

PRESS RELEASE

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**U.S. Assistant Secretary of State
to attend the WDC Annual Meeting in Tel Aviv**

NEW YORK: APRIL 17, 2013 – Jose W. Fernandez, the Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs at the U.S. Department of State and the most senior American official overseeing U.S. government policy related to the Kimberley Process, has confirmed that he will attend as a guest of honor at the Ninth Annual Meeting of the World Diamond Council, which will take place in Tel Aviv, Israel, May 5 and 6, 2013.

Assistant Secretary of State Fernandez also will address the WDC Plenary Session on May 6.

In helping shape U.S. policy, Assistant Secretary of State Fernandez has stressed the potential of the diamond industry as a constructive agent for development and change. “We cannot think about business without understanding the broader social, political and economic impacts that commerce has on the world,” he in his opening address to the 2012 Kimberley Process Plenary in November last year. “Neither can we expect business to promote positive change if it cannot also ensure that it has a stable operating environment in which to secure a profit. Indeed, the two are mutually dependent. For me, the Kimberley Process is – and should continue to be – an exemplar of this relationship. Within the KP, we see industry and governments seeking to maintain the integrity of this most precious of products.”

“We are honored to have Assistant Secretary Fernandez join us in Tel Aviv,” said Eli Izhakoff. “His presence underscores the very firm commitment of the United States to the integrity of the diamond trade, and the role it is able to play in enhancing the economic potential of countries and communities in the developing world.”

The WDC Annual Meeting, which will gather together leaders of the diamond and jewelry industries from around the world, as well as representatives of government and civil society, is the official forum for the General Assembly of the WDC. The host of the meeting will be the Israel Diamond Institute President Moti Ganz and the IDI Group of Companies.

The dedicated WDC Annual Meeting website is located at:

<http://meeting2013.worlddiamondcouncil.org/>

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