



Press release

## **Antwerp diamond industry launches offensive in Latin America**

**After the Antwerp diamond industry had made it a priority in recent years to conquer the Asian market, in 2015 it will set its sights on Latin America. Brazil in particular has many opportunities with regard to diamond production. Accompanied by Secretary of State for Foreign Trade Pieter De Crem, from 12 through 17 March the Antwerp World Diamond Centre will travel to Brazil for the first time.**

Brazil currently ranks only 17<sup>th</sup> among diamond producing countries, but it has tremendous potential. Geologists have mapped the Brazilian landscape in recent years, discovering some fifty potential diamond mines.

“These mines are currently untapped territory, literally and figuratively,” says Margaux Donckier, spokeswoman of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre. “Antwerp wishes to make its expertise and know-how available in order to develop this potential in Brazil with regard to mining activities as well as concerning implementation of the strict regulations that apply to the diamond industry.”

### **Investing in Brazil**

In the context of the trade mission of Secretary of State for Foreign Trade Peter De Crem, the Antwerp World Diamond Centre is organizing a seminar about the Kimberley Process regulations, which are the guarantee that diamonds are traded legally.

“Antwerp is one of the leaders when it comes to applying the strict Kimberley Process regulations, and with the more than 550 years of experience as a trade center that we have to offer, Brazil is welcoming us with open arms,” says Donckier.

The annual figures from 2014, showing commercial turnover of 58.8 billion USD, demonstrated once again that Antwerp remains the most important trading center for diamonds. The fact that new mines opt for Antwerp when it comes to trading their diamonds can only reinforce this position.

### **Antwerp diamond industry plants trees on Brazilian soil**

During the mission, Secretary of State for Foreign Trade Pieter De Crem will take time out to pay a visit to the Antwerp World Diamond Centre’s WeForest project. WeForest is an international non-profit association committed to reforestation in areas where the natural forestation has been compromised, for example by activities from the mining industry.

With the support of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre, WeForest will plant 24,290 trees in an area the size of twelve football fields.

# Diamonds love Antwerp

**Private Stichting – Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC)** ☐ Hoveniersstraat 22, BE-2018 Antwerpen, Belgium  
T +32 3 222 05 11 ☐ F+32 3 222 05 99 ☐ info@awdc.be ☐ www.awdc.be ☐ BTW – BE 0885 969 987



The Antwerp World Diamond Centre has supported WeForest since 2012. “It is a symbolic decision, given the chemical composition of diamonds (carbon) and the positive effect of the planted trees on the environment (removing CO2 from the air),” says Margaux Donckier. “But the choice of Brazil also demonstrates how strongly we believe in this country. In 2015, Brazil will serve as the geographical priority for Antwerp as a diamond industry.”

## Facts & Figures

Brazil is currently ranked 17<sup>th</sup> on the list of diamond producing countries, with annual production of around 50,000 carats per year, good for a value of 3.7 million USD.

Nearly half of this production, some 46%, is exported to the United States. Europe is accountable for no less than 23% of Brazilian exports.

A new mine will be commercially exploited for the first time this year: the Lipari Mine. The entire production of this mine, some 225,000 carats annually, will be processed in Antwerp. Brazil’s percentage of exports to Europe will thereby increase in the coming years.

Later this year, the Antwerp diamond sector will travel across the pond for a second time in its function as co-organizer of the GMB Brazil (Global Minerals Business Brazil) conference. The objective of this high level event is to bring the Brazilian & Antwerp diamond and jewelry industry closer together.

**AWDC**, Antwerp World Diamond Centre, 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.

### Press contact:

Margaux Donckier, Spokeswoman

[Mado@awdc.be](mailto:Mado@awdc.be)

+32 478 32 47 97

Karen Rentmeesters, Manager Communications

[karenrentmeesters@awdc.eu](mailto:karenrentmeesters@awdc.eu)

+32 497 83 80 35

# Diamonds love Antwerp

Private Stichting – Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) ☐ Hoveniersstraat 22, BE-2018 Antwerpen, Belgium  
T +32 3 222 05 11 ☐ F+32 3 222 05 99 ☐ [info@awdc.be](mailto:info@awdc.be) ☐ [www.awdc.be](http://www.awdc.be) ☐ BTW – BE 0885 969 987