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PRESS RELEASE**

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[Download report here: http://www.pacweb.org/Documents/diamonds_KP/18_Zimbabwe-Diamonds_March09-Eng.pdf](http://www.pacweb.org/Documents/diamonds_KP/18_Zimbabwe-Diamonds_March09-Eng.pdf)

**ZIMBABWE'S BLOOD DIAMONDS
World Diamond Regulators Flounder
UN Action Required**

Diamonds have become a major factor in Robert Mugabe's desperate attempt to retain power in Zimbabwe. Diamond smuggling has become rampant and dozens of diamond miners have been murdered by the military, which now controls the country's main diamond fields.

The horrors behind Zimbabwe's diamonds are the subject of a new report released today by Partnership Africa Canada (PAC): ***[Zimbabwe, Diamonds and the Wrong Side of History](#)***. The PAC report describes the role that diamonds are playing in Zimbabwe's growing misery, and says that the Kimberley Process, the 45-government international diamond regulatory body created to end conflict diamonds, is unwilling and unable to deal with the problem.

Under Zimbabwe's new "Unity Government", the mining portfolio and the military remain firmly under the control of Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF cronies, all of whom are subject to asset seizure laws and travel restrictions in the European Union and the United States.

PAC is calling on the United Nations Security Council to step in, as it did with blood diamonds in Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and to place an embargo on Zimbabwean diamonds until they are under legitimate and competent governance.

The PAC report says that Kimberley Process debates about how to respond have been "sluggish, timid and wholly inadequate".

"The almost desperate insistence by some governments that the Kimberley Process has nothing to do with human rights is disgraceful," said Ian Smillie, PAC's Research Coordinator. "That is why our report is addressed to the UN Security Council. In the Kimberley Process there is no appetite for effective action.

The PAC report warns that "Consumer confidence in the purity of diamonds will only be maintained if the Kimberley Process is willing to take vigorous action to prevent tainted diamonds from entering the world's diamond stream. In the case of Zimbabwe, the KP is currently failing the test."

In addition to its appeal to the United Nations, Partnership Africa Canada asks that the KP suspend

Zimbabwe's membership until its diamonds are properly managed, and until it can be established that a stockpile of more than 1.3 million carats has not been sold off illegally or bartered by the government. PAC also repeats a growing demand that the Kimberley Process develop a clear and actionable protocol on gross human rights abuse in the management of diamonds resources.

For further information, please contact:

Ian Smillie: +1 613 728-9725 (English)

Susanne Emond +1 613 237-6768 (Français; note : the report is available only in English)

Partnership Africa Canada is a Canadian nongovernmental organization that has been involved in efforts to halt the trade in conflict diamonds since 1999. Other reports on conflict diamonds can be found at www.pacweb.org