



News Release

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WFDB President Urges KP Plenary to Ensure Pro-Active Role for Proposed Permanent Secretariat

*Implement the Spirit of UN Resolution A/71/L.55 of 27 January 2017
Create well-structured permanent body to take over work done by volunteers
Facilitate process of rehabilitation for previously non-compliant countries*

Antwerp, Belgium – November 17, 2019: World Federation of Diamond Bourses President Ernie Blom has appealed to government representatives attending next week's Kimberley Process Plenary session in New Delhi, India, to ensure that the new KP Permanent Secretariat that is being set up is given a pro-active role, particularly in facilitating the process of rehabilitation of countries that had previously been found to be non-compliant.

Writing in his President's Blog on the WFDB website, Blom urges the KP members to follow the spirit of UN Resolution A/71/L.55 of January 2017 so that that the new structure being set up to replace the current Administrative Support Mechanism (ASM) is not reduced to being "a bureaucratic pen-pusher".

Blom says that the Ad Hoc Committee on Review and Reform tasked with the establishment and practical organization of a Permanent Secretariat has put forward a list of functions of the new body that "are only of an administrative nature".

This fails to tackle a "structural deficiency in the organization", he writes, elaborating, "One particular problem that demonstrates this is the process of rehabilitation for countries that had previously been found to be non-compliant. The reasons for the long process of normalization in these countries is related to poverty and the lack of human and technical capital and the many structural deficits of a country which has been in a conflict.

"For example, while the special teams that are established to follow up the process of rehabilitation do excellent work in developing the internal controls necessary for a Participant to once again become compliant, these are often voluntary groups with no prior institutional knowledge and therefore lack any consistency in the structures that they implement."

Unfortunately, the idea that the secretariat "could potentially help to facilitate progress in countries of concern and especially in assisting the Kimberley Process with regard to Participants who had been suspended and who are resuming participation in the KP is nowhere to be found."

It will be a pity if the opportunity to create such a body is missed, Blom writes, but concludes: "It is not too late and hopefully the Plenary will do what is needed."



WFDB President Ernie Blom.

ABOUT THE WFDB:

The World Federation of Diamond Bourses has 30 affiliated bourse members and exists to protect the interests of affiliated bourses and their individual members, and also to further the amicable settlement or arbitration of disputes between individual members of the affiliated bourses and/or between affiliated bourses. The WFDB participates in the promotion of world trade and encourages the establishment of new diamond bourses.

Members of affiliated bourses pledge to uphold the traditions, principles of mutual trust, consideration and friendship which prevail among the members of the bourses worldwide. They also pledge themselves to abide by and hand down these principles and to ensure that they will forever serve as a basis in business relations between members of affiliated bourses.