



Press Release

Diplomats from across the globe tour Antwerp's diamond sector

Antwerp, 17 September 2014 – Today, 150 diplomats descended upon Antwerp. In the context of the Diplomatic Day, organized by the City of Antwerp, they visited the Antwerp World Diamond Centre. Diamond Office, the beating heart of AWDC, attracted a lot of interest.

Just like diamonds, diplomats travel around the world. Wherever they go, they transmit their knowledge. As diamonds are one of the most important Belgian export products, and are inextricably linked to Antwerp, a visit to the diamond district could not be omitted.

Diplomats learned today that the vast majority of diamonds come to Antwerp to be traded. Here in Antwerp the precious stones undergo quite a number of checks before they continue their journey around the world, for example, so they can leave for

Sri Lanka (to be cut and polished), to New York (to be traded), followed by Turkey (to be set in a jewel), and to finally be sold in China to a groom-to-be.

"Diamonds are manufactured and sold worldwide, but almost all the stones in rough and polished form, pass through Antwerp at some point," said Margaux Donckier, spokeswoman for the Antwerp World Diamond Centre. "More than 550 years of experience, the large number of potential customers, and thorough controls explain this."

During their visit, diplomats learned about how diamonds are formed, the production process of a diamond from mine to jewel, and the role of Antwerp in this whole chain. "The control procedures conducted in Diamond Office, the inspection of each consignment of imported or exported diamonds, received a lot of interest," said Margaux Donckier. "It is the strict controls that ensure a fair and transparent diamond trade and distinguish Antwerp from other diamond centers such as Dubai or Mumbai."

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.

Diamonds love Antwerp

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