



News Release

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World Federation of Diamond Bourses Praises ALROSA Rescue Efforts, Emphasises Priority Given to Miners' Safety

Antwerp, Belgium – August 28, 2017: The World Federation of Diamond Bourses (WFDB) has praised the huge efforts undertaken by Russia's ALROSA to rescue eight miners trapped underground for the past three weeks following the firm's decision on Saturday to end rescue operations. Water rushing into the area poses too great a threat to teams who have been working around the clock since the disaster struck on August 4.

"Firstly, our hearts and prayers are with the families of the miners who have been hoping against hope since this catastrophe happened," said WFDB President Ernie Blom. "This is an extraordinarily difficult time for them and they must be treated with the utmost consideration. ALROSA and other authorities are moving quickly and with a minimum of bureaucracy.

"On behalf of WFDB members around the world, I would also like to praise the speedy response by ALROSA which allowed 143 miners to be rescued quickly, and the way in which it rapidly put the rescue operation into place. Rescuers worked around the clock for more than three weeks facing incredible dangers and operating in conditions that are impossible for most of us to grasp. Unfortunately, a point was reached where it is simply not possible to continue. With great sadness, we must accept that the trapped miners are unlikely to still be alive without food and water, in appallingly high levels of humidity and with a high content of hydrogen sulfide and salts in the mudflow.

"We bow our heads to the memory of the miners, but we also need to be proud of the rescue efforts and the way the worldwide industry has come together to show its concern for the men. Beyond this, we must emphasise the fact that such tragedies are an extremely rare occurrence in diamond mining. This is because diamond mining firms have extremely stringent safety procedures in place which give paramount importance to the personal safety of employees. This is not a given, as can be seen from the tragedies that take place in other mining industries, but is another example of the way the diamond industry is a well-regulated business."



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. In 2012, it established The World Diamond Mark, a not-for-profit organization, to promote consumer desirability and confidence in diamonds.

Members of affiliated bourses pledge to uphold the traditions, principles of mutual trust, consideration and friendship which prevail among the members of the bourses world-wide. 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.