



PRESS RELEASE

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WDC condemns intimidation of observers or participants in KP

NEW YORK, USA: JUNE 4, 2010 – The World Diamond Council (WDC) is extremely concerned at reports that members of the Centre for Research and Development (CRD), a Zimbabwean NGO and official Observer at the Kimberley Process (KP), have been intimidated by the authorities.

The Government has given no plausible reason for its behavior towards the CRD and at least one member has been arrested and held without charge. In the absence of explanation of the legal grounds for this action, the WDC joins with members of the KP's Civil Society Coalition in calling for an immediate end to this intimidation, the release of those arrested and the return of confiscated property and documentation.

Published reports raise serious questions concerning the ability of the KP Monitor to carry out his terms of reference. Those terms of reference and the Joint Work Plan are a multi-stakeholder consensus pathway for bringing Zimbabwe into compliance with KP minimum standards.

The World Diamond Council condemns, without equivocation, the intimidation of individuals legitimately carrying out their duties as observers or participants in the Kimberley Process.

The WDC once again alerts its members to refrain from purchasing diamonds originating from Marange unless they are certified for export by the official KP-appointed Monitor under the terms of the Joint Work Plan and the Administrative Decision.

Zimbabwe often reminds the world that it is a founding member of the Kimberley Process and wants to continue its participation. It has repeatedly stated that it will co-operate fully to implement the JWP that it agreed to last November. Other government members, the World Diamond Council and the Civil Society Coalition have been patient and provided much support in their eagerness to see the JWP succeed and Zimbabwe's continued participation in the KPCS.

However, unless the Zimbabwean authorities demonstrate their commitment by renewing their efforts to achieve full compliance and crack down on acts of violence and intimidation, they risk undermining any remaining goodwill, their future participation and the opportunity to benefit legitimately from the export and sale of their valuable resources.

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