



Statement to Members

2nd February, 2010

Marange Diamonds and The RJC Certification System

The reported human rights abuses in the Marange diamond fields in Zimbabwe are of grave concern to all who advocate responsible practices in the jewellery supply chain.

The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) includes specific provisions regarding human rights and conflict diamonds as part of its Certification System, formally launched in December 2009.

Marange Diamonds

In November 2009, shipments of diamonds from the Marange fields were suspended, pending the appointment of a Kimberley Process Monitor for the region. However there are reports that Marange diamonds have been and still are being smuggled out of Zimbabwe with illicit or counterfeit Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) certificates. While no goods from Marange can be legally exported from Zimbabwe at present, illicit diamonds may be entering the supply chain as a result of illegal practices.

The smuggling of rough diamonds from a country enforcing Kimberley Process law is a crime as is the use of ill-gotten KP certificates. RJC strongly supports the efforts of law enforcement agencies in combating the issue. Certainly the appointment of the Special Monitor and progress in implementing the Joint Working Plan will assist in maintaining good order in the Kimberley Process.

RJC reminds its members that no one should be dealing in recently exported Marange diamonds and are therefore expected to demonstrate due diligence as they continue to fully comply with the KPCS and World Diamond Council System of Warranties. Members are advised to exercise extreme caution when buying rough diamonds on the market to ensure that they do not originate from Marange, despite the current KPCS suspension. Once the KP Monitor is in place in Zimbabwe, all exports from Marange must bear the signature of the Monitor on the KP Certificate.

In light of the serious situation in Zimbabwe, the RJC will ensure that auditors place an extra level of vigilance on the potential for non-conformances in this area. Auditors will be kept updated on the situation via training delivered by the RJC and alerts on relevant developments.

The RJC will continue to monitor progress on KPCS implementation in Zimbabwe and urges all parties to work diligently towards resolution of the situation in Marange.

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RJC Certification Requirements

Through the RJC Certification System, the RJC requires that its Members must not knowingly buy or sell conflict diamonds, or assist others to do so. The RJC Code of Practices includes four provisions requiring conformance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) for rough diamonds and the World Diamond Council System of Warranties (WDC SoW). Non-compliance with any of these provisions is considered a 'Critical Breach' under the RJC Certification System, which will trigger disciplinary proceedings leading to sanctions against that RJC Member, which may ultimately lead to expulsion from the Council.

The RJC Code of Practices also includes specific provisions on human rights, which refer to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights, and ILO Conventions on child labour, forced labour, freedom of association and discrimination. There are also provisions requiring RJC Members to consider the risks related to ethical, human rights, social and environmental practices of significant business partners, and use their ability to influence and promote responsible business practices among them.

RJC Members must evidence conformance with the Code of Practices through an independent verification assessment, which involves desktop reviews and site visits. Independent, third party auditors will look for objective evidence of conformance in the form of management systems, observed practices and record-keeping.

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About RJC

The Responsible Jewellery Council is an international not-for-profit organisation bringing together more than 150 member companies committed to promoting responsible ethical, human rights, social and environmental practices in a transparent and accountable manner throughout the industry from mine to retail. Their commitment aims to reinforce consumer and stakeholder confidence in diamond and gold jewellery products.

The Council has developed the RJC System, a certification system – which will apply to all Members' businesses that contribute to the diamond and gold jewellery supply chain. All Commercial Members of the RJC are required to be audited by accredited, third party auditors to verify their conformance with the RJC's Code of Practices and become certified under the RJC System.

The Responsible Jewellery Council and a full list of its Members can be found on the web at www.responsiblejewellery.com

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