



Press Release

New AWDC Board reelects Stéphane Fischler as President

Antwerp, June 27 - 2014. On Wednesday June 25, during the first meeting of the new Board of Directors of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) the Board members reelected Stéphane Fischler as President of the AWDC. The Board of Directors also appointed Kaushik Mehta as Vice-President, representing the trade, and Freddy Inzlicht as Vice-President representing the Bourses.

In 2012, the by-laws of the AWDC extended the duration of the mandates to four instead of two years and implemented an alternating rotation system that will renew half of the board every two years, which ensures continuation in the Board of Directors over the years.

In accordance with AWDC by-laws, this week, the Bourses put forth three Board Directors as their representatives; Alfred (Freddy) Inzlicht, Jacques (Jacky) Korn and first time Board member Mr. Thierry Polakiewicz. The diamond manufacturers (SBD and VKD) proposed Mr. Stéphane Fischler.

The remaining six Board Directors, Mr. Kaushik Mehta, Mr. Santosh Kedia, Mr. Shailesh Javeri, Mr. Samir Mehta and Mr. Jacques Weisz, elected as trade representatives through direct elections in 2012, remain in their position for two more years, until the 2016 elections.

AWDC's CEO Ari Epstein: " I sincerely congratulate Mr. Fischler on his reelection as AWDC President. Over the past two years Stéphane Fischler has proven to be a skillful leader of our Board of Directors. He is highly respected and well known for his dedication towards the Antwerp diamond community and beyond. As CEO of our organization, I look forward to continuing the excellent cooperation with both Mr. Fischler and our Board of Directors."

Stéphane Fischler was born in Antwerp in 1958. He is a third-generation diamantaire who started working at Fischler Diamonds in 1979. The company was founded in 1953 by Aby and Cappi Fischler, and by the late Bram Fischler, who served as President of the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, the Antwerp Diamond Bourse and the HRD. Stéphane Fischler is currently a partner in the company.

Over the years Mr. Fischler has held many executive positions in various industry bodies. Since 1994, he has been serving as Vice President of SBD (the Belgian Diamond Manufacturers Association). He also served as Vice President of IDMA from 1996 to 1997 and Secretary-General/Treasurer of IDMA from 1998 to 2008 and current IDMA Treasurer. In addition, he served as President of WTOCD (scientific diamond research center) from 1998 to 1999, and has been a member of its board for several years. Mr. Fischler is a founding member and current Board member of the World Diamond Council (WDC). He also served as HRD's Treasurer from 2005 till 2008 and as Vice-President of the AWDC from 2010 to 2012. He was Chairman of the International Diamond Council (IDC) between 2008 and 2014. Since 2010, Mr. Fischler has been Board member of the Diamond and Jewellery Management Institute Antwerp and since 2007 he is Vice-President and Board member of the Diamond Development Initiative (DDI).

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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