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WDC EXPRESSES REGRET ABOUT INCONCLUSIVE KP INTERSESSIONAL MEETING, URGES ALL PARTIES TO RENEW EFFORTS TO REACH CONSENSUS

NEW YORK: JUNE 26, 2011 - NEW YORK: JUNE 26, 2011 - The World Diamond Council has expressed its regret about the inconclusive end to the Kimberley Process Intersessional Meeting in Kinshasa. Emphasizing the necessity of a robust Kimberley Process in which all rules and procedures are clearly understood and implemented by all member nations, the WDC has called on all parties to renew efforts to reach agreement over the future of exports from Zimbabwe's Marange region. In the meantime, The WDC urges all members of the trade to deal only in rough diamonds that are accompanied by KP certificates that comply with the consensus decisions of the Kimberley Process.

"We came to Kinshasa knowing full well that the task ahead of us was complicated and fraught with difficulty, and over the course of the week there was a genuine and concerted effort to resolve the differences that remained," said WDC President Eli Izhakoff. "I do not feel that we reached a dead end. Progress was being made, but we simply ran out of time. We have to continue talking in order to reach the necessary consensus as soon as possible."

"I believe that all sides agree that what is at stake here is not only the wellbeing of the diamond business, but also the economic future of ordinary people living in the diamond producing areas. And this, of course, includes Zimbabwe, whose production provides an exciting new opportunity for economic prosperity in Africa. But, if the Kimberley Process is rendered ineffective as a result of indecision at the executive level, nobody really benefits. We have no alternative but to carry on looking for a solution," Mr. Izhakoff stated.

"The Kinshasa meeting did not conclude as we would have liked, but it also did not end with any of the parties slamming the door on the KP. Despite their reservations about KP chair's declaration, the U.S., E.U., Canada and Australia all expressed continuing support for KP and stated their intention to continue searching for consensus. So did the representatives of civil society, who represent the third critical pillar supporting KP, along with government and the industry. So while we may be frustrated, we have to remain confident," the WDC President said.

The World Diamond Council will advise industry members if and when participants to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme reach consensus on the issuing of KP Certificates for the export of rough diamonds from the Marange region, when advised of the same by the KP Chair.

www.worlddiamondcouncil.com
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