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Press release

The Belgian city of Antwerp and the Chinese city of Shanghai celebrated the 30th anniversary of their sisterhood ties with a spectacular fashion show in Shanghai, completely accessorized with diamonds. The exclusive evening was organized by the Antwerp World Diamond Centre. Antwerp diamond traders traveled to Shanghai and seized the opportunity to network with the Chinese diamond traders present at the event.

Antwerp fashion designers Ann Demeulemeester, Haider Ackermann and Jean-Paul Lespagnard showed a number of unique pieces that they had carefully selected from their collection for this 'Diamond Night'. Diamond jewelry from Antwerp, provided by diamond company Casa Gi, added sparkle to the clothes on the runway. The entire evening was sponsored by Silk Road Diamonds.

"China is the fastest growing market for diamonds," says Margaux Donckier, spokeswoman for the Antwerp World Diamond Centre. "A good relationship with the Shanghai Diamond Exchange is therefore of great importance for the Antwerp diamond sector.

Last year, Antwerp exported 1,8 million carats of polished diamond to China and Hong Kong, with a value of 3,7 billion dollar. This success can be explained by young Chinese couples, which think that a diamond ring is a condition for a good marriage.

The growing popularity of diamonds is also an explanation of the growth of the Chinese jewelry market in total. Today, the jewelry market in China is worth 75 million dollar. According to experts, the Chinese jewelry market will be worth more than \$100 billion by 2015, which would bring China to the same level as the United States by 2020.

During the mission, the Antwerp World Diamond Centre signed several MOUs with the Shanghai Diamond Exchange, aiming to improve cooperation between the two trading centers even more in the years to come. The mission concluded with a so-called 'Diamond Night', where the participating Antwerp diamond traders got the chance to meet their Chinese counterparts.

Silk Road Diamonds, sponsor of the Antwerp Diamond Night: "This mission personifies everything we stand for as Belgian-Chinese company: establishing a link between Antwerp and China, just like the Silk Road connected the East and the West ages ago. We are honored to have sponsored this event."

"With over 550 years worth of knowledge and experience, Antwerp guarantees excellent quality, a controlled and transparent trade and good prices," says Margaux Donckier. "This is why the Chinese like to do business with Antwerp, which is of course beneficial for the industry in our country."

The Antwerp diamond district is home to more than 1,700 diamond companies, directly creating 6600 jobs and indirectly creating 32,600 jobs. Diamonds represent 5% of Belgian exports of goods and services and 15% of Belgian exports outside the EU. That makes diamonds the most important Belgian export outside the EU.

Diamonds love Antwerp

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Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) is the coordinating body and the official representative of the Antwerp diamond sector. AWDC promotes the entire diamond industry at home and abroad and is internationally recognized as the host, spokesperson and intermediary for the entire Belgian diamond community.

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.

[Pictures of the Diamond Night are available on www.awdc.be](http://www.awdc.be)

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