



Press Release

## Belgium the leading importer of Canadian diamonds

Ottawa, 13 March 2018 – Diamond is the most important product in the trade relations between Belgium and Canada. Diamonds represent 21% of all Canadian imports to Belgium. In the Canadian Museum of Nature, King Filip and Queen Mathilde were immersed in the process of diamond mining in the Northwest Territories, the area responsible for 90% of diamond production in Canada.

It took Canada only ten years to develop into the third most important diamond producing country (in value) worldwide. In 2016, the country produced about 13 million carats of diamonds for a total value of US\$1.4 billion. Thanks to this production, Canada accounted for 10% of the world's total diamond output in 2017. The Northwest Territories in particular are an important source of diamonds. In this expansive area, which has only 44,000 residents, are located three very important diamond mines: Ekati, Diavik and Gahcho Kué.

60% of the total production of Canadian mines – worth about 860 million dollars – are traded directly on the Antwerp diamond market. Almost the entire production of Ekati, Diavik and the Renard mine in the Quebec area are traded in Antwerp. Half of the Gahcho Kué mine production goes straight to the market in Antwerp.

It is no coincidence that Canada has selected Antwerp as the primary market for its diamonds, as our two countries share the same values, such as sustainability, transparency and a very strict implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

The Royal couple was immersed in a 360-degree mine experience in the Canadian Museum of Nature. They were guided through the different phases of the mining process, facilitated by an interactive exhibition that provided them in-depth information about diamond exploration, the mining process, the sorting of diamonds by size and quality and, last but not least, the impact diamond mining has on the area and the local community.

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

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