



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

**Statement by H.E. Gillian Bird
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Australia to the United Nations**

(as delivered)

Thank you Madam President,

Let me first thank the European Union for its leadership of the Kimberley Process as Chair in 2018, and in particular, its commitment to taking forward the targeted reform agenda that the Kimberley Process agreed on at the Brisbane Plenary in 2017. We thank the European Union for leading the process of revising the core document.

Australia also welcomes India to the role of Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2019, and looks forward to working together to strengthen the Kimberley Process so that it remains relevant in an era of new challenges to the modern diamond industry, including artisanal and alluvial mining and synthetic diamonds.

We acknowledge the significant contribution of all stakeholders, including those who serve on committees. We welcome the extension of the Ad Hoc Committee on Review and Reform for a further year and thank India for Chairing the Committee in 2018.

Australia is honoured to have chaired the Committee on Participation and Chairmanship in 2018. In that role, we worked to ensure the Kimberley Process maintains high standards of compliance and integrity. We worked inclusively with stakeholders to strengthen the tripartite government, industry and civil society structure. We made progress on draft policy and procedures for including or admitting observers. And we welcomed Gabon as a Participant in the Kimberley Process.

Madam President,

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme makes an important contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Peace and development are intrinsically and increasingly linked, and we welcome the ways in which the Kimberley Process continues to contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

We encourage other stakeholders whose work is relevant to the diamond industry, and who have a commitment to the Kimberley Process values and processes, to join or participate in the Scheme.

We thank the European Union for continuing to advance reform, building on the progress achieved during Australia's chairing of the Kimberley Process in 2017. Such reform is critical to position the Kimberley Process to make an increasingly important contribution to maintaining international peace and security, and to ensuring that communities benefit directly from the proceeds of diamond production and trading.

Finally, we congratulate the Russian Federation on its appointment as Vice Chair in 2019, and Botswana as Vice Chair in 2020. We look forward to the Russian Federation assuming the role of Chair and host in 2020, and Botswana assuming that role in 2021.

Thank you.