

## UAE Kimberley Process Chair Visits Central African Republic to Expedite Diamond Trade Reinstatement

- *Ahmed Bin Sulayem, the UAE's Chair of the Kimberley Process, visited the Central African Republic (CAR) in February to scope out the country's diamond situation*
- *The visit aimed to give momentum for an official review and reinstatement of CAR's diamond trade*

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Ahmed Bin Sulayem, the Chair of the Kimberley Process (KP), recently led a delegation from the UAE to the Central African Republic (CAR) in February to assess the diamond situation first hand. It was his second visit to CAR, previously visiting as KP Chair in 2016.

Since 2013, the Kimberley Process has imposed a temporary ban on the import and export of rough diamonds from CAR due to unrest. With the security situation improving, eight subprefectures have since been approved for diamond exports, while 16 remain restricted.

During the five-day visit, Bin Sulayem engaged in discussions with government officials, industry representatives and artisanal miners across the country.

CAR's government-team led by the Honourable Rufin Benam Beltoungou, Minister of Mines and Geology, hosted the UAE's delegation as they visited key diamond exploration cities, including Bouar, Berbérati and Bria, before concluding meetings in the capital, Bangui, with Prime Minister Félix Moloua.

Reinstating of CAR's diamond trade is at a critical stage and urgent. The Kimberley Process designated monitoring team for CAR has yet to visit the country in 2024. Meanwhile, the lab-grown industry is gaining ground.

**Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chair of the Kimberley Process**, said: *"By not reinstating certain regions of CAR into the Kimberley Process, it means that diamonds mined in non-approved areas can only be traded illicitly, significantly impacting the livelihood of families and children across the country. With South Africa now chairing the KP Working Group on Monitoring, I am confident that the situation in CAR will be properly addressed. We strongly urge the CAR Monitoring Team, led by the USA, to expedite a review mission which has not been prioritised for ten years. Our recent visit to CAR reaffirms the need for action."*

Civil Society, a Kimberley Process member, has previously echoed concerns about the slow pace of CAR's full reinstatement into the Kimberley Process, emphasising the need for constructive approaches to ensure the country and its people benefit from their diamond wealth.

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 chairs the Kimberley Process.

CAR, which has a population of 5.5 million people, remains one of the world's poorest countries despite rich natural wealth in diamonds, gold, oil and uranium. Real GDP growth stagnated in 2022 due to severe flooding and fuel shortages.



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