

Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chair of the Kimberley Process, Concludes Fact-Finding Mission to West Africa

- *Visit of “exemplary” Sierra Leone and Ghana aimed to drive best practices across Kimberley Process membership under UAE-led “Year of Delivery”*
- *This is first official visit of both countries by an acting Kimberley Process Chair and precedes earlier visit by Ahmed Bin Sulayem to CAR*
- *Tour of key African members precedes vital KP intersessional meeting in Dubai in May 2024 to drive and reform global diamond agenda*

26 March 2024

Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chair of the Kimberley Process (KP), led a delegation from the UAE to the West African countries of Sierra Leone and Ghana in March to evaluate the local implementation of Kimberley Process procedures and gain insights into best practices applied in the two countries. This marked the first visit to both nations by an acting KP Chair.

This visit followed an earlier trip to the Central African Republic, aimed at expediting the review process by the KP’s Working Group of Monitoring and initiating efforts to reinstate the country’s diamond trade, which had been partially restricted due to unrest.

During the five-day visit to Sierra Leone and Ghana, Bin Sulayem engaged in discussions with government officials, industry representatives, and artisanal miners across the countries, including with Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President, Sierra Leone.

The UAE delegation visited significant diamond exploration sites, including the underground Meya Mine, artisanal mines, and Gemfair – a De Beers-initiated pilot programme providing a secure and transparent route to market for ethically-sourced ASM diamonds from Sierra Leone. This initiative is underpinned by a tailored digital traceability solution.

Additionally, meetings were held with Ghana’s Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, led by Honourable George Mireku Duker, Deputy Minister, and PMMC (Precious Minerals Marketing Company Limited), which serves as the country’s KP focal point.

Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chair of the Kimberley Process, remarked: *“Both Sierra Leone and Ghana are exemplary members of the Kimberley Process, actively participating across several of its work streams. These countries have been exceptionally successful in leveraging the KP to curb smuggling, with robust internal controls and mechanisms that set the standard. In this year of delivery for the Kimberley Process, and the industry facing challenging geopolitical overreach, it’s crucial that we listen and learn from each other as we collectively shape the next generation, including a more digital version of the Kimberley Process.”*

The UAE was the first and only Arab country to Chair the Kimberley Process in 2016, an international group tasked with regulating the global diamond trade. Established in 2003 by the United Nations, 85 participating countries seek to ensure that unregulated rough diamonds do not enter the legitimate diamond market as a means to finance conflict. In 2024, the UAE once again assumed the chairmanship of the Kimberley Process.

The UAE has committed to making 2024 a ‘Year of Delivery,’ aiming to overcome political gridlocks. Key focuses under UAE leadership include the establishment of a permanent secretariat in Botswana, completion of the KP review and reform cycle, and the digitalization of KP certificates on the blockchain.



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