

March 14, 2011

IGI and CEEC to Establish Congo School of Gemology
Industry and Congo-Area Leaders Conclude Initial Meeting to Kick-off Project

KINSHASA, Congo – The International Gemological Institute (IGI) today announced plans to establish a school of gemology in Kinshasa, following the December 13, 2010 signed agreement between IGI and the Centre of Expertise, Evaluation and Certification of Precious Minerals and Semi-precious Stones of Congo (CEEC) to initiate the project under the sponsorship of the European Union (EU), the Coordinator of the European Fund for Development (COFED) and the Platform for Governance Support (PAG).

The Democratic Republic of Congo is the second largest producer of diamonds in the world (source, Kimberley Process, 2009) and as such, there is a vital need for high-level professional gemological education. Project leaders from all affiliated organizations met to discuss initial plans earlier this month in Kinshasa.

“The establishment of a school of gemology is of paramount importance as it will provide the Congo diamond industry the necessary experts, professional support and instruction in order to contribute to improving the accuracy of the country's collection of mineral revenues, stated IGI CEO Roland Lorie.

After several months of preliminary training in Antwerp, IGI will deploy a group of experts to assist the CEEC under the guidance of the EU and the PAG. These representatives will utilize IGI methodology and establish several defined stages of preparation prior to the school's opening.

The commencement meeting included the following leaders and organizations:

European Union (EU)

Jeroen Willems, Head of Economic Section
Rene Gorenflo, Programme Officer

Centre of Expertise, Evaluation and Certification of Precious Minerals and Semi-precious Stones of Congo (CEEC)

Alexis Mikandji, DG
Pascal Nyembo, DGA
Director Matthew, YAMBA
Clement P. Nkongo, Head Div. NB
Jean Otshudi Disashi, Head Div. Jur & Cont

International Gemological Institute (IGI)

Roland Lorie, CEO
Deborah Pienica, COO

Platform for Governance Support (PAG)

Francisco Fernandez Nunez, Coordinator
Pascal Esiki, National Expert of Mines

Coordinator of the European Fund for Development (COFED)

Apollinaire Kiakesidi, Head of Programmes

Additional Participants

Justin Mulenda, Adviser, Ministry of Mines

Dona Kampata, Coordinator, CTCPM

Baldwin Ihet, Coordinator, SAESSCAM

Jules Kabongo, Coordinator, PROMINES

About IGI

IGI began in Antwerp in 1975 and is currently the largest independent certification institute in the world with offices in Antwerp, New York, Hong Kong, Bombay, Bangkok, Tokyo, Dubai, Tel Aviv, Cavelese, Toronto, Los Angeles, Kolkata, New Delhi, Thrissur, Surat, Chennai and Shanghai. IGI is a worldwide organization and receives ISO accreditation in addition to being a member of the Responsible Jewelers Council. For more information please visit, www.igiworldwide.com.

