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Mr. Chairman, members of the WDC, colleagues and friends.

First I would want to congratulate and thank both Eli and Geatano for organizing a splendid WDC meeting.

Though the WDC comprises of industry stakeholders represented as Observers in the Kimberley Process, I have the privilege of representing the Government of Israel. Israel is one of the world's most important diamond manufacturing and trading center – and Israel has been a warm supporter of the Kimberley Process from its very first day.

As Israel's Diamond Controller, I hold by law the position of oversight over the Israeli diamond industry. My office issues diamond trading licenses, oversees the import and export customs offices, and, of course, we are responsible for the implementation of the Kimberley Process in Israel.

I am grateful to Eli for inviting me and for the opportunity to clarify to the WDC members some details on the Israeli position in the Kimberley Process:

1. A few years ago Israel served as Chair of the KP. The lesson we have learned from this experience is that the KP Chair term should be extended to two years in order to better ensure KP continuity and efficiency.
2. We have proposed the creation of a Permanent Support Secretariat, consisting of not more than three experts, which, in the future, can assist and support the rotating Chair.
3. I believe that we also should more clearly define the terms of reference (TOR) of the Deputy Chair's role to allow more stakeholder participation and to more effectively share the work-load of organizational challenges. There should be frequent exchange of views between Chair and Deputy Chair to ensure smooth transition and continuity.

4. As we approach the 10th anniversary of the hugely successful Kimberley Process, naturally we are looking forward and need to reflect on how the process can even be more improved and made even more effective. It my position – and this is the position of the Government of Israel – that we must learn from past experiences and implement measures to improve the process through following a consensus-based approach which will allow the global community to enjoy the KP's achievements.

5. Israel believes that because this government-led process is highly reliant on the state cooperation in complying with the KP rules, the current decision making procedure is most appropriate. Israel continues to support strongly the consensus method of decision making.

6. Israel recognizes that the Kimberley Process is, indeed, a process. It is a system that must continually change and adapt itself to new challenges. We are actively engaged in the discussions on widening the scope and definitions of our core principles. As government we, of course, are very much aware of the importance for any business community to meet also challenges in the areas of human rights.

7. In our consensus-based approach we all must recognize that change comes gradually. Through evolution rather than revolution. We also must recognize that in adherence to our legal mandate and core principles, there are also limits beyond which we cannot go. For example, the Israeli government sees the KP as a rough diamond trading monitoring mechanism, and we shall not support any attempts to widen the scope to include also polished diamonds or diamond jewelry.

8. Lastly, and maybe most importantly, the Israeli government deeply respects the important role of the Observers in the Kimberley Process. That is why I am grateful to you, Eli, for allowing me to participate at this meeting so that I can accurately inform my government of the views held by the World Diamond Council.

This is a two-way street. I would also want to ask you, as an Observer, to uphold, respect and strengthen a system which is managed and implemented by sovereign governments. Governments which all share a deep feeling of responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing for the world diamond industry and all their stakeholders.

Thank you very much.

Shmuel Mordechai