



**Edward Asscher
WDC President**

Closing Address to KP Intersessional – Kasane, Botswana

24 June 2022

Your Excellencies, Honorable Chair, Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Dumelang!

We have come to the conclusion of an intensive week, at the start of which few of us were ready to predict how it may end, or for that matter even how it would begin. I started my opening speech noting that I stood here with mixed feelings. Today, as we prepare to take leave of one another until the Plenary later this year, I feel more confident about the cohesiveness of the Kimberley Process. The glue that holds us together is not reliant on there being one-mindedness on each critical issue – it never has been – but rather on the common belief that natural diamonds should be an equitable resource for growth, development and hope, and bring better lives and wellbeing for all people involved.

This stunningly beautiful environment in which we have been privileged to hold our discussions this week highlight the natural and cultural richness of our hosts and host country, Botswana. We have witnessed their humanity and wisdom. “Dumelang,” the Setswana word with which we are greeted each day, is rooted in the word “dumela,” in which one expresses belief in the friendly intentions of the person you are meeting. This, as I said, is the glue that holds us together.

Dear hosts, KP Chair, thank you for your leadership and hospitality at this Intersessional, and for your and your teams hard work to make us feel welcome and secure in these challenging times.

On Monday, in my formal address, I spoke about the urgent need for the KP to evolve, so as to remain a relevant force in a world that has changed. As you know, WDC has advocated for KP reform for many years. Today I can state that I believe we are noticing a positive shift.

It is important that such discussions take place under KP’s own umbrella, and not only on its sidelines. Therefore, we have formally requested that the KP Chair add the reform and review cycle to the draft agenda of the KP Plenary in November. We formally want to discuss and work on the review in all aspects of the KP in 2023 under the incoming Chair Zimbabwe.

We are also heartened to hear the positive feedback and reports emanating from the recently completed KP review visit to Zimbabwe, and these were confirmed in tripartite discussions with people intimately familiar with what is

happening in the field. This provides a positive backdrop as Zimbabwe prepares to assume the KP Chair in 2023.

Last year the KP adopted the Declaration for Responsible Sourcing of Rough Diamonds in the Supply Chain, listing support for principles of labor rights, human rights, environmental protection, the development of local diamond communities and more as best practice. This year, throughout our engagements with many government participants here in Kasane, there seems to be strong support for further reforms, including that of the “conflict diamond” definition.

We joined the session hosted by the Civil Society Coalition and were pleased to be able to conduct an open and honest dialogue about the reform of the KP. We would like to see these discussions continued within the KP.

Before I conclude, allow me to express our thanks and appreciation to the extremely hard working, always efficient and always dedicated Elke Ceulemans who will be leaving us in the course of this year. She has been an invaluable support to this organization. This makes the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat even more urgent.

I will end as I started, expressing my belief and confidence in the potential and significance of the Kimberley Process.

Honorable minister, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, to use another Setswana word with which we have become familiar this week, “Ke-a-leboga!”

Thank you very much.