

CONFLICT DIAMONDS – 4 IDEAS FOR ACTION FROM THE CORPORATE ACTION NETWORK (CAN) AND THE DRC COUNTRY ACTION PROGRAM (DRC CAP)

The movie "*Blood Diamond*" depicts a period in Sierra Leone's recent history when the use of child soldiers was endemic. While the conflict has ended in Sierra Leone, neighboring Côte d'Ivoire is still plagued by armed conflict where children from Liberia as well as Côte d'Ivoire have been recruited by government armed forces and rebel armed groups. And in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Diamonds and other minerals are still actively mined by rebel groups to buy arms.

Several governments with records of recruiting child soldiers have initiated or participated in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs for children, but many of these programs have encountered significant challenges, including funding and management problems. For example, despite a DDR program in DRC designed to assist 30,000 child soldiers, only 19,000 children were believed to have been disarmed by June 2006. In fact, a majority of the 11,000 children that didn't benefit from the program are girl soldiers, who are often misidentified as "dependents" of adult fighters. Meanwhile child soldiers are still being recruited – and re-recruited - including some who were only recently demobilized and reunited with their families in the DRC.

Level 1 - Write letters to Condoleezza Rice and Henry Paulson to strengthen enforcement of the Clean Diamonds Trade Act

Gather signatures on the attached sample letter and send it to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and copy Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson to demand better enforcement of the Clean Diamond Trade Act. You can also encourage jewelers in your area to sign the letter as well – they have a vested interest in making sure diamond laws work!

Level 2 - Survey Jewelers in your Area

Send a message to the jewelers in your area that you want them to take conflict diamonds seriously. You can use the four questions on the fact sheet to undertake your own investigation about what jewelers are doing about this problem, or use our handy survey form attached below. Take notes about the response you receive, and if you don't get satisfactory answers, contact your local media and let them know. **Send only one activist per retailer.** Find online survey forms and report your findings at: www.amnestyusa.org/countries/drc

Level 3 - Educate & Inspire – See the film while it's still playing in your area

In December, the new action film, *Blood Diamond* was released, and Amnesty International is promoting the film to raise awareness about conflict diamonds and the Kimberley Process. Visit www.blooddiamondaction.org to learn more. You can get involved by organizing groups to attend the film, then meet up afterward to discuss the issue and take action. Use the comprehensive curriculum and discussion guide available at <http://s3.amazonaws.com/3b59dcdf1c4552f8d85a16a4808a3b38-default/BloodDiamondCurriculumGuideFinal.pdf>

Level 4 - Educate Consumers

In the days leading up to Valentine's Day, many people will be out shopping for a gift that demonstrates their love and devotion – often that gift is a diamond. You can help arm shoppers with the right questions to ask to ensure their purchases are conflict-free. Print off copies of the attached fact sheet, which includes 4 questions consumers should ask before purchasing a diamond, and download our buyers guide at <http://www.amnestyusa.org/diamonds/BuyersGuide.pdf>. Consider setting t up a table or leafleting near a local shopping area too.



global witness

Conflict Diamonds: What's Happening Now

- **Diamond-fuelled wars** have killed over 4 million people, destroyed countries, and displaced millions more.
- **Blood diamonds are not just a problem of the past.** Blood diamonds from West Africa are currently reaching international markets. The UN recently reported \$23 million in blood diamonds from the Ivory Coast are being smuggled into international diamond markets. Diamonds have fuelled the conflict in the Congo (DRC), the bloodiest war since WWII; armed violence and human rights abuses continue over control of diamonds mines in eastern Congo. As the brutal conflict in Sierra Leone shows, even a small amount of conflict diamonds can wreak enormous havoc in a country.
- **The government-run Kimberley Process**, set up to stop the trade in conflict diamonds, has serious weaknesses that must be addressed to make this system effective. Government controls are not strong enough or enforced effectively enough to make sure that diamonds mined by rebel groups don't get sold to fuel conflict.
- **The diamond industry, worth \$60 billion in 2005, has failed to match its rhetoric with action.** It agreed to police itself in support of the Kimberley Process, but it has not made a wholesale change in the way it operates to make sure that diamonds never again fuel conflicts. Some members of the industry continue to operate with impunity - breaking the law and trading in blood diamonds - while the rest of the industry turns a blind eye.
- **The industry's voluntary system of warranties is more of a PR exercise than a credible system.** It is not a robust or credible system that will combat conflict diamonds. There is no third party verification or monitoring to make sure that companies are adhering to the system and responsibly sourcing diamonds. The warranties system is not backed up with concrete policy measures.
- **Consumers can play an important role in combating conflict diamonds.** When in a diamond store, consumers should ask for a guarantee that the diamond they are buying is conflict-free.
- **Global Witness and Amnesty International** are supporting the film, *Blood Diamond*, as an important way to raise awareness about how diamonds can fuel conflict. We hope that as a result of the movie, people will ask more questions before buying a diamond, and that the industry will take action to make sure companies can provide consumers with adequate assurances that the diamonds they sell are conflict-free.

4 simple questions to ask your diamond retailers:

1. How can I be sure that none of your jewelry contains conflict diamonds?
2. What is your primary source for diamond jewelry?
3. Can I see a copy of your company's policy on conflict diamonds and/or a written guarantee from your suppliers that your diamonds are conflict-free?
4. How often do consumers ask you about conflict diamonds?

Background

- Blood diamonds have been used by rebel groups to fuel brutal wars in Africa. These conflicts have resulted in over 4 million deaths and the displacement of millions of people in Angola, Sierra Leone, the DRC, Liberia, and now in Ivory Coast. These diamonds have been sold to international diamond dealers giving rebels profits to buy large quantities of small arms.
- In 1998 Global Witness began a campaign to expose the role of diamonds in funding conflicts. As the largest grassroots human rights organization in the world, Amnesty International has been instrumental in educating the public about the problem and pressing governments and industry to take action. Over the years, international pressure has increased from a large coalition of NGOs.
- In 2003, the government-run Kimberley Process scheme was launched to stop the trade in conflict diamonds. Over seventy governments taking part in the process are required to certify that diamond shipments through their countries are conflict-free, and they are required to set up diamond control systems to ensure this is true. Governments must pass national laws implementing the Kimberley Process, and they can only trade with other participants in the process.
- The diamond industry agreed to police itself to support the Kimberley Process by tracking diamonds from mines all the way to retail stores – this is generally referred to as the “system of warranties” or the “system of self regulation.” But it isn’t fully implemented. Every company dealing in diamonds should have a policy in place to ensure their diamonds are conflict-free.
- Governments must also step in and monitor the diamond industry. They should require all sectors of the diamond trade to put meaningful systems in place to combat conflict diamonds (responsible sourcing policies, third party auditing measures). Governments should carry out periodic spot checks of diamond companies to make sure they have systems in place to prevent any trade in conflict diamonds. Governments participating in the Kimberley Process have agreed that it is a priority to set up government checks of rough diamond companies in 2007.
- The World Diamond Council, set up to represent the diamond industry on conflict diamonds, has launched an aggressive, multi-million dollar PR campaign aimed at convincing the public that the conflict diamond problem has been solved. This campaign jeopardizes global efforts to stop diamonds from fuelling conflict and to protect the legitimate diamond trade in Africa. Industry profit and inaction come at the expense of economic development in Africa and at the expense of people’s lives.
- Many diamond-rich countries are extremely poor and people are not benefiting from the wealth in their soil. Diamond fields are rife with chaos and instability, and rebel groups and terrorists can still take advantage and access diamonds. The Kimberley Process means little to hundreds of thousands of men and children digging for diamonds in dangerous, dirty and difficult conditions in Africa. They often earn less than a dollar a day from artisan mining, carried out with simple picks, shovels and sieves.

What can consumers do? Make sure the diamond industry gets the message that the only diamonds people want to buy are conflict-free.

Consumers can help ensure diamonds never again fund conflict. When shopping for diamond jewelry, you can ask the salesperson four questions to find out what they are doing to help prevent the trade in conflict diamonds. If they can’t answer these basic questions, shop somewhere else, and tell them why.

- 1. How can I be sure that none of your jewelry contains conflict diamonds?**
- 2. What is your primary source for diamond jewelry?**
- 3. Can I see a copy of your company's policy on conflict diamonds and/or a written guarantee from your suppliers that your diamonds are conflict-free?**
- 4. How often do consumers ask you about conflict diamonds?**

VISIT www.blooddiamondaction.org TO LEARN MORE AND TAKE ACTION!

Take Action!

Send messages to Secretary Rice and Secretary Paulson and to your local diamond retailers that you want them to take conflict diamonds seriously.

Level 1 – Send letters and petitions to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Treasury Henry Paulson

Use the sample letter at the end of this guide to send messages to Secretaries Rice and Paulson.. You can copy the letter as-is, use it as a guide to write your own letters, or shorten it to make a petition for tabling.

Level 2 – Survey local diamond retailers

Despite its pledge to support the Kimberley Process and Clean Diamond Trade Act, the Diamond Industry has fallen short of implementing the necessary policies for self-regulation. The retail sector in particular fails to provide sufficient assurance to consumers that the diamonds they sell are conflict-free. That is why we need your help to find out how policies are being communicated at the shop level, and what actions, if any, are being taken to ensure that policies are more than just rhetoric. At the same time, you'll be sending a strong message to your local jewelers that their role in diamond-fueled conflict must end. Here's how:

1. Get Ready

- Check out www.blooddiamondaction.org and build your knowledge of the issue.
- Network to identify other local and student Amnesty groups in your area that are interested in participating, then hold a planning meeting to divide up roles and responsibilities.
- Compile a list of jewelers to target in your area using the phone book, an online search engine such as yellowpages.com or dexonline.com, or the "store locator" function of individual jewelry store websites.

Try starting with the following major U.S. diamond retailers:

Costco	Kmart	Target
Fred Meyer Jewelers	Kohl's	TJ Maxx
Friedmans Jewelers	Macy's	Ultra Diamonds
J.C. Penny Co	Saks Fifth Avenue	Wal-Mart
Kay Jewelers	Samuels Jewelers	Whitehall Jewelers
K's Merchandise	Sears, Roebuck, & Co	Zales

2. Conduct Surveys

- Send 1-3 people to visit each local diamond retailer, or (if necessary) contact stores by phone.
- Request to speak to the manager and then ask the four survey questions on the form below.

3. Report your Findings

- Complete online survey forms at www.amnestyusa.org/countries/drc or mail written surveys to:

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
Amnesty International USA
600 Pennsylvania Ave. SE
Washington, D.C. 20003



Amnesty International USA ~ Diamond Retailer Survey

Date: _____

Activist/Consumer: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Member of National Chain Regional Chain Single Proprietor

Retailer: _____ Phone: _____

Representative: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

1. How can I be sure that none of your jewelry contains conflict diamonds?

2. What is your primary source for diamond jewelry?

3. Can I see a copy of your company's policy on conflict diamonds and/or a written guarantee from your suppliers that your diamonds are conflict-free?

4. How often do consumers ask you about conflict diamonds?

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I am writing to urge the Administration to strengthen enforcement of the Clean Diamond Trade Act (CDTA) to help stop the trade in conflict diamonds and to support the Kimberley Process.

Blood diamonds are still a serious problem today. The United Nations recently reported that \$23 million in blood diamonds from the Ivory Coast are being smuggled over the border into Ghana and Mali, making their way into international diamond markets. Diamonds have also fueled conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where violence and human rights abuses continue over control of diamond mines. As the brutal conflict in Sierra Leone shows, even a relatively small number of conflict diamonds can wreak enormous havoc.

The Kimberley Process was set up to stop the trade in conflict diamonds but has serious loopholes that must be addressed to make this system effective. Government controls are neither strong enough nor enforced effectively enough to ensure that rebel groups, terrorists, and other criminal networks do not use diamonds to finance conflict. Notably, a September 2006 report by the Government Accountability Office found serious weaknesses in the U.S. controls system due to poor enforcement of the CDTA. The report specifically addressed the need for improvements in monitoring the diamond industry's compliance with this law and in compiling accurate statistics on U.S. trade in rough diamonds.

As the world's largest consumer of diamonds, the U.S. should take a greater leadership role on the issue of conflict diamonds. I urge you as Secretary of State to take the following steps along with Secretary of Treasury Paulson to strengthen the CDTA and the Kimberley Process:

1. Work with other key governments to strengthen the Kimberley Process and crack down on blood diamonds smuggled out of the Ivory Coast. In particular, ensure that the KP adopts measures to: improve the accuracy and analysis of statistics, require verification of industry compliance, and provide adequate financing to promote effective implementation of the scheme.
2. Work to ensure that all GAO recommendations are swiftly implemented, including the carrying out of periodic spot checks of diamond companies and rough diamond exports/imports, and the publication of a time-bound action plan for implementing all recommendations.
3. Take immediate measures to improve the accuracy of U.S. rough diamond trade statistics.
4. Require diamond companies to have their Kimberley Process compliance verified by an independent auditor.
5. Provide more robust support, including technical and financial assistance, to help countries improve their implementation of the Kimberley Process.

I look forward to your timely response and to learning more about your plans to strengthen U.S. efforts to combat conflict diamonds.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Hentry Paulson
Secretary of The Treasury
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Ideas for After-Movie Discussion

- You can discuss the movie immediately after watching it, or you can arrange a discussion among individuals who saw the movie on some date in the near future.
- Determine ahead of time how you will handle “spoilers,” those people in the group have not yet seen the movie.

Use our fact sheets to ask questions of the group (and see sample questions below).

Some Sample Questions for Discussion

- ◆ What was most moving about the film for you?
- ◆ What human rights, development, or aid organizations did you notice mentioned in the film?
- ◆ The film depicts a fictional representation of conflict in Sierra Leone in 1999. Where have there been other wars fueled by the sale of conflict diamonds?
- ◆ What is the Kimberley Process?
- ◆ How well has it worked?
- ◆ What can we do here in the U.S. to help strengthen that process?
- ◆ Where are some of our closest retailers?
- ◆ Would anyone like to call or visit a local retailer? (You only need one volunteer per retailer.)