



Press Release

Alrosa and AWDC reaffirm strong relationship at Antwerp diamond industry networking evening

Moscow, 10 December 2015 – The excellent collaboration between Antwerp, the leading diamond trade hub, and Russian mining giant Alrosa, the world’s largest diamond producer, was once again highlighted at an exclusive networking event in the margins of Alrosa’s diamond tender period. The event, a joint initiative by Alrosa and AWDC, was held in the Belgian Ambassador’s residence in Moscow.

As the most important diamond trade center in the world, Antwerp is home to the largest number of Alrosa’s long-term customers. Alrosa sells approximately 70% of its rough diamond production by means of exclusive contracts with these customers. The mining giant currently has long-term contracts with 47 companies, 17 of which have their headquarters in Antwerp.

New customers

AWDC and Alrosa jointly organized a high-level networking evening in cooperation with the Belgian Ambassador in Russia, Mr. Alex Van Meeuwen, who hosted the event. Among those in attendance were: the Governor of the Province of Antwerp, Ms. Cathy Berx; the President of Alrosa, Mr. Andrey Zharkov; representatives of the AWDC Board of Directors, Mr. Ramesh Patel and Mr. Jacques Weisz; representatives from the Gokhran - the State Precious Metals and Gems Repository - and several senior officials from the Russian government. All Alrosa long-term clients were invited to this networking evening.

Alrosa president Zharkov emphasized during his speech their strong ties with Antwerp, referring to the fact that the very first long-term Alrosa contracts were closed in the city on the Scheldt, and not by coincidence. AWDC president Stéphane Fischler spoke about the fruitful collaboration between AWDC and Alrosa, and about the leadership role that both diamond centers currently fulfill. This leading role will only be further reinforced in the coming years, according to Fischler, illustrated for instance by the appointment of Alrosa vice president Andrey Polyakov as the next president of the World Diamond Council. The WDC represents the global diamond industry in the Kimberley Process.

A total of 33 Belgian companies made the journey to Moscow, including 15 long-term contract holders. During the event, companies without an exclusive contract with Alrosa also received the opportunity to establish contacts with the world’s largest diamond producer.

Antwerp – Russia relations

The networking event with Alrosa was an important occasion for Antwerp diamond traders. Russia is the largest diamond producing country in the world, with a total production of 38.3 million carats of

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rough diamonds in 2014. 24% of all rough diamonds imported to Antwerp come from Russia. Antwerp, and by extension the European Union, is also the most important export market for Russian diamonds.

Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) is an industry-established foundation, whose mission is to serve and support the diamond business in Antwerp, the world's most important diamond trade hub. AWDC is the coordinating body and the official representative of the Antwerp diamond sector, and as such is recognized internationally as the host, spokesperson and intermediary for the Belgian diamond community. In this capacity, AWDC liaises on behalf of the Belgian diamond sector with governments and actively promotes support for the diamond sector at home and abroad.

84% of all rough diamonds and 50% of all polished diamonds pass through Antwerp. Diamonds represent 5% of the total Belgian exports and 15% of all Belgian exports outside the EU, making diamonds the most important export product outside the EU.

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