



World Diamond Council

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World Diamond Council Calls for Action on Zimbabwe

(New York, NY) – 26 August, 2009 – The World Diamond Council (WDC) is calling for decisive action from government participants in the Kimberley Process (KP) to ensure that issues surrounding the Marange alluvial diamond fields in Zimbabwe are properly resolved.

A recent KP Review Mission to Zimbabwe, which included representatives from governments, civil society and the diamond industry, made a series of recommendations that are required to successfully address issues of non-compliance and alleged human rights abuses.

The Government of Zimbabwe, in particular, must develop an action plan in accordance with the recommendations of the review; so that diamonds from the mine in Marange can be managed in a manner fully compliant with the requirements of the KP and also maximize the value of these diamonds for the benefit of the Zimbabwean people. In particular, a process for the demilitarization of Marange must be developed quickly and identifiable milestones established so that monitoring can occur.

If these recommendations are not implemented, and addressed in an acceptable timeline, the World Diamond Council will have no hesitation in calling for the suspension of Zimbabwe from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

Eli Izhakoff, Chairman of the WDC maintains that, “Elsewhere in southern Africa, diamonds are an engine for growth, employment and prosperity. The World Diamond Council believes that, in addition to combating the scourge of conflict diamonds, the Kimberley Process has helped to safeguard these benefits that are shared and enjoyed by thousands of people in communities across the region”.

However, he went on to say that “for this success to continue, and for the sake of the KP’s integrity, it is essential that governments act now – and be seen to act – to provide the political will and resources necessary to assist the Zimbabwean Government in restoring security for the people of Marange and re-establishing compliance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme”.

Finally, Izhakoff pledged that, “in addition to the technical expertise it has already provided to the Kimberley Process, the World Diamond Council stands ready to provide any further assistance that will help bring this situation to a satisfactory conclusion.”