

**SPEECH BY MR. FREDDY J. HANARD, CEO OF THE ANTWERP WORLD  
DIAMOND CENTRE AT THE OCCASION OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
WORLD DIAMOND COUNCIL IN ANTWERP, 30 JUNE – 1 JULY 2008.**

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Excellencies,  
Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is with great satisfaction and pleasure that I welcome the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the World Diamond Council to Antwerp, the world diamond centre.

The World Diamond Council has been created on this spot here in the Province House, in July 2000, eight years ago. At the 2000 Antwerp Diamond Congress, the World Federation of Diamond Bourses and the International Diamond Manufacturers Association agreed to pool their efforts to fight conflict diamonds. Today, we can congratulate the World Diamond Council and its Chairman, Mr. Eli Izhakoff, for its vital contribution to the success of the multi-stakeholder Kimberley Process.

In a few moments we will be welcoming here Belgium's Minister of Economic Affairs, Mr. Vincent Van Quickenborne. His presence here today clearly shows the support of the Belgian government for the diamond industry here in Antwerp. After all, this industry represents 8 percent of all Belgian exports. It also highlights the government's and the diamond industry's commitment to the Kimberley Process and to the fight for a clean and transparent diamond trade.

Minister Van Quickenborne's interest and commitment to our industry goes back to his previous mandate as Secretary of State. Under his leadership, an important collaboration agreement for the diamond community was discussed in South Africa with a government delegation led by Deputy President and initiator of the Kimberley Process, Madame Phumzile Mlambo-Ngucka. We at the Antwerp World Diamond Centre, previously the HRD, are grateful for South Africa's commitment and vision in establishing the Kimberley Process.

Tonight, Belgium's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Karel De Gucht, will address us at our Gala Dinner. He has made it his personal challenge to turn Africa's natural resources into development engines. This has been Belgium's contribution to its 2 year-tenure at the UN Security Council. He has taken his inspiration from the Kimberley Process, something we can all be proud of.

We can also feel very proud about the accomplishments of the World Diamond Council. Soon conflict diamonds will be completely eradicated we hope. So what future is there for the World Diamond Council? After all, didn't it serve its purpose?!

It would be a tragic mistake to believe that all problems are solved now. The World Diamond Council needs to address the challenges that the post-conflict period will bring. Are we collectively living up to diamonds? What is the involvement of our industry in achieving the 8 Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations that have been championed by the previous Secretary General, Mr. Koffi Anan? In this respect, we are happy to welcome Dr. Gaetano Cavalieri, President of CIBJO. His organisation launched at this year's annual meeting, the World Jewellery Confederation Educational Foundation – WJ CEF . Thanks to Dr. Cavalieri's vision and perseverance, WJ CEF will soon be ready to educate the diamond and jewellery industry about the Millennium Development Goals.

The diamond industry should take up this responsibility at heart. We have been applauded for establishing the Kimberley Process. Now we should strive to lead and show other resource-related industries how to implement greater transparency and create a proper return.

A simple but effective way is to guarantee the governments of some of the poorest nations mostly in Africa, that the diamonds that they produce are properly valued and generate the correct revenue. The correct revenue for the governments through taxes, while the producers must receive proper earnings for their diamonds. Only through this, we will be able to turn all diamonds into prosperity diamonds!

We should all take a firm stance against the evil of undervaluation. Undervaluation not only undermines the fair diamond trade, but it also increases the risk of money

launderers using the legitimate diamond trading channels for their own criminal benefits.

For those that may think that this seems al too altruistic, think again. The increasingly important anti-money laundering legislations in combination with the Basle II requirements for banks, will continue to push the industry towards greater transparency. If we expect our banks to continue to finance our businesses, it will be under their terms. The only acceptable business model for the successful diamond company of the future will be centred around transparency and fair trade!

Here in Antwerp we have already set the standard for diamond controls through our Diamond Office. We are willing to help all governments that require technical assistance to further improve their own diamond offices.

Here in Antwerp we have already been subjected to some of the strictest KP and AML regulations worldwide. We are proud to say that this new business environment has been fully accepted and successfully implemented by our diamond dealers.

Also at the World Diamond Council, transparency and good governance must be the key words. Our organisation must answer to this call and be a role model.

I am convinced that under the leadership of Eli Izhakoff the future of the World Diamond Council is secure. Let us now make sure that the future of our diamond businesses also provides a future for Africa's poorest.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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