



Ministerial Statement

Conclusions of the Ministerial Meeting Pretoria, 21st September 2000

We, the Ministers and the representatives of the World's leading diamond exporting, processing and importing states, met in Pretoria on 21st September 2000, at the invitation of the African diamond producing countries, to agree on what we could do to break the link between the illicit trade in rough diamonds and armed conflict.

We reviewed the challenges and reached the following conclusions:

- We are concerned that the trade in conflict diamonds is prolonging wars in parts of Africa; is frustrating development efforts and is causing immense suffering. We understand "conflict diamonds" to be rough diamonds which are illicitly traded by rebel movements to finance their attempts to overthrow legitimate governments;
- We recognize that conflict diamonds make up only a small fraction of the overall market for rough diamonds. The legitimate diamond trade makes a critical contribution to economic development worldwide. For this reason, we need to devise pragmatic and effective measures to address the problem of conflict diamonds, whilst ensuring that we do not harm the legitimate diamond industry;
- We are resolved to do more and to work together to deny these 'conflict diamonds' access to world markets, whilst recognizing the difficulty of devising and enforcing measures to prevent smuggling of items that are portable, concealable, valuable, and difficult to identify by source, as diamonds.

We welcome important progress to date, in particular:

- The readiness of the Republic of South Africa and other countries participating in the conference to co-sponsor a resolution at the 55th session of the United Nations General Assembly;
- The role of the UNSC in addressing this problem. We commit ourselves to the full and rigorous implementation of the various UN sanctions regimes targeting the link between the illicit trade in rough diamonds and the supply of weapons and fuel to rebel movements;
- The initiative of the G8, in the context of its commitment to conflict prevention at the Okinawa Summit in July 2000, to support practical approaches to the issue of conflict diamonds, including consideration of an international agreement on certification of rough diamonds;
- National initiatives, including the steps taken by the governments of Angola and Sierra Leone to put in place effective national certification schemes, as well as the efforts by trading and marketing centres in Belgium, Israel and India to strengthen regulation and transparency of the trade;
- Proposed steps by industry, including the resolution agreed at the World Diamond Congress in Antwerp in July 2000, to address the problem of conflict diamonds;
- The constructive role played by civil society organizations in raising public awareness on the conflict diamonds issue, proposing practical solutions and helping generate the necessary political will required for concrete action.

We especially welcome the African Initiative that led to the Kimberley Process. As the first of its kind, this initiative brought together producing, processing and trading countries, and drew on the different perspectives and expertise of governments, industry and civil society in generating ideas for workable solutions. It highlighted that the problem of conflict diamonds is of international concern and requires a comprehensive and practical approach.

We agree that:

- A comprehensive approach should be explored to deal with the causes and drivers of conflict
- A mechanism of establishing an intergovernmental body to monitor compliance with the certification system should be investigated. This should include investigating the relationship between the intergovernmental body and the World Diamond Council



- We take note of the report of the Working Group and commend it as a valuable contribution to future international efforts to address this problem;
- We are resolved to maintain the momentum of the Kimberley Process by moving ahead into an intergovernmental process to design a workable international certification scheme for rough diamonds. We favour a simple and effective scheme that does not place undue burden on governments and industry, particularly smaller producers;
- We therefore welcome the initiative to convene an intergovernmental conference in London to bring in other interested states and take the multilateral process forward.

We are conscious of the need for governments and industry to work together and to implement effective measures soon. This is necessary to curb conflicts in parts of Africa and maintain consumer confidence vital to the well-being of the industry. We are equally conscious of the need to ensure that the diamond trade optimally contributes to sustainable development and of the importance of working towards that objective.