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## **World Diamond Council meets in Plenary Session in Tel Aviv, signs MOU with Kimberley Process for Administrative Support Mechanism**

TEL AVIV: MAY 6, 2013 – The World Diamond Council has met in Plenary Session at the Ninth Annual WDC Annual Meeting In Tel Aviv, Israel. During the gathering, the WDC and the Kimberley Process signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will establish a permanent Administrative Support Mechanism to support the Kimberley Process in its mission to eradicate the trade in diamonds from conflict areas.

Signing the MOU were Eli Izhakoff, President of the World Diamond Council, and Ambassador Welile Nhlapo, Chair of Kimberley Process.

According to the MOU, the World Diamond Council will provide a variety of support services to the Kimberley Process. These include the creation of an online electronic archive, the provision of communication services, logistical support for the KP Chair, chairs of KP Working Groups and ad hoc committees, as well as planning and following through on training, data, technical assistance and support.

The task of establishing and operating the Administrative Support Mechanism will be divided among four WDC members: the Israel Diamond Institute Group of Companies, the Antwerp World Diamond Center, India's Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council, and the Diamond House of the Government of Ghana.

"There are some who may consider that, with the ASM, the structure that we are establishing is incongruous," said WDC President Eli Izhakoff. "For it is a permanent civil service that is operated by private industry to support the operation of the Kimberley Process, which at the national level is government-operated. In effect, it is the regulated working with the regulators to assist in their regulation."

"But, for those who are veterans of the Kimberley Process, this is not an unusual situation at all," Mr. Izhakoff continued. "The Kimberley Process, which is administered and enforced by national governments, is designed to defend the integrity of a chain of distribution that is inherently international. It is we, the industry, which make it international, linking those various countries to one another. We have a vested interest in making the system work, and the system will not work without us."

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During the meeting, the World Diamond Council expressed its support for the efforts currently made by the Chair of the Kimberley Process to monitor the flow of diamonds from the Central African Republic which currently is embroiled in civil conflict. These efforts include the consideration of suspending the trade in diamonds from the country, while the Kimberley Process works together with the CAR to gain control over the situation.

Andrew Bone, WDC Vice President, reported on the work of the Steering Committee that was established in 2012 to examine the restructuring of the World Diamond Council in terms of membership, financing and administration. While its work is ongoing, Mr. Bone said, the committee has made significant progress in developing alternatives for the WDC's membership and financial structure, so that the council will be properly and consistently supported over the long term.

The World Diamond Council confirmed that the organization's first Vice President, Avi Paz, will assume the duties of president, when Mr. Izhakoff leaves the position, as he announced, at the end of June. Elections for WDC President will take place in January 2014.

*The dedicated WDC Annual Meeting website is located at:  
<http://meeting2013.worlddiamondcouncil.org/>*

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