



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **World Diamond Council to Attend and Speak at the Annual OECD Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains**

**WDC to Share Insights as the First Mineral Based Industry to Introduce a Certified Due Diligence Process via the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in 2003**

**NEW YORK, NY, April 17, 2018**— More than a dozen members of the World Diamond Council (WDC) will attend the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains this week, and two members will serve as panelists in a discussion about the future of diamonds. As the first mineral based industry to introduce its own due diligence process for responsible supply chains (in conjunction with governments and under the United Nations), the diamond sector is in a unique position to offer insight and guidance, based on the success of its own Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), which has been in place since 2003.

The 2018 Forum on responsible mineral supply chains is being held at the OECD Conference Centre in Paris, France from April 17-20, 2018. This is the first year that the WDC will speak at this important event.

On Wednesday, April 18 WDC Acting President Stephane Fischler, and WDC member and Vice President of Corporate Affairs for Signet Jewelers David Bouffard, will be participating with others in a panel discussion entitled “Diamonds – Looking Ahead”. In addition, members of the WDC will be attending private bilateral meetings with industry leaders from the European Union.

The OECD promotes policies that improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world by providing a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. The 2018 Forum is expected to focus on, among other things, the OECD due diligence guidelines and how companies can incorporate them into their own business practices to ensure a responsible supply chain for a wide range of mineral resources.

For the last 15 years the diamond industry has adhered to strict guidelines, as a means of eliminating conflict diamonds from the legitimate supply chain. The Kimberley Process (KP) is a binding agreement that imposes extensive requirements on every participant of the diamond supply chain. The visible evidence of this commitment is that it both safeguards the shipment of rough diamonds and certifies them as conflict-free.

In addition, the WDC introduced a System of Warranties (SoW) to comply with, support and strengthen the KPCS. During the latest WDC Annual General Meeting in October 2017, it was reviewed and

consensus reached to formalize principles related to the duty of care for responsible business practices. The principles are intended to raise awareness and incorporate more human rights assurances, as recommended by various governance-related international and national treaties. These principles should be easily incorporated into any size organization, including small and medium sized businesses. Diamond industry members of the WDC are close to finalizing the Guidelines which will serve to update the SoW.

“We remain supportive of efforts to broaden the scope of the KPCS mission and as such of wider due diligence requirements that we believe are necessary to pre-empt systemic violence and abuse, particularly within artisanal mining communities where the issue is most acute,” said WDC Acting President Stephane Fischler. “These efforts will play a vital role in creating an environment suitable for long term peace and will help establish a safe, healthy and fair environment necessary for communities to grow and thrive.”

In its third edition, [OECD Due Diligence Guidance](#) (DDG) provides detailed recommendations to help companies respect human rights and avoid contributing to conflict through their mineral purchasing decisions and practices. This Guidance is for use by any company potentially sourcing minerals or metals from conflict-affected and high-risk areas.

Both the diamond industry Guidelines and the OECD DDG are voluntary and place the responsibility of stewardship on the companies directly. In doing so, it enables companies throughout the supply chain the ability to verify and validate the sources of the diamonds they purchase as they move from rough, to loose polished, to mounted in fine jewelry. The OECD DDG builds on KPCS SoW Guidelines for companies who are involved in sourcing in high risk areas and those that want to go beyond the KP requirements by conducting additional due diligence on their supply chain to ensure integrity of provenance.

### **About the World Diamond Council**

The World Diamond Council (WDC) is an industry organization focused on preventing conflict diamonds from entering the global supply chain and on preserving the value attached to natural diamonds. Formed in 2000, it is the only organization where the diamond trade is represented in full, from producer to retailer, and includes the most influential commercial businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and individual companies in the industry today. The WDC is the voice of the international diamond industry in a tri-partite collaboration with governments and civil society known as the Kimberley Process (KP). The KP secures and manages monitoring processes that have virtually eliminated the trade in conflict diamonds to ensure that the world’s supply of diamonds is from sources free of conflict. Visit [www.worlddiamondcouncil.org](http://www.worlddiamondcouncil.org) to learn more.

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