



Press Release: Karen Rentmeesters appointed new, permanent CEO of Antwerp World Diamond Centre

Antwerp, July 19, 2024. Yesterday, the Board of Directors of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC), the umbrella organization defending the interests of Antwerp's diamond community, appointed Karen Rentmeesters as the new, permanent CEO. Rentmeesters, who has more than 14 years of experience within the organization, including 7 years as head of the PR & Industry Relations department and 3 months as interim CEO, will immediately assume the role. In her new role as CEO, she is tasked to guide Antwerp back to growth, among others, by focusing on optimizing AWDC's operations.

Karen Rentmeesters began her career at the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) in 2010 and took up various roles within the organization in the past 14 years. She started as Communications Officer, continued to lead the PR & Industry Relations department, and assuming the role of interim CEO three months ago, a role which is now confirmed in a permanent appointment. Karen has an impressive track record within the ranks of the AWDC, says Isidore Mörsel, President of the AWDC Board of Directors.

“The fact that all board members unanimously agreed to appoint Karen as permanent CEO of the AWDC speaks volumes about the trust we all put in her”, says Mörsel. “Karen can count on her vast experience in the diamond industry, an extensive network and the necessary expertise. In the past three months, as interim CEO, she has demonstrated to be an absolute added value for the organization. She has a solid understanding of our industry and of the challenges our industry is currently facing. She is not afraid to tackle difficult decisions and brings a creative approach to the table, which, combined with her experience, makes her the perfect person for the job. I am very happy with her appointment and wish her all the best. She will be able to count on the full support of the Board of Directors to fulfill her tasks.”

“I look forward to continuing the work I started as interim CEO. In the past few months, some key issues have been addressed, but it will take a lot more for Antwerp to return to a growing and flourishing diamond trade hub”, says Karen Rentmeesters. “Ensuring AWDC is an efficient, well-organized, and trusted partner for our diamond companies is a key challenge. In my new role as CEO, I am fully committed to achieving that goal, together with the Board and our teams. In addition, the global diamond industry faces geopolitical challenges and is in a worldwide crisis. As a representative body, it is crucial that we can guide our companies through these turbulent times and offer perspective for the future.”, Rentmeesters concludes.

Karen Rentmeesters is 45 years old, married, and has two children. She earned a master's degree in Communication Sciences at the University of Leuven in 2002. Throughout her career, she has led teams of various sizes, built up an extensive network, and has in-depth knowledge of the diamond industry from mine to finger.



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