



Press Release

## Delegation of Chinese Jewelers Visits Antwerp Diamond Industry

**Antwerp, 23 November 2016 - For the past three days a delegation of 21 leading jewelers from China, who collectively represent more than 8,000 points-of-sale, have been getting acquainted with the Antwerp diamond industry. The visit took place in the framework of a new initiative by the Antwerp World Diamond Centre, the "Antwerp Diamond Experience", intended to provide groups of foreign jewelers, wholesalers and manufacturers inside access to the world's diamond capital. Seeing as how China is currently the second largest jewelry market following the United States, this served as an incredible opportunity.**

According to Margaux Donckier, spokeswoman for the AWDC: "This approach, whereby jewelers come to Antwerp instead of the diamantaires having to travel around the world, is much more efficient and cost effective. The diamantaires are also given the opportunity to make one-on-one appointments during the networking sessions, and then meet these jewelers in the confines of their own offices."

On Tuesday the Chinese delegation went on a speed dating spree in the Antwerp Diamond Club, one of the four diamond bourses in Antwerp. The delegates were given six-minute introductory sessions to determine whether or not the Antwerp companies were a match, and when the buzzer chimed, it was on to the next. According to Marianne Georges, top saleswoman at Diarough N.V., "We felt the introductions went very well, and fully expect tangible results to emerge from this initiative. We are all looking to grow in this business. It's just a matter of meeting the right clients, and this is a step in the right direction."

This was not the first international delegation to visit within the framework of the "Antwerp Diamond Experience". Earlier this year the Antwerp diamond industry welcomed groups from Kuwait, Turkey, Iran and most recently the United States. The Chinese group was the final delegation of the year for the AWDC's new program, with more countries scheduled for the coming year.

**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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