



Press Release

## Delegation of American Jewelers Visits Antwerp Diamond Industry

**Antwerp, 13 July 2016 - For the past three days a delegation of leading jewelers and diamond traders from the United States have been getting acquainted with their counterparts in Antwerp, enjoying a behind-the-scenes look at the diamond capital and doing business at high-level networking events. This visit took place in the framework of a new initiative by the Antwerp World Diamond Centre, "Antwerp Diamond Experience", intended to bring groups of jewelers, wholesalers and manufacturers from major and upcoming diamond markets into direct contact with Antwerp diamantaires and give them inside access to the world's leading diamond trade center.**

The delegation was treated to dinner in Antwerp's historic City Hall, but the real business took place during the networking events with Antwerp dealers. The American delegation was clearly enthusiastic about this initiative. "This trip has reawakened my passion for diamonds," said Ilan Dahan, Business Development Director of Crown Ring "and I am going to take that passion back to my clients. When you become entrenched in your familiar environment, it is easy to forget what it was that made you so enthusiastic about diamonds in the first place. Coming here has rekindled my enthusiasm, and I would encourage anyone in the trade to make the trip to Antwerp."

Laurie Kottke, who runs a fine jewelry business in Minneapolis and has been to Antwerp several times as a 'personal shopper' for her clients, said the inside access gained on this trip, "has opened up an entirely new perspective. I run a small store in a big market, so I am always looking for ways to differentiate my business. Based on what I have seen here, and the whole story around it, I expect to be returning with a much longer shopping list next time."

This was not the first international delegation to visit in the framework of the "Antwerp Diamond Experience". Earlier this year the Antwerp diamond industry welcomed groups from Kuwait, Turkey and Iran. A second delegation from the US, followed by groups from Armenia and then China will round out the first year of AWDC's new program.

**AWDC**, short for 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 are 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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# Diamonds love Antwerp

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