

# Kimberley Plenary

## Speech by Hilde Hardeman

Brisbane, December 14, 2017

Mr Chairman,

Ministers,

Excellences,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

Let me thank Australia for their warm welcome and hospitality at this Kimberley Process Plenary meeting.

Let me thank and congratulate the Chair, Robert [Owen Jones] and his team, for having guided us through the agenda of this important year, and of this important meeting.

Let me further thank and congratulate the Chairs of the Kimberley Process working bodies for their crucial work.

And let me thank all of you, for the spirit of cooperation and joint commitment in which we have worked together.

The Kimberley process is at a crucial moment in its history.

It is with concern and regrets that we take note of the announcement of one of our civil society observers, that they will leave the process. We need to pause and reflect.

Indeed, since its inception, the Kimberley process has delivered as a tool for conflict prevention a sustainable development, because governments, civil society and industry understood that working hand in hand is in their joint interest, in the world's interest for peace and prosperity.

The main strength of the Kimberley process has always been that it looks beyond governments, to civil society and the private sector.

This tripartite structure remains the cornerstone for further success in tackling the challenges we face, and in making the most of the real opportunities ahead of us. We need to cherish, and further reinforce it.

The European Union is proud to be the next chair of the Kimberley process. We are well aware of the responsibility this puts on our shoulders.

Let me share with you briefly how we see the way ahead.

We look forward to working with India, as Vice Chair, with the Kimberley Process working bodies, with all Participants and Observers, with all of you, to deliver results.

The newly created Ad Hoc Committee for Review and Reform will have an important role to play.

By end 2018, we aim to have made tangible progress in supporting the honest diamond trade, and meeting the call of the international community to ensure that the Kimberley process remains fit for purpose in a changing world through reform.

We need to reinforce implementation and effectiveness, and focus on the human conditions in mining and the prosperity of producing communities.

Encouraging exchange of best practices among producing, manufacturing and trading countries, promoting information and data-sharing, strengthening the peer review system, and engaging with international organisations, will help further to reinforce the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certificate Scheme.

A regional approach can contribute to this end. The Mano River Union partnership between Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea is an example of regional cooperation that we support and aim to further support. We believe that this is a model the Kimberley Process can build on.

In the same spirit, by partnering with the United Nations system and joining up with international financial institutions, we will contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Ministers, Excellences, Ladies and gentlemen,

As incoming Chair, the European Union will aim for continuity. We have been committed to the creation and the success of the Kimberley Process since its establishment in 2003, and will continue to do so.

Guided by the principles of sustainability, inclusiveness, responsibility and dialogue, the European Union is committed to playing its role as an honest broker, and to working in a pragmatic and transparent way.

We will aim to deliver results that matter in real life and are credible on the ground, that help ensure sustainable livelihoods for producing communities, and that take account of the interests, and ensure the ownership, of all stakeholders.

Together, we will be stronger in achieving our goals, in assessing and upgrading the Kimberley Process for peace and prosperity.

We will be grateful for your support.

We will launch practical work right away in January [2018], and take stock of our joint efforts at the Intercessional in Antwerp in June. I look forward to welcoming you there.

Thank you for your attention.

Brisbane, December 14, 2017