



News Release

(July 9, 2004, No. 004)

Kimberley Process Removes the Republic of Congo from the List of Participants

The Canadian Chair of the Kimberley Process today issued a revised list of Kimberley Process Participants from which the Republic of Congo has been removed. The measure was taken after a review mission to the Republic of Congo concluded that the country was not complying with the provisions of the certification scheme.

“The findings of the review mission are clear. The Republic of Congo cannot account for the origin of large quantities of rough diamonds that it is officially exporting”, said Tim Martin, Canadian Chairman of the Kimberley Process. “Kimberley Process Participants need to have complete confidence that conflict diamonds are not entering the legitimate trade. The removal of the Republic of Congo from the list of participants is necessary to safeguard the credibility and integrity of the KPCS.”

“The Kimberley Process remains open to the Republic of Congo resuming its participation in the KPCS when it is in a position to fully implement the requirements of the certification scheme”, added Martin.

The review mission, headed by former South African KP Chairman Abbey Chikane, and included experts from Canada, Israel, the World Diamond Council and the Ottawa-based NGO Partnership Africa Canada, was sent to the Republic of Congo on May 31 - June 4 due to a concern over the country's rough diamond exports, which far exceeded its potential production capacity.

The review mission concluded that the Republic of Congo was not complying with the requirements of the KPCS. Specifically, the ROC authorities were unable to account for a massive discrepancy between the scale of rough diamond exports and the absence of any reported production or imports. Moreover, the review mission concluded that the ROC did not have adequate procedures in place to ensure that Kimberley Process Certificates were being issued only for rough diamonds produced in the ROC or those which were imported in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Kimberley Process.

Further information is available at <http://www.kimberleyprocess.com> or at the Kimberley Process Secretariat, Peacebuilding and Human Security Division (AGP) Foreign Affairs Canada/Affaires Etrangères Canada

125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa,
Ontario K1A 0G2
Canada

Telephone (613) 944-0900

Facsimile (613) 944-1226

E-mail: kimberley.process@dfait-maeci.gc.ca

Web: <http://www.kimberleyprocess.com>

A backgrounder is attached.

For further information, media representatives may contact:

Jeremy Pedder

Advisor to the Chair

(613) 944-0900

Backgrounder

THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS CERTIFICATION SCHEME

The Kimberley Process

Conflict diamonds fueled armed conflict in a number of African countries such as Angola, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Kimberley Process was initiated by African diamond-producing countries in May 2000 to develop an international certification scheme for rough diamonds in order to prevent conflict diamonds from entering legitimate markets. Currently chaired by the Government of Canada, the Process brings together a broad range of international stakeholders in the diamond trade, including government officials, industry representatives and non-governmental organisations.

Participants officially launched the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) on January 1, 2003. Under the scheme, Participants are required to export rough diamonds in tamper-resistant containers and provide certificates validating that their diamond exports are conflict-free. Participants are also prohibited from importing/exporting rough diamonds from/to countries not implementing the Scheme.

To date, 43 international participants--representing more than 98 percent of the world's diamond trade -- have been deemed to meet the requirements of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (see complete list at end of document).

Review Missions

Review missions are an essential KPCS tool aimed at ensuring compliance with the requirements of the certification scheme. Review missions are sent to Kimberley Process Participants where there are credible indications of significant non-compliance.

Review missions complement the Kimberley Process peer review mechanism, which require participants to submit annual reports outlining how the certification scheme is being implemented in their respective territories and encourages Participants to invite KP experts for inspections.

Review Mission to the Republic of Congo

On the basis of indications of significant non-compliance relating to the scale of rough diamond exports from the Republic of Congo, Kimberley Process Participants adopted a decision to send a review mission to the country on March 12, 2004.

The mandate of the review mission was to provide an explanation for a discrepancy between the scale of the Republic of Congo's rough diamond exports and its known production capacity. The mission was also tasked to provide a detailed assessment of the relevant laws, regulations and procedures which ensure that Kimberley Process Certificates are issued only for those rough diamonds which are produced within the Republic of Congo or which are imported in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

The mission, which took place on May 31 -June 4, 2004, was led by Mr. Abbey Chikane, former South African Chairman of the Kimberley Process and included experts representing Canada, Israel, the World Diamond Council and the Ottawa-based NGO Partnership Africa Canada.

The review mission concluded that the Republic of Congo was not complying with the requirements of the KPCS. Specifically, the ROC authorities were unable to account for a massive discrepancy between the scale of rough diamond exports and the absence of any reported production or imports. Moreover, the review mission concluded that the ROC did not have adequate procedures in place to ensure that Kimberley Process Certificates were being issued only for rough diamonds produced in the ROC or those which were imported in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Kimberley Process.

Kimberley Process Participants (as of July 9, 2004):

1. Angola
2. Armenia
3. Australia
4. Belarus
5. Botswana
6. Brazil
7. Bulgaria
8. Canada
9. Central African Republic
10. China
11. Côte d'Ivoire
12. Croatia
13. Democratic Republic of the Congo
14. European Community
15. Ghana
16. Guinea
17. Guyana
18. India
19. Israel
20. Japan
21. Laos
22. Lesotho
23. Malaysia
24. Mauritius
25. Namibia
26. Norway
27. Romania
28. Russia
29. Sierra Leone
30. Singapore
31. South Africa
32. South Korea
33. Sri Lanka
34. Switzerland
35. Tanzania
36. Thailand
37. Togo
38. Ukraine
39. United Arab Emirates
40. United States of America
41. Venezuela
42. Vietnam
43. Zimbabwe

**The rough diamond trading entity of Chinese Taipei has also met the minimum requirements of the KPCS