

WDC President commends KP Participants and Observers on robust discussions during 2023 KP Intersessional in Zimbabwe

The open and constructive discussions about reforming the Kimberley Process give room for encouragement, said Ferial Zerouki



WDC President Ferial Zerouki addressing the Closing Session of the 2023 Kimberley Process Intersessional Meeting in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, on May 25.

VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE: MAY 26, 2023 – The 2023 Intersessional Meeting of the Kimberley Process concluded yesterday in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Addressing the closing session of the gathering, World Diamond Council President Ferial Zerouki was positive about headway having been made during the four-day event.

“Decisions of the Kimberley Process are taken at Plenary Meetings, and so the goal of the Intersessional is to record progress, and we seem to have achieved that on a number of key issues,” the WDC President said.

Turning first to the Review and Reform Cycle that began this year, and more pointedly to the work of the sub-team on what constitutes a “conflict diamond,” Ms. Zerouki strongly reiterated WDC’s position that the expansion of the conflict

diamond definition is essential, and she emphasized that the KP has been provided the mandate to do exactly that.

To reach common ground on the definition, as well as some of the other issues being addressed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Review and Reform, a spirit of candidness, trust and respect is essential, Ms. Zerouki said.

“As we’ve witnessed this week, through open and robust discussions, we have secured the necessary psychological safety to share views and positions in support of the reform. These fundamentals are paramount if we are to guarantee reform of this important process, and promote the precious mineral resource we are all custodians of – natural diamonds,” she stated.

Commenting on the work of the Kimberley Process Secretariat Task Force, which is chaired by WDC representative Wim Soons, Ms. Zerouki noted that consensus was reached about the terms of reference of the new body, which is scheduled to begin operating next year in the Botswana capital of Gaborone.

The task force is also close to agreement on issuing a call for candidates for the new position of KP Executive Secretary, the WDC President stated. Issues that still need to be resolved include the legal entity status of the Secretariat and a host country agreement.

Ms. Zerouki voiced particular concern about the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). “The WDC wants nothing more than to see the country in peace and prospering from the value of its mineral resources,” she said.

Expressing WDC’s commitment to the CAR Monitoring Team’s work and objectives, Ms. Zerouki stated that the World Diamond Council is disturbed about the accuracy of values being determined on diamonds exported from the country. They contradict the very purpose of the monitoring team’s revised operational framework for approving exports from authorized green zones, which was created specifically to support increased revenues for CAR, as well as to ensure security and stability, she stated.

Ms. Zerouki said that the WDC supports a KP Review Visit to CAR, but noted that it cannot take place until such time that the safety and security of the Review Team can be assured.

Concluding her address. Ms. Zerouki paid tribute to the hosts of the meeting – the KP Chair and the Government of Zimbabwe – saying that their hard work, organization and hospitality, all “contributed to the spirit of collaboration that we have experienced over the past several days.”

On a personal note, she thanked all participants in the Intersessional “for making this, my first major Kimberley Process gathering as President of the World Diamond Council, so memorable.”

To download the full transcript of WDC President Ferial Zerouki's address to the 2023 KP Intersessional Meeting, please [CLICK HERE](#).

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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 to learn more.