

## WDC proposal helps break impasse, allowing for successful conclusion to 2022 KP Plenary



*The Closing Session of the 2022 KP Plenary in Gaborone, Botswana, on November 4.*

**GABORONE, BOTSWANA: NOVEMBER 7, 2022** – The 2022 Kimberley Process Meeting ended successfully in the early hours of November 5, after a compromise proposal offered by the World Diamond Council managed to break an impasse that could have prevented the gathering dispersing without issuing a Final Communiqué.

For several hours during the final session, when the Communiqué had to be ratified by consensus, the delegates had debated how to refer to an early set of requests to the KP Chair for a formal discussion to take place during the four-day event on the implications of the war in Ukraine on the Kimberley Process. The request was opposed by several countries, which under the consensus decision-making system was sufficient to ensure that it did not appear on the agenda. But a number of governments insisted that the refusal to hold a debate be recorded in official record of the meeting.

After long discussions, during which the unprecedented possibility of a Plenary closing without a Final Communiqué loomed large, the compromise text was accepted after minor adjustments were made by both sides.

Following the agreement, WDC President paid tribute to the outgoing KP Chair, Jacob Thamaga of Botswana. “He certainly was the right person at the right time, and we have to admire his perseverance during the long night. We are proud that the WDC has made an important contribution to assist him in successfully concluding the discussions,” Mr. Asscher said.

The Final Communiqué of 2022 KP Plenary can be downloaded by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Many hours earlier, the KP Plenary approved an Administrative Decision to form an Ad Hoc Committee that will oversee the next **Review and Reform cycle**, which takes place every five years, and which will begin in 2023. The Administrative Decision named Angola and South Africa, as respectively the chair and vice chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, and listed key subjects that will be discussed.

WDC President Edward Asscher welcomed the new AD and expressed satisfaction that the **“conflict diamonds” definition** in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme’s Core Document will be high on Review and Reform Cycle’s agenda.

“I have spoken at length about the shortcomings of the existing definition, and the degree to which it threatens to render the KPCS as irrelevant among diamond consumers,” he said. “I do not expect the coming debate to be easy, but it is an area in which failure is not an option. I felt here that all countries present accept the need for change.”

Another milestone at the Plenary was the acceptance of the recommendation of the tripartite Technical Expert Team (TET), chaired by the WDC, that **Botswana be the host of the new KP Permanent Secretariat**. The Plenary also accepted the Permanent Secretariat’s proposed budget, to which WDC has committed to make a substantial contribution.

Work now will begin in early January on physically establishing the Permanent Secretariat in Gaborone and appointing its staff, with the goal being to begin operations on January 1, 2024.

In his final statement to the Plenary, the WDC said that the **Central African Republic** remains an area of grave concern. Prior to the Gaborone Meeting, the KP Chair had written to all the relevant parties to gauge the possibility of conducting a Review Mission without compromising the safety and security of the review team. The mission would be charged with examining the effectiveness of a new Operational Framework for monitoring KP-compliant exports.

The KP Plenary also confirmed that **Zimbabwe will take over as KP Chair** at the beginning of 2023, and the **United Arab Emirates was ratified as KP Vice Chair** in 2023, becoming KP Chair in 2024.

The WDC President congratulated the incoming KP Chair. “We wish Zimbabwe the very best of a luck, knowing of course that success as KP Chair is not simply about luck. It also requires hard work, wise counsel, diplomatic skill and a deep understanding of the diamond industry, the countries in which it operates and the people and communities that are its stakeholders. With the eyes of the world upon it, we hope that its term as KP Chair will be as good for Zimbabwe as it will be for our industry,” he said.



*WDC President Edward Asscher during the 2022 KP Plenary in Gaborone, Botswana.*

Following the Plenary, several members of the WDC delegation departed for an official visit to Zimbabwe, to begin discussions on cooperation with the incoming KP Chair.



*The largest-ever WDC delegation to a KP Plenary (from left): Morgane Winterholer, WDC Secretary Udi Sheintal, WDC Treasurer Ronnie Vanderlinden, WDC Executive Director Elodie Daguzan, Adam Rolfe, WDC Vice President Feriel Zerouki, Benjamin Marriott, WDC President Edward Asscher, James Evans Lombe, Arantxa Arias, Kele Mafole, David Alexander Gul and Steven Benson. Not in photo: Wim Soons.*

**[CLICK HERE](#) to download a full transcript of the WDC President's final statement to the 2022 Kimberley Process Plenary meeting.**

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#### **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.