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### WDC PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO OPENING SESSION OF 2021 KP INTERSESSIONAL MEETING

**With consumers demanding greater accountability and sustainability, the Kimberley Process must not be left behind, WDC President declares**



*WDC President Edward Asscher addressing the Opening Session of the Kimberley Process's virtual 2021 Intersessional Meeting, on June 21, 2021.*

NEW YORK, JUNE 21, 2021 – “Consumers today want to know about a diamond’s provenance. They want to be assured that the diamonds they are considering buying have made a positive impact on the world,” said Edward Asscher, President of the World Diamond Council (WDC), speaking today during the opening of the 2021 Intersessional Meeting of the Kimberley Process (KP), which is being conducted virtually for the first time in the organization’s 21-year history.

“The prevailing subjects that are today on the agenda of the international community, as well as that of the diamond industry, are: human rights, environmental protection and social justice. They are certainly being discussed and advanced outside of the Kimberley Process. And we must not be left behind,” the WDC President stated.

The Kimberley Process Intersessional Meeting, which is being held this week, is one of two regularly scheduled meetings conducted by the KP in any calendar year, with the other being the KP Plenary. It is being chaired by the Government of the Russian Federation, which holds the post of KP Chair this year. The WDC, which together with civil society has Observer status in the KP, represents the industry in the tripartite forum charged with eliminating the trade in conflict diamonds.

Noting that consumer desire is the only value driver for diamonds, Edward Asscher stressed that not meeting consumer expectations presents a very real risk for the industry, as well for countries who rely on diamonds for their economic wellbeing and stability. “If the KP is left behind, it runs the risk of becoming irrelevant, and so may the category of natural diamonds. Let us not forget that consumers have alternatives. Meeting their trust and ensuring their confidence needs must be at the top of our agenda,” he stated.

In his address, Edward Asscher referred to the imminent introduction of the WDC’s new System of Warranties, which he said will “help all participants in our business sector with best practices, compliance and due diligence when purchasing diamonds. We are sending a strong signal that we are ready to reform, and that we do not want to be left behind.”

The WDC President concluded his address by reiterating the spirit of the KP and of the community that the KP unites, and of its members’ aim to protect the integrity of natural diamonds.

“This must be done within the KP – in this very forum – and not elsewhere,” he said. “We must be able to stand behind our promises and our mandate to protect the rights of those who are connected to the diamond industry, whether they reside in producing countries, polishing countries or in the jewelry markets. We are all in this together, whether we are from government, industry or civil society. It doesn’t matter.”

“We are all here to protect the integrity of the whole diamond value chain in every aspect: human rights, social rights and environmental protection. We can only achieve results if we work together,” the WDC President stated.

*To download the full version of the WDC President address to the Opening Session of the KP Intersessional Meeting on June 21, 2021, [PLEASE CLICK HERE](#).*

#### **About the World Diamond Council**

The World Diamond Council (WDC) is an industry organization focused on preventing conflict diamonds from entering the global supply chain and on preserving the value attached to natural diamonds. Formed in 2000, it is the only organization where the diamond trade is represented in full, from producer to retailer, and includes the most influential commercial businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and individual companies in the industry today. The WDC is the voice of the international diamond industry in a tripartite collaboration with governments and civil society known as the Kimberley Process (KP). The KP secures and manages monitoring processes that have virtually eliminated the trade in conflict diamonds to ensure that the world’s supply of diamonds is from sources free of conflict. Visit [www.worlddiamondcouncil.org](http://www.worlddiamondcouncil.org) to learn more.