



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

MFN - April 23rd

Event: **African Mineral and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC) -Pan-African Resource Reporting Code (PARC) Sensitization and the Africa Gemstone, Jewellery Exhibition and Conference (AGJEC) Expansion Workshop**

Location: **Freetown, Sierra Leone**

Dates: **22 – 25 April 2025**

Time: **2:45pm (14h45)**

Length: **30 minutes** (use timer)

I would first like to recognize:

Members of the Sierra Leonean government,
The Director of the African Minerals Development Center (AMDC),
The Programme Management Officer,
as well as my visiting distinguished colleagues.

It is important for me to also applaud the African Union Heads of State and Government's adoption of the Africa Mining Vision (AMV) which took place 16 years ago.

Ladies and Gentleman,
I am Dr M'zée Fula Ngenge,
the chairman of the **African Diamond Council (ADC)**,
which has been in existence since **1999**.

THE work
we put in REPRESENTS Africa
in such a way that the industry
has misfired in efforts to represent itself.

Many of the industry's challenges
and most of the problems that have occurred
on the African continent have stifled
our industry for quite some time.

Some would even agree that the problems
that the African continent was facing
WERE deliberate.

That is primarily based on the belief that
the resources do not truly benefit
the communities or the population



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

Our objectives at the ADC are to:

1. **Strengthen policy coherence** between diamond-specific strategies and broader mineral governance.
2. We aim to **drive** ethical sourcing, environmental stewardship, and community benefits.
3. We also **set out to build** technical, regulatory, and entrepreneurial skills across the diamond value chain.
4. We have improved decision-making in our industry THROUGH integrated mineral data systems.
5. And for the last 26 years, we have **amplified Africa's voice** in global forums on both, diamonds and minerals.

In other words, we look to

1. Enhance Governance
2. Promote Sustainability
3. Boost Local Capacity
4. Leverage Data
5. Advocate Collectively THROUGH-out the global diamond sector

Looking at Areas of Cooperation

Policy Harmonization is key to the mandate of the African Diamond Council (ADC)

We develop and propose policies that harmoniously align with the AMV principles through local content and revenue transparency.

An example would be, Operation Transparency,

That took place in the Republic of Angola in 2018.

Initially viewed as controversial,

It ended up being a successful and globally celebrated undertaking.

Progress in the global diamond industry

can also be credited to the the

African Diamond Manufacturers Association (ADMA),

the African International Diamond Exchange (AIDEX)

and

the African Diamond Trust Fund (ADTF).

Collectively, we push for a bold economic reset centered on value addition, industrialization, and African ownership of resources.

As a whole, we are the voice for the voiceless in the African diamond industry and we are unapologetic in our message delivery.

With regard to Capacity Building:

These entities take pleasure in designing and proposing training programs for governments, miners, and communities



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

Each of these entities are ACTIVE in the areas of diamond valuation, certification and broader mineral governance.

We also commit a great deal of time to developing E-learning platforms and workshops on best practices to youth that are interested in the minerals sector, particularly diamonds.

When it comes to Research & Innovation: ADC encourages collaborative studies on sustainable mining technologies and diamond traceability.

We participate in pilot projects for reducing environmental impact and the formalization of artisanal mining is also a concentrated focus of the ADC.

With regard to Advocacy & Certification, the ADC is interested in Joint campaigns for ethical sourcing standards as well as for improving global certification schemes.

We also seek to establish unified positions in international forums, such as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA).

With regard to data Integration: We compile quite a bit of industry data for analytics and to enhance efforts in African MINING policymaking.

We are determined to upgrade development in African communities and infrastructure.

We are continuously proposing Initiatives that enhance education, healthcare, and economic diversification in African mining regions.

The ADC's Technical Working Groups **are** focused on specific areas, such as Research and Development as well as Advocacy.

To highlight expertise, **the** ADC contributes diamond-sector knowledge, while promoting the African diamond trade through international media platforms In a variety of languages



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

The ADC focuses on **enhancing** the global diamond trade to curb conflict minerals, **boost transparency**, and maximize local value addition,

We are very guarded with sensitive industry data as well as intellectual property.

We are also fully engaged when it comes to **Dispute Resolution** *(as many of you have witnessed on the ferry ride last night)*

We are put forth a great deal of energy on Revenue Recovery and the return of confiscated, smuggled goods back to their countries of origin.

Since I have mentioned countries of origin, I would like to highlight some of the opportunities that exist within the global diamond sector and the entire gemstone trade.

The ADC has an opportunity to strengthen Africa's role in diamond and mineral markets through unified advocacy for traceability.

In the last four years, the ADC has been on a mission to position Africa as a leader in sustainable mining technologies.

The probable strategic partnerships that exist within this room would harness ADC's diamond expertise and AMDC's mineral governance framework

This would drive inclusive growth, aligning with the continental goals that many of you are familiar with.

The level of Success would be measured by improved policy coherence, enhanced local benefits, and stronger global representation, not only in Africa's mineral sector, but in the entire gemstone sector.

Imagine being asked the question about diamond jewelry that we typically see being worn.

We must remember and keep in mind that 8 of the top 10 diamond producing nations are AFRICAN, with the exception of Russia and Canada

Imagine every First Lady within an African diamond producing nation wearing the most beautiful jewelry at EVERY international event they attend



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

Let's TAKE INTO consideration that this jewelry is made from AFRICAN, NATURAL and PREMIUM goods, rather than synthetics. Not only exclusive to diamonds, but to other gemstones produced in Africa, such as Sapphires, Rubies, Emeralds and Tanzanite

Imagine that EACH TIME an **African supermodel** is questioned during a high-profile global event with regard to what she's wearing, THAT question SHOULD BE followed by:

What is the **country of origin** for the diamonds or gemstones that you're wearing? and what is the **name of the mine** that these diamonds or gemstones were actually extracted from?

Now that African cinema is beginning to exhibit more potential and global dominance, It is time to encourage African filmmakers to place more energy into product placement with a conscious effort to successfully launch African luxury goods.

An African jewelry designer does not have to win a **Shining Lights Award** to achieve global success, especially when the continent possesses in excess of 1.5 billion potential consumers.

There are terms such as: Sustainability, Transparency, Beneficiation and Traceability, And we need to understand who invented these terms as well as how these terms became so popular within our African discourse.

(Expound)

As Africans, **I know that it is our nature** to become more obsessed with trends, **schemes and mechanisms**, so much more than those who take the responsibility to deliver them to us, but I am determined to alter and change that mindset.

There is no real or bona fide desire to regulate and establish an industry that benefits those who deliver most of the product to the table.

With that in mind, I am a firm believer that it is important to lead, rather than follow.



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

Going back to traceability,
Blockchain technology was introduced in the global diamond industry in AFRICA
by a company called EVERLEDGER,
which had several pilot programs that were running in parallel.

The first one was launched in 2018 right here in Sierra Leone
through an initiative that was called GEMFAIR,
which had participation from the DeBeers Group of Companies.

From that blockchain, Tracr was born.
De Beers' aggressive marketing and the rush to CONTROL,
left Everledger behind
to basically reinvent itself.

Everledger went on the partner with Brilliant Earth in 2019
and from that point on,
the industry has become inundated
with private blockchain initiatives,
that serve primarily as inventory management systems,
that are designed to trace, not track diamonds.

(Illustrate)

There are some of us who actually place the dots on paper
and there are some who take the easy road to outline the dots
by tracing from one dot to the next. This approach lacks originality.
(Expound)

Blockchain positions mining companies to replace antiquated paper systems with digital.
Both PUBLIC and PRIVATE technologies create a unique digital identity for the asset or the
gemstone

It is important to disclose that, PUBLIC blockchain makes certain information available to all
stakeholders without compromising security,
which is something the ADC is fully in favor of.

Since then, Everledger has developed a blockchain technology called **Provenance Proof**
which rivals other private blockchains, such as **Opsydia and iTraceIT**

What I began to realize at that point, was
everyone was pointing their barrel in the same direction.
Many of them missing the target
and others without sufficient ammunition to finish the undertaking.

There is a looming question:
Will blockchain ALONE solve the problems and challenges
we face in the African diamond industry?
The simple answer is "NO"



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

Does it enhance the way Africa brings diamonds to the marketplace? The answer is “YES”

In our most structured environments, such as Botswana, South Africa or Namibia, this approach is viewed as a victory.

However, **in countries, such as** Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, much more is required.

In **Angola and Zimbabwe**, these countries are in transition and on the road to improving their overall mining infrastructure.

In Lesotho, there is little or no consequences to exploit a country that produces some of the precious diamonds on the continent, and smuggling operations come with EVEN less scrutiny.

Angola launched an initiative in 2018 that was referred to as Operation Transparency, This was a voluntary initiative that exhibited an incredibly strong will for sovereignty in the African diamond sector.

It was so successful, that it served as a wonderful example for the African oil sector to demonstrate sufficient autonomy that ANGOLA ended up exiting OPEC.

Unfortunately, that departure from OPEC was not enough to prevent the Angolan diamond sector from making the same mistake to be held hostage by lobby groups that pretend to govern the entire global diamond industry.

What am I suggesting to mines and global diamond centers as well as to the United Nations, the African Union, the European Commission, the G7 as well as to the Russian Federation and the United States is to carefully examine the real advancements that have been made in our industry over the last 4 years.

Within that period, the African Diamond Council had ample time to carefully evaluate all the offerings that were being presented and I was even active in improving the foundation that was being constructed.

I carefully evaluated EACH OFFERING and THERE WAS ONE that stood out



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

more than the others.

At the same time, this was not just a blockchain technology, It quickly became a traceability solution that is focused ON AFRICA in a way that the others would not.

It was the only one that was willing to present PUBLIC Blockchain and they were willing to create a mechanism that was compatible with ALL the private blockchains that were being presented.

At the same time, it allowed African diamond producing nations to express their concerns as well as outline what they felt was necessary to resolve issues and challenges that the industry was currently facing.

None of the private blockchains ON OFFER were interested in providing solutions for Africa,

none were interested in having African representation at the helm of development and the narrative that was being pitched to the G7 at the outset did not include Africa at all.

Perhaps, traceability was not meant to be a BONA FIDE or DELIBERATE solution and if BLOCKCHAIN fell short, they never expected for Africa to move beyond their expectations with regard to how we engage with the current technological offerings

Nonetheless, a major shift in diamond traceability is underway and its momentum cannot be stopped, ESPECIALLY once everyone demonstrates that they POSSESS an understanding of the global impact.

Authentia is an end-to-end ecosystem blockchain-powered platform that is presented as a four-pronged traceability solution

These features are highlighted by:

1. **CERTIFICATES of ORIGIN - (Explain)** So If a producing mine provides direct material uploads from mines and creates a digital twin of that diamonds, then the MINE should be entitled to issue certificates of origin for rough diamonds at the point of extraction
2. Authentia is built on a **PUBLIC BLOCKCHAIN (Explain)** that is compatible with PRIVATE blockchain and is tailed to prevent information from being mishandled or leaked.



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

It utilizes the **INTERNET of THINGS** with tamper-proof digital records that is sealed TRACK parcels.

Keep in mind that PRIVATE blockchains can and do pose a **Centralization Risk**

3. **Nanotechnology** is where the nano tagging can take place sub-surface and/or above-surface on a rough or polished diamond. **(Explain)**

Authentia's patented technology enables smartphones to read these nano-markings

Meaning **that the nano tag can be read** by a cellphone lens and powered by Artificial Intelligence for added security)

4. **TITLES of OWNERSHIP (Explain)**

To date, Authentia has been granted 26 international patents in four different continents.

Can be applied to any gemstone, and there is no better place to commence than with those diamonds that are extracted in Africa

Blockchain technology IN GENERAL, DOES possess the capacity to impact diamond prices by improving efficiency in the diamond supply chain, but AS I SAID, it is an INVENTORY MANAGEMENT system that takes the industry from PAPER to DIGITAL

The KP certificate GIVES PERMISSION TO EXPORT rough diamonds

Authentia.io's integration into the KP and the **African diamond supply chains** elevates market trust, operational efficiency, and ethical branding.

This positions African rough diamonds as premium products, driving price increases while modernizing the KP to meet contemporary challenges.

The result is a win-win for ethical commerce, African economies, and global consumers.

The ADC possesses political will and shall continue to complement the global diamond industry without making the mistake to duplicate what has already been achieved.

We are keen to collaborate with industry bodies, such as African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC), the Kimberley Process and national agencies within African diamond producing nations.



AFRICAN DIAMOND COUNCIL (ADC)

We do understand the challenges that the industry has, which results from a lack enforcement power, however, the ADC is willing to assume responsibility to bind mechanisms, such as sanctions for non-compliance.

Strong political sponsorship from member states is necessary, but they must not aid or participate in destabilization efforts.

We are fully aware that strategic alignment and advocacy is feasible.

As Chairman of the ADC, it is important to close on the reality that the global diamond industry's institutional practice of conferring accolades upon African representatives who acquiesce to systemic subservience within neocolonial economic frameworks does not, in any meaningful capacity, incentivize my participation in such ethically dubious recognition paradigms.

This performative validation of complicit actors, rooted in hegemonic power asymmetries and extractive capitalist logics, exemplifies the industry's perpetuation of sociopolitical hierarchies under the veneer of corporate benevolence.

My critical distance from these ceremonial endorsements stems not from disengagement, but rather from a deliberate refusal to legitimize mechanisms that recast structural exploitation as mutualistic partnership.

The epistemological violence inherent in reducing complex postcolonial agency to transactional compliance warrants rigorous deconstruction, not unwitting replication through aspirational affiliation.

In other words, the global diamond industry rewards Africans who comply with exploitative systems, but I refuse to legitimize such practices by participating.

The ADC shall continue to play a critical role in formalizing Africa's diamond sector, ensuring transparency, and capturing greater value for African economies.

Times have changed and it is because Africa has decided that it is our moment to lead that change.

Thank you!