

**Statement by His Excellency Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations at the General Assembly debate on “the Role of Diamonds in Fuelling Conflicts: Breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflicts as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts”**

**December 04, 2006**

**Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Mr. President Festus G. Mogae and Chairman of our Committee  
Distinguished delegates,**

I have the honour to speak on this important issue, on which there has been a great deal of progress in the past years. We congratulate Botswana and the European Commission for their election as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2006. Our congratulation is also extensive to Canada for the excellent work undertaken during its chairmanship.

**Mr. President,**

We associate ourselves to the statement made by His Excellency president Festus G. Mogae president of Botswana in his capacity as Chairman of the Kimberley Process and express our sincere gratitude for the report he has presented us this morning.

**Mr. President,**

Angola remains deeply concerned about the illicit trade of rough diamonds. Unfortunately, this illegal trade continues to threaten in several communities by fuelling armed conflict.

Angola remain committed to working jointly with the relevant governmental authorities of diamond producing and importing nations, as well as legitimate private diamond companies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in fighting this serious scourge.

**Mr. President,**

Efforts to address the problem of conflict diamonds started some time ago. SADC Mining Ministers, in 2000, in Cape Town, South Africa, agreed that

international action was imperative to address the problem of conflict diamonds from negatively affecting the trade of legitimate diamonds, which makes a critical contribution to the economies of these countries.

In this connection, when we last debated the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, the overwhelming sense of the General Assembly was already one of satisfaction at the progress achieved by the international community, through the Kimberley Process,.

The General Assembly particularly welcomed the introduction by the Kimberley Process of a peers review system, to provide assurances that the provisions of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme are in fact being implemented by all Participants in the Scheme.

Today, no one doubts at all that the Kimberley Process is indeed a tremendous success. The excellent and comprehensive report presented by Botswana as Chair of the Kimberly Process makes clear the extent to which the Certification Scheme has modified the diamond trade at the global level, as we believe that only the widest possible participation in the certification scheme will achieve the results we all seek: a reduction of conflict and human suffering through the illegal trade of diamonds and natural resources.

The Kimberley Process has therefore, given governments a greater degree of control over their diamond resources. It has also clamped down on smuggling with numerous cases of illicit diamonds being seized, which would otherwise have ended up illegally on world markets.

By adopting Resolutions 55/56 and 56/263 that the General Assembly has a crucial role to play in breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict, which represents an important contribution to the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts.

**Mr. President,**

This progress achieved in international implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, demonstrates what can be attained by the international community in addressing the issues of serious international concern, as the illicit trade of diamonds.

It is hoped that the United Nations will continue to support the implementation of the Kimberly Process, since it helps to ensure the effective implementation of relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning the trade of conflict diamonds.

**Mr. President,**

Since the very beginning, Angola has played an important role in international efforts to addressing the global trade in conflict diamonds, which have had a devastating impact on peace and human security in several African countries, including Angola.

In the case of Angola it was important to ensure that the decisions of the Security Council regarding sanctions were in fact translated into effective action.

A key lesson drawn from this process is devoted to the measures to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the implementation of targeted sanctions, the necessary coordination among UN actors, and the importance of sanctions committees that have the leading role in monitoring the implementation of Security Council targeted sanctions.

**Mr. President,**

With the lessons from the implementation of international coordination action in dealing with illicit diamond trading, particularly in Africa, at the initiative of Angola and particularly of the president of the Republic of Angola, His Excellency Jose Eduardo dos Santos, a recent initiative was launched to establish the African Countries Diamond Producers Association (ADPA). The organization is designed to coordinate action by African producers on the world diamond market, as well as harmonize legislation and encourage foreign investment in the industry.

This confirms the concerns of the government of Angola in relation to the issue of continued illegal trade of blood diamonds particularly from Africa as the continent counts for nearly 60 per cent of the world diamond production.

The newly established ADPA could play a pivotal role as the institution that can congregate the producer's countries as well as provide a forum with a view to permanent cooperation in order to achieve a sustainable growth in the industry not just in Africa but in the world.

In this connection, both producer and consumer countries should adopt measures to allow more active and concerted intervention with a view to transforming the diamonds gains into development.

The positive results achieved in the fight against conflict diamonds and the illicit trade of diamonds is the evidence that the more united the countries are the better. The international community should continue to push forward the Kimberly Process in order to put an end to the role diamonds play in financing wars and international terrorism.

**Mr. President,**

Allow me to make a final observation. The wars which the Kimberly process Certification Scheme was designed to tackle have now ended. But Angola believes that as a conflict prevention instrument, the KPCS remains vital. This Resolution will send a strong and clear message that the international community is not complacent about the continuing potential of diamonds in fuelling conflict.

Angola will continue to do whatever it takes to see that the issue of conflict diamonds continues to be addressed in a comprehensive manner through the implementation of the international certification scheme. We therefore look forward to the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution before us today.

**I thank you.**