



**KIMBERLEY PROCESS CIVIL SOCIETY COALITION
CLOSING SPEECH for the 2021 KP Plenary Meeting - not
delivered, only circulated**

**Virtual meeting hosted by the Russian Federation
12 NOVEMBER 2021**

Chair of KP,

Vice Chair

Dear Participants and observers

On behalf of the CSC, I would like to thank the Russian Federation for hosting the hybrid 2021 KP Plenary meeting and the ASM for logistical support to all participants and observers.

This first Plenary meeting after the last review and reform cycle was again dominated by a lack of trust and common purpose among participants. This made the political wrangling over the final communiqué drag on for hours, and led the Russian chairmanship to decide, for the first time ever, that there was no time left for civil society and industry observers to deliver their standard closing remarks. In this manner, they also avoided the kind of chaos that emerged at the June Intersessional meeting, when a number of Participants tried to silence civil society. We are circulating these remarks, in the hope that they will still be read by KP Participants.

We are getting used to being disappointed about the lack of progress in the seemingly endless discussions on updating the KP's conflict diamond definition. We now know everybody's arguments and excuses by heart. This was another record of instances as discussions had to be stopped prematurely because those opposing dialogue refused to move an inch. This offers little hope about any future efforts to make the KP catch up with reality, for which the conflict diamond definition is only one of the many weaknesses that require serious reform.

A sprinkle of hope is the Declaration on Principles for Responsible Diamond Sourcing. Even though it was a sad sight to see Participants tone down the language of this non-binding document and seek continuous assurances that it would in no way require them to take any action on giving effect to it. For the KP CSC, this document can only be a first step, and we are hopeful that Botswana's Chairmanship in 2022 will start a trajectory on how the KP can turn these words into action, in cooperation with other international initiatives such as the OECD, the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, IRMA and the United Nations.

The situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) remains of concern to us; especially the suffering of the local population, the involvement of armed groups, mercenaries and criminal elements in illegal diamond mining and trade, and the widespread smuggling that allow these diamonds to be traded internationally, often with KP Certificates of Mixed Origin. We fully appreciate the work done by the CAR

MT and the CAR government, and urge both of them and the KP at large to cooperate constructively and make full advantage of the KP's operational framework to facilitate the legal trade. We hope that, once conditions permit, a KP Review Mission can be sent, with clear and specific Terms of Reference to assess the implementation of the KP's operational framework in CAR. Yet, such a one-time visit only makes sense if it can be adequately informed on evolving conditions on the ground. In this regard, it will be essential to make sure that the ongoing monitoring, in particular by the UN Panel of Experts and civil society, can take place without any limitations.

We welcome the interest expressed by DELVE to cooperate with the KP on enhancing data collection and dissemination on artisanal and small-scale diamond mining. The data voids in this area are indeed huge, complicating efforts to improve the governance of this essential livelihood and socio-economic development driver for millions of families. In this light, the KP CSC has this year started a systematic cross-country data collection campaign in 8 African diamond producing countries. We look forward to exploring how this work can be complemented to leverage on the work of DELVE.

Regarding the CSC's proposed administrative decision on the creation of national multi-stakeholder working groups in producing countries, we want to thank all those who provided relevant and rich contributions to improve the proposed document. Work to refine this document will continue within WGAAP and we are confident that its adoption will meet with everyone's approval during the next plenary.

As we stated in our opening speech, we urge authorities in DRC and Angola to take adequate measures to mitigate and address the devastating human and environmental impact of pollution of the Congo River Basin by diamond mines in Angola.

Finally, CSC welcomes the admission of Mozambique, Qatar and the Kyrgyz Republic into the Kimberley Process. We hope they will readily implement the legal and institutional controls they put in place related to the trade of diamonds. For Mozambique in particular, we appreciate the inclusion of civil society in the tripartite National KP Council, especially given the challenging context of conflict in this country.

With those remarks I thank you.

Shamiso Mtisi – *Coordinator KP CSC.*

On behalf of the Kimberly Process Civil Society Coalition

12 November 2021