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## Press Statement on Kimberly Process Certification Scheme Reform

24 May 2013

NOTING that in its Core Document, the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) acknowledges "the devastating impact of conflicts fuelled by the trade in conflict diamonds on the peace, safety and security of people in affected countries and the systematic and gross human rights violations that have been perpetrated in such conflicts";

REALIZING that 10 years after the formation of the KPCS, the production of rough diamonds continue to cause further impoverishment of communities and disintegration of producing countries:

DEEPLY CONCERNED that the current weak definition of 'conflict diamonds' makes it easy for purchasing countries to harvest diamonds from Africa whilst the Africa people, majority of whom have never worn or seen a diamond ring, sink deeper into poverty;

FURTHER OBSERVING that the revenues from diamonds might contribute to opaque activities and instability in the entire Southern African region.

SADDENED by the forced displacement of communities and the concomitant human rights abuses and environmental degradation caused by mining companies in their efforts to extract what they believe are 'conflict free diamonds' from Africa;

FURTHER CONCERNED that 'legitimate' governments are now the main perpetrators of diamond related human rights abuses;

REALISING that the mining of rough diamonds has brought more tears than joy to the African people and further noting that there is absence of beneficiation and value addition in Zimbabwe in spite of the fact that the country is now ranked among the top seven producers in the world.

HORRIFIED by recent developments in Central Africa Republic where rebels have for years been illegally trading in diamonds, whose revenues funded the recent overthrow of the legitimate government in that country and by the protracted conflict in DRC

ALARMED by continued revelations by the Zimbabwe's Finance Ministry that it has no clue as to where diamond revenues are going and the potential of such opaque activities to cause instability in Zimbabwe and the entire SADC region;

ACKNOWLEDGING that diamonds deemed 'conflict free' by the KPCS are strengthening illegitimate governments and dictatorships in Africa whilst contributing to employment creation and sustainable development outside the continent;

CONCERNED with the difficulties faced by the KPCS to promote revenue transparency and sustainable development in its monitoring mechanism

ACKNOWLEDGING that governments have the primary responsibility to put in place systems that guarantee transparency, accountability, security and the rights of citizens;

**MAKE THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the definition of 'conflict diamonds' be changed to the following:

"Conflict diamonds are rough diamonds used to undermine human rights, democracy and sustainable development"

2. That the KPCS adds a specific clause on human rights, restricted to diamond mining areas only, as part of its minimum standards
3. That the KPCS demands revenue transparency as part of compliance with its minimum standards
4. That diamond mining companies are certified individually as opposed to a country level compliance
5. That the KPCS demand periodic reports on human rights, environment and sustainable development from diamond mining communities
6. That the KPCS also certifies a Local Monitoring Mechanism for diamond producing countries

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