



**STATEMENT  
BY  
MR JACOB THAMAGE, CHAIR OF THE KIMBERLEY PROCESS FOR  
2022**

**DURING  
THE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF ECOSOC  
ON  
"NATURAL RESOURCES, PEACEFUL SOCIETIES AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM THE  
KIMBERLEY PROCESS"**

**NEW YORK**

**18 MARCH 2022**

**Mr. President,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. Let me start by also adding my voice to those who have thanked you for convening this Special Meeting on ***“Natural Resources, Peaceful Societies and Sustainable Development: Lessons from the Kimberley Process.”***
2. Having just become the new chair of the Kimberley Process I am pleased to see the importance this jewel we call diamonds is to many of us the world over.
3. The Kimberley Process (KP) has in its 20 years of existence grown to become a significant multilateral trade regime in the global system. It has remained relevant and fit for purpose in its key mandate of preventing the flow of conflict diamonds.
1. Thanks to the KP, over 99.8% of rough diamonds in global circulation are conflict-free. This is a commendable achievement that has been realized through the commitment of the members of this tripartite coalition, i.e. Governments, Civil society Coalition and Industry.
2. This achievement should be preserved and built upon in order to continue promoting international peace and security, and to also provide value for all stakeholders involved in the global diamond value chain.

**Mr President**

3. The importance of Diamonds to all stakeholders cannot be overemphasized. Most Producer countries and importing countries such as Botswana use proceeds from diamond sales to finance national development, which is why the Kimberley

Process is still relevant today and applies to a great majority of diamond producers.

4. Of course, we also have to continue to protect the integrity of diamonds for the benefit of all involved in the value chain as well as to earn the trust and ethical expectations of consumers who give diamonds their lustre and meaning.

**As part of my priorities as chair**

5. Let me note that as chair of the Kimberley Process in 2022, Botswana commits to upholding the legacy of the KP mechanism, preserve and build-on the gains made over the years. We will do this taking into account the current challenges and opportunities. In this connection, the Botswana Chairmanship has adopted the theme ***“Diamonds, a catalyst for Sustainable Development”*** and prioritized the following;

- Assistance and support to Kimberley Process Member States that are currently at minimal compliance of Kimberly Process Certification standards;
- Principles of responsible Diamond sourcing as best practices for Kimberley Process Members;
- Closer cooperation and Collaboration between the K.P as a UN entity and UN affiliated and recognized stakeholders such as UN Secretariat departments and Organs, the European Union, African Union and the five African Sub-regional Organisations;
- Unified technical assistance to all Kimberley Process Member States. Establishment of a Kimberley Process Permanent Secretariat.
- Preservation of the Kimberley Process Tripartite; and
- Building Back better from the COVID-19 pandemic including promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development efforts;

6. These priorities are informed by the mandate of the KP as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its principle

of ***“Leaving No One Behind”***. It is our firm belief that no KP member should be left behind on matters of compliance and utilization of diamond proceeds for development.

- 7.** To achieve this, we will depend on the standards, rules, procedures of the KP as well as our experience as a major producer whose diamonds have been a catalyst for development.
- 8.** During our chairmanship, we intent to explore pathways through which the effectiveness of the KP can be further enhanced so that producing countries, especially those with predominantly artisanal production, can reap improved benefits of their diamond resources for both peaceful and sustainable development outcomes.
- 9.** The Covid 19 pandemic disrupted all our lives and for the Kimberley Process this meant we could not undertake the very cornerstone of the certification scheme, the peer review mechanism. Our first priority is to rekindle the process of review visits and to also follow up on recommendations of previous review visits reports. This is in recognition that review visits, which collapsed due to the COVID 19 pandemic, continue to serve a crucial role in monitoring compliance with Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Without review visits, it is difficult to know what’s happening on the ground and what interventions need be implemented to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the KPCS.
- 10.** When the pandemic broke out, there were a number of participants waiting to be reviewed. Since we are still reeling out of the pandemic and doing so at different rates, we have already reached out to find out which of those participants are prepared to host review visits. We already have one review visit scheduled for Zimbabwe in May this year.

**11.** The second of our priorities is to implement decisions of the last Plenary. We shall continue with the initiative of exploring and encouraging the digitization of KP certificates. We are conscious that not all Participants can move at the same pace on this initiative. Therefore, we shall seek and pursue opportunities for technical assistance and capacity-building to support those participants that are facing or may face challenges to fully comply with the KPCS's existing standards or as they evolve.

### **Conclusion**

**12.** In conclusion, I must note that Botswana takes over the Chairmanship at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is occasioning uncertainty in the diamond market, to the detriment of the economies of most diamond producing States. We will therefore welcome discussions on protecting the natural diamond market and assisting producers to ***Build Back Better*** from the COVID-19 pandemic.