



World Diamond Council

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Abbey Chikane Named WDC Director

DIAMOND INDUSTRY AND NGOS HAIL KIMBERLEY PROCESS BREAKTHROUGH

WDC, Global Witness, and Partnership Africa Canada welcome Canada and Russia as new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process

Sun City, South Africa (31st October 2003) – At the Kimberley Process Plenary meeting held at Sun City, South Africa on the 29th through 31st of October 2003, more than 70 countries, the NGO community, and the World Diamond Council (WDC), representing the international diamond industry, agreed unanimously to implement a voluntary “peer review” system to ensure the credibility of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The World Diamond Council applauds this breakthrough, which will help secure the diamond industry's vital interests and strengthen consumer confidence.

At the Plenary, Canada was unanimously acclaimed as successor to South Africa at the helm of the Kimberley Process. In addition, the Russian Federation was selected as Vice-Chair, the first occupant of that position.

Mr. Eli Izhakoff, President of the WDC, said, “We are delighted that Canada has agreed to take on the responsibility of leading the international community, with the active support of the NGOs and the whole diamond industry, in our collective determination to prevent funding of conflict, and to protect both the diamond trade and consumers. We also welcome Russia’s selection as Vice-Chair, which will provide continuity for the future.

“The WDC would like to take this opportunity to salute the tremendous work done by South Africa in first initiating and then chairing the Kimberley Process during its critical formative stages with such commitment and skill, and Mr.

Abbey Chikane, in particular, for his patience, vision and diplomatic prowess. The diamond industry looks forward, under the guidance of Canada, to continuing the excellent progress made to date.”