

The Kimberley Process – A Solution to Conflict Diamonds

What is the Kimberley Process?

To seek a solution to the escalating violence of African civil wars using rough diamonds to fuel its driving force, a group of diamond producing states met in May 2000 in Kimberley, South Africa. By the end of that year the United Nations General Assembly adopted their creation of a new international certification scheme for rough diamonds. This became known as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) setting up a strict control of rough diamond production and trade.

The requirements of the KPCS demand participating diamond producing states to establish national legislation and institutions, strict export, import and internal controls, and transparency of statistical data. The sale of rough diamonds must be accompanied by a legal KP certificate guaranteeing the diamonds are conflict-free. Participants in the Kimberley Process can only trade legally with other participants meeting the KPCS requirements.

This scheme came into force in 2003.

“The Kimberley Process (KP) is a joint governments, industry and civil society initiative to stem the flow of conflict diamonds – rough diamonds used by rebel movements to finance wars against legitimate governments. The trade in these illicit stones has fuelled decades of devastating conflicts in countries such as Angola, Cote d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone.

The Kimberley Process Scheme (KPCS) imposes extensive requirements on its members to enable them to certify shipments of rough diamonds as ‘conflict-free’. As of September 2007, the KP has 48 members, representing 74 countries, with the European Community and its Member States counting as an individual participant.”

“Diamond experts estimate that conflict diamonds now represent a fraction of 1% of the international trade in diamonds, compared to estimates of up to 15% in the 1990’s. That has been the KP’s most remarkable contribution to a peaceful world, which should be measured not in terms of carats, but by the effects on people’s lives.”

Kimberley Process

To read more about the Kimberley Process, its history and its structure, visit their website at: www.kimberleyprocess.com

“Conflict Diamonds are rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments.”

United Nations Security Council

“Conflict Diamonds are diamonds that fuel conflict, civil wars, and human rights abuses.”

Global Witness

“General Assembly recognized that conflict diamonds are a crucial factor in prolonging brutal wars in parts of Africa”

United Nations General Assembly

“The goal is indeed to end the conflicts. Because the only difference between a diamond and a conflict diamond is the conflict. End the conflict and there are only diamonds, diamonds that bring prosperity.”

Peter Meeus
Managing Director, HRD

Facts and Figures of Conflict Diamonds in Civil War:

Angola: 1975 – 2002
500,000 people killed
Many people maimed by landmines

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):
1998 – 2003
3.3 million people killed

Sierra Leone: 1991 – 1999
50,000 people killed
Many people mutilated, raped, tortured, and abducted.

Liberia: 1989 - 1997 and 2000 - 2003
with continuing insecurity
200,000 people killed
1 million refugees and human rights violations

www.conflictfreediamonds.org