



Conflict Diamonds

Major world leaders - including Nelson Mandela - have cited the importance of diamonds to the lives of African people.

With the recent release of Warner Brothers motion picture “Blood Diamond”, I feel it is my duty to provide clarity on this topic and further educate people to both sides of this issue to gain a better understanding of this most unsettling area of our beautiful industry, and our stance against it.

Jewelers like myself have always known of the horrible atrocities that happen in the civil war-torn regions of Angola, Liberia, Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo (also known as Congo Brazzaville).

Yes, it is true; some diamonds are being used as leverage for the betterment of rebels in regions of Africa. Since diamonds are the most precious gems on our planet, it makes sense that they can be used to fuel war and greed.

Conflict diamonds are diamonds illegally traded to fund conflict in war-torn areas, particularly in central and western Africa. The United Nations (UN) defines conflict diamonds as “...diamonds that originate from areas controlled by forces or factions opposed to legitimate and internationally recognized governments, and are used to fund military action in opposition to those governments, or in contravention of the decisions of the Security Council.” These diamonds are sometimes referred to as “blood diamonds.”

The jewelry industry has not turned their back on this. Most

definitely on the contrary, it has adopted sure measures, initiatives, and laws that have prevented conflict diamonds from entering the global supply chain.

In July 2000, the global diamond industry made clear to the international community its zero tolerance policy towards conflict diamonds. Dedicated to eradicating the trade in conflict diamonds, it worked closely with the United Nations, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Global Witness and Partnership Africa Canada to create the Kimberley Process Certification System (KPCS). This system was formally adopted in 2003 and guards against conflict diamonds entering the legitimate diamond supply chain. The diamond industry also adopted a voluntary System of Warranties to assure consumers that their diamonds are from sources free of conflict.

Today 71 governments have enshrined into their national law the Kimberley Process Certification System, and now more than 99% of the world’s diamonds are from conflict free sources. However, even one conflict diamond is one too many. The diamond industry continues to work with governments, NGOs and the UN to strengthen the Kimberley Process and the System of Warranties.

While diamonds have been used to fund conflict, the prob-

lem is not the diamonds themselves but the rebels who exploit diamonds (along with other natural resources) to achieve their illicit goals. The vast majority of diamonds come from countries at peace. These countries have been able to invest the revenue from diamonds into the development of infrastructure, schools and hospitals for the good of the communities in which diamonds are found. These countries include Australia, Botswana, Canada, Namibia, Russia, South Africa and Tanzania.

Today, more than 99% of the world's diamonds are now from conflict free sources and are officially traded under the UN mandated Kimberley Process.

Our Stance

Gold & Gems Fine Jewelry, owned and run by my father & myself, have always served our clients conscientiously and are proud to choose products from mainstream, quality designers and companies that operate with utmost class, dignity, and highly ethical approach to their business'. The jewelers in Southern Oregon, as well as the jewelers that I associate with globally, possess the same passionate belief system. We can assure you that your diamond jewelry is from one of thousands of non-conflict sources.

Sure Solution for Selecting a Diamond

For those who feel that 99% just isn't enough, I invite you to come see The Arctic Love Diamond. We are proud to provide them exclusively from our store. These spectacular diamonds are mined, graded, cut, polished, branded, certified and distributed wholly from the Northwest Territories and are truly a sight to behold.

On the behalf of Gold & Gems Fine Jewelry and all of the fantastic people of this great industry, I appreciate you reading this article and encourage you to further educate yourself about this world's most coveted, most beautiful, most timeless of gems...the diamond.



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Interesting Facts of the Diamond Industry

Fact #1: An estimated 5 million people have access to appropriate health-care globally thanks to revenues from diamonds.

Fact #2: Conflict diamonds have been reduced from approximately 4% to considerably less than 1% since the implementation of the Kimberley Process in 2003.

Fact #3: An estimated 10 million people globally are directly or indirectly supported by the diamond industry.

Fact #4: The diamond mining industry generates over 40% of Namibia's annual export earnings.

Fact #5: Diamond revenues enable every child in Botswana to receive free education up to the age of 13.

Fact #6: In July 2000, the global diamond industry announced its zero-tolerance policy towards conflict diamonds and continues to drive this policy.

Fact #7: Sierra Leone is now at peace and exported approximately \$142 million diamonds in 2005.

Fact #8: Approximately one million people are employed by the diamond industry in India.

Fact #9: Approximately \$8.4 billion worth of diamonds a year come from African countries.

Fact #10: More than 99% of diamonds are now from conflict free sources and traded under the UN-mandated Kimberley Process.

Fact #11: The Diamond Development Initiative was established to improve the working conditions of artisanal miners.

Fact #12: The revenue from diamonds is instrumental in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Fact #13: Under the Kimberley Process, rough diamonds can only be exported and imported when accompanied by a certificate from the exporting country.

Fact #14: The charity Jewelers for Children funds a community based care program for orphaned children in South Africa.

Fact #15: An estimated 65% of the world's diamonds come from African countries.

Fact #16: Today, 71 governments and the legitimate diamond industry are all committed and legally bound to eradicating conflict diamonds.

Fact #17: The diamond industry has introduced a system to help give greater assurances to retailers and to provide consumers with

the reassurance that their diamond is from a conflict free source.

Fact #18: Diamonds account for 33% of the GDP (approximately \$3 billion) of Botswana. Since diamonds were discovered in Botswana, GDP annual growth rate has averaged 7%.

Fact #19: Major world leaders - including Nelson Mandela - have cited the importance of diamonds to the lives of African people.

Fact #20: It is estimated that one million people work in the informal (artisanal) alluvial diamond-digging sector.

Fact #21: Some diamond producing countries are not Kimberley Process compliant.

Fact #22: In November, 2006, 71 Governments, leading NGOs, and the World Diamond Council agreed on measures to further strengthen the Kimberley Process.

Fact #23: At the 2006 Kimberley Process Plenary, the industry committed funds and resources to address challenges faced by countries with a high prevalence of artisanal alluvial mining.