tinto and Atlas Copco team have agreed to share further information on this mining breakthrough with the mining community at the upcoming SME conference in Phoenix Arizona, March 1-3, 2010.

*"We are excited to have this opportunity to work with a leading mining and mining development company, such as Rio Tinto, whose vision and solid knowledge will be vital in developing this machine," said Björn Rosengren, Business Area President of Atlas Copco Construction and Mining Technique. "Many of our best products result from close collaboration with customers like Rio Tinto who, as we, are always looking for continuous improvement. Developing the Modular Mining Machine demonstrates that we have the technical knowhow to provide sustainable productivity under nearly any circumstances, and we are devoted to its successful realization."*

John McGagh, Rio Tinto Head of Innovation, said: *"We are very pleased that the Atlas Copco team, with many years of experience in different novel rock excavation techniques, has committed to work with Rio Tinto on this challenging opportunity. The proposed machine is a very promising new concept based on a combination of well proven methods and components. This innovative combination is a key reason for selecting Atlas Copco as one of the two suppliers to work with on new tunneling methods for our future block cave operations."*

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#### **Atlas Copco Group Center**

Atlas Copco AB  
SE-105 23 Stockholm  
Sweden

Visitors address:  
Sickla Industriväg 3  
Nacka

Telephone: +46 (0)8 743 8000  
Telefax: +46 (0)8 644 9045  
[www.atlascopco.com](http://www.atlascopco.com)

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### **About Rio Tinto**

Rio Tinto is a leading international mining group headquartered in the UK, combining Rio Tinto plc, a London and NYSE listed company, and Rio Tinto Limited, which is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange.

Rio Tinto's business is finding, mining, and processing mineral resources. Major products are aluminium, copper, diamonds, energy (coal and uranium), gold, industrial minerals (borax, titanium dioxide, salt, talc) and iron ore. Activities span the world but are strongly represented in Australia and North America with significant businesses in South America, Asia, Europe and southern Africa.

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*Atlas Copco may be required to disclose the information provided herein pursuant to the Securities Markets Act.*

**Atlas Copco** is an industrial group with world-leading positions in compressors, construction and mining equipment, power tools and assembly systems. The Group delivers sustainable solutions for increased customer productivity through innovative products and services. Founded 1873, the company is based in Stockholm, Sweden, and has a global reach spanning more than 170 countries. In 2009, Atlas Copco had about 30 000 employees and revenues of BSEK 64 (BEUR 6.0). Learn more at [www.atlascopco.com](http://www.atlascopco.com).

**Atlas Copco's Construction and Mining Technique business area** develops, manufactures, markets and services rock drilling tools, construction and demolition tools, drill rigs and equipment. It innovates for superior productivity in surface and underground rock excavation, exploration drilling, rock reinforcement, ground engineering, water well, oil and gas drilling, and compaction and paving equipment worldwide. The business area has its principal product development and main manufacturing units in Sweden and the United States.