

**“The Role of the United Nations in Breaking the Link
Between Diamonds and Civil War in Africa”**

**Statement to the International Ministerial Diamond Conference by
Ambassador Paul Heinbecker (Canada)
Chairman, Security Council Committee established pursuant to
resolution 864 (1993) concerning the Situation in Angola**

Pretoria, South Africa – Wednesday, 20 September 2000

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to address the International Ministerial Diamond Conference.

Many of you here today worked closely with my predecessor as Chairman of the Angola Sanctions Committee, Bob Fowler.

As his successor, I hope I can count on continuing to receive your cooperation. I will work with the same commitment to the same ends, as he did.

Several of you have also extended assistance to other members of the Security Council, including through the unprecedented hearings on diamonds chaired by my colleague, Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury of Bangladesh, Chairman of the Sierra Leone Sanctions Committee.

I am confident that I speak for all my colleagues on the Council in thanking you for that assistance and in encouraging closer ties between the Security Council and the entire diamond sector.

In its efforts to break the link between diamonds and armed conflict, the United Nations has sought collaboration of the very sort that is embodied by the Kimberley Process.

The Security Council possesses a mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Its resolutions are binding under international law.

The definition of security itself is broadening to respond to changing circumstances – since the end of the Cold War there have been more conflicts and more civilian casualties.

In fact, civilians have become the actual, not the incidental targets in these conflicts.

No one here needs reminding that illicit diamond sales sustain some of the most appalling and intractable armed conflicts in the world today, with some of the most appalling impacts on people.

The Security Council, imbued with the legitimacy of the universality of the United Nations itself, has both the duty and the power to act on behalf of that membership.

What the Security Council lacks is the kind of detailed technical knowledge of how to act, knowledge that people at this gathering can provide, and that is needed if the Security Council is to stop these conflicts and do so with a minimum of collateral, economic and social damage.

Partnership among governments, industry, civil society and international bodies, including particularly the UN, that is, between those with political authority and those with technical expertise -- is therefore indispensable.

That partnership is a must if we are to craft the sophisticated control measures we need in order to ascertain the provenance of diamonds.

And if we are to devise workable and cost-effective monitoring measures that do not impose undue cost on diamond producers or manufacturers or give one jurisdiction or company advantage over another.

In other words, collaboration is necessary if we are to attain what I believe to be our common goal: eliminating diamonds as a source and motor of armed conflict, and preserving diamonds as a force for prosperity.

From the outset of Canada's chairmanship of the Security Council's Angola Sanctions Committee, we have encouraged the diamond producing, processing and consuming countries to work with the United Nations to make the diamond sanctions work.

At the initiative of our hosts, the South African government, and the other African producer states, the Kimberley Process has drawn the most interested countries together to consider the certification requirements that are needed if sanctions are to have maximum targeted impact and do the minimum unintended harm.

This conference, and the preparatory work among governments and their partners that has preceded it, can make a very valuable contribution to divorcing diamonds from armed conflict.

The members of the Security Council have also sought to work with industry and civil society to the same end.

We welcome the significant steps that have been taken:

- by individual companies, such as De Beers;
- by national bodies, such as the Diamond High Council; and,
- by the major diamond associations: the International Diamond Manufacturers Association (IDMA) and the World Federation of Diamond Bourses (WFDB).

More needs to be done.

But the commitment to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem, is increasingly clear and welcome.

Once fully implemented, the remarkable resolution adopted by IDMA and the WFDB in Antwerp in July will have real impact in keeping “conflict diamonds” from reaching market.

I am impressed at how quickly the World Diamond Council called for in the Antwerp resolution was established and by what was achieved at its inaugural meeting in Tel Aviv earlier this month.

The World Diamond Council promises to open new opportunities for cooperation between governments, industry and civil society, provided it remains transparent and all have access to it – including the most engaged NGOs and all of the most interested governments.

It will be important to ensure complementarity between the work of the World Diamond Council and that of any intergovernmental process established to take forward the results of the Pretoria Ministerial Meeting.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Two years later, the Security Council’s resolution 1306 (2000) imposed a comprehensive embargo on diamond exports from Sierra Leone, with provision for the exemption of diamonds certified by the Government of Sierra Leone once the details of the certification arrangements have been agreed.

The Security Council remains unanimous in its determination to make these sanctions work.

Equally, It remains committed to minimizing any collateral damage to the legitimate diamond trade – not least here in Southern Africa, where diamonds remain so important a source of employment, prosperity and stability.

The Security Council's responsibility to act where diamond revenues fuel armed conflict has led us to adopt two sets of sanctions.

You will recall that the Security Council's resolution 1173 (1998) placed an embargo on the direct or indirect export of diamonds by UNITA.

We *do* understand that the vast majority of diamond production worldwide has nothing to do with armed conflict.

The Security Council's determination to give effect to these two diamond embargoes has been given tangible expression through the creation of three subsidiary bodies.

First was the Panel of Experts on Angola, which identified the sources and methods of violations of the sanctions against UNITA and recommended additional measures to the Security Council.

In response, the Security Council then set up a Monitoring Mechanism under the chairmanship of Ambassador Juan Larrain of Chile, to acquire more information and to continue to focus attention on sanctions violations and violators.

Ambassador Larrain and his team have already traveled extensively,

They are to submit an interim report by 18 October and a final report for the Security Council action before the end of this year.

On Sierra Leone, a Panel of Experts was established under the chairmanship of Ambassador Martin Chungong Ayafor of Cameroon.

It, too, is to report before the end of the year.

Ambassador Chungong Ayafor and the four other members of his Panel are with us here in Pretoria today. They are:

- Mr Atabou Bodian (Senegal);
- Mr Johan Peleman (Belgium);
- Mr Harjit Sing Sandhu (India); and,
- Mr Ian Smillie (Canada).

A fourth subsidiary body, a Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth in the Democratic

Republic of the Congo, was recently established under the chairmanship of Madame Safiatou Ba-N'Daw of Cote d'Ivoire.

When the Heads of State and Government met earlier this month in the New York Security Council Summit, the second such meeting ever, the prevention of armed conflict and the protection of civilians in conflict were very much on their minds.

They resolved to break the diamonds/conflict link.

The declaration the leaders adopted at the Summit (SCR 1318 (2000)) underscores their commitment to have the Security Council "continue to take resolute action in areas where the illegal exploitation and trafficking of high-value commodities contributes to the escalation or continuation of conflict".

Individual leaders also emphasized the importance of action.

President Nujoma of Namibia underscored the value of sanctions as a tool where wars and rebel atrocities are fueled by the illegal trade in diamonds and other natural resources.

President Konare of Mali spoke in favour of targeted sanctions relating to the illegal exploitation of natural resources.

President Chirac of France called for the establishment, within the UN Secretariat, of a permanent body to control diamond trafficking and trafficking in rare precious metals.

And Prime Minister Jean Chrétien of Canada called for more vigorous action by the United Nations to sever the links between commodity revenues and war.

These statements and many more like them measure the temper of our times.

This concern about the link between diamonds and armed conflict is not a passing fad... nor is it a reflection of the narrow national interests of individual Council members.

The international community as a whole wants these conflicts to end.

Nor does the Council's position reflect the views of countries disconnected from the diamond trade.

Consider the composition of the Security Council.

Its fifteen members include three significant diamond producers: the Russian Federation, Namibia and Canada; and three major marketers and consumers of diamonds: the U.S., the U.K. and France.

The Council's membership is not universal.

With 189 members, however, that of the General Assembly is universal – or very nearly so.

All the producing countries, all the manufacturing countries, most of the exchanges and transit centres and all the major consumers are represented there.

I therefore welcome the British government's recent initiative in placing "the role of diamonds in fueling conflict" on the agenda of the 55th Session of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly is the venue where the entire UN membership can act in support of the Kimberly Process and the World Diamond Council.

The autumn months will not be quiet ones.

As I have already said, the Angola Monitoring Mechanism and the Sierra Leone Panel of Experts will both report by the end of the year.

Security Council resolution 1295 (2000) established a review process by which the Council undertook to determine who was in violation of the sanctions and to decide what to do about it.

Those decisions will be taken by the end of December.

We have barely begun to implement the other provisions contained in that resolution which took up the majority of the recommendations in the report of the Panel of Experts.

We will want to see progress made in their implementation before year's end, too.

And, on Sierra Leone, both the Council and the Sierra Leone government will want to see the certification arrangements, discussed here yesterday, finalized as soon as possible.

This is an extraordinarily heavy agenda.

But it is one that we and other Security Council members are resolved to carry out.

As this is a meeting about diamonds, that is the topic that I have focused my remarks on.

But it is important for all to understand that the Security Council is not concentrating on diamond sanctions to the exclusion of other sanctions or other initiatives.

In addition to very specific sanctions against the export of diamonds by UNITA, the Angola sanctions regime encompasses prohibitions:

- on the sale and supply of arms and other forms of military assistance to UNITA;
- on representation abroad and travel by UNITA and the adult members of the immediate families of the UNITA leadership;
- on the sale or supply of petroleum products to UNITA; and,
- on the provision of funds to UNITA.

The Security Council is committed to making *all* of these measures work, in order to degrade UNITA's capacity to pursue its objectives through war and so to help to establish conditions leading to a durable political settlement.

As Chairman of the Angola Sanctions Committee, it is appropriate that I discuss that conflict directly.

The sanctions against UNITA were imposed incrementally in reaction to repeated evidence of UNITA's determination to pursue their military campaign in defiance of the will of the international community and in violation of the obligations UNITA freely entered into in the Lusaka Protocol.

The record of the Government of Angola is not unblemished.

Nonetheless, the Security Council has repeatedly determined that UNITA bears the primary responsibility for the continuation of this cruel civil war.

It bears repeating that that civil war has left more than one million people dead, many more maimed and injured, and more than twenty percent of the population displaced.

It has also undermined Angola's economic and political prospects for more than two decades.

Sanctions on their own will not bring this war to an end.

But the diamond measures and the broader sanctions regime can help to establish the conditions for peace and, for this reason, must be made to work.

Our assessment is that sanctions are having an impact.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The composition of the Security Council changes each year and my country's, Canada's two-year term comes to an end in just over three months.

We will use all of the remaining time to continue to press hard for the effective implementation of the Council's sanctions and for further Security Council action on conflict diamonds.

I have no doubt that others who join the Security Council in January will help those who remain on the Council to carry this work forward.

My predecessor, Bob Fowler's excellent work reflected the importance the Canadian Government attaches to making sanctions an effective instrument of Human Security.

I will continue those efforts with the same degree of commitment in the time remaining to us on the Security Council.

Again, I appeal for your continued cooperation.

It is cooperation between governments, industry, civil society and the United Nations and international bodies that has brought us all to the point where we are now.

Continued cooperation will be essential if peace in Angola is to be realized and if the people of Sierra Leone are to enjoy at least the human security that they, like we, are entitled to.

Thank you.