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World Diamond Council Board of Directors elects officers, Edward Asscher to serve as new WDC President

MAY 13, 2014 – The Board of Directors of the World Diamond Council has elected a new President, Vice President and Treasurer of the organization. Edward Asscher, a fifth generation diamantaire who heads the Royal Asscher Diamond Company of the Netherlands, was elected WDC President. Andrew Bone, head of Government & Industry Relations of the De Beers Group was elected WDC Vice President, and Ronnie VanderLinden, representative of the U.S. Coalition and president of the Diamond Manufacturers and Importers Association of America (DMIA), was elected WDC Treasurer.

The vote for WDC officers took place during the first formal meeting of organization’s 20-person Board of Directors, which was elected on April 28 by a vote of the organization’s full membership. According to the WDC statutes, the new President will serve a single two-year term, following which he will be succeeded by the sitting Vice President.

Mr. Asscher, who was born in 1946, began working at the family-owned Royal Asscher Diamond Company in 1970 after completing a Masters Degree in Economics at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. With a long history of public service in the industry, he served as president of the International Diamond Council from 1990 to 2008, is a past president of the International Diamond Manufacturers Association (IDMA), and is vice president of the European Council of Diamond Manufacturers. Outside of the diamond industry, he is a past president of the Dutch Liberal Party and served as a Senator in the Dutch parliament from 2007 to 2011.

Thanking the WDC Board of Directors for its vote of confidence, Mr. Asscher paid tribute to the outgoing officers.

“I am looking forward to continue the work of both my predecessors to whom we all are grateful,” he said. “The Board and I will give new energy to implement the Kimberley process, which has been so successful in preventing conflict diamonds getting into the

trade. Consumers must remain able to maintain confidence in our products, and the wellbeing of all who are involved in the diamond trade must be the focus of our mission. That is the legacy which I want to be able to pass onto the next generation of young adults who work in the diamond industry, wherever in the world.”

“I am honored to have been elected by my peers to this responsible position and my thanks go out to all who were involved in the process,” said Mr. Bone. “I look forward to working closely with Edward and Ronnie, fellow board members and, very importantly, the wider membership, to build further on the successes achieved under Eli Izhakoff and Avi Paz. Our task is to ensure that together we can rise to the challenges that await us and take advantage of the opportunities presented to us.”

“I greatly appreciate the trust that our colleagues have shown in us,” said Mr. VanderLinden. “I look forward to working closely with Edward and Andy, as well as the Board of Directors and the membership of the WDC, on behalf of our great industry.”

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The **World Diamond Council** was created in 2000 to coordinate the effort of the international diamond and jewelry sectors to eliminate the trade in diamonds from areas of conflict. Its primary objective is to represent the diamond industry in the development and implementation of regulatory and voluntary systems to control the trade in diamonds embargoed by the United Nations or covered by the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.