



African Union

Blood Diamonds

I. Background

The term blood diamond refers to the illicit mining and trading of diamonds in a conflict zone, in order to fund an insurgency. Also referred to as conflict diamonds, hot diamonds, and war stones, these stones are mined illegally usually by slave laborers, and then sold on the black market. The mining operations are very common in southern Africa , and other third world countries with rich veins of diamonds.

Blood diamonds were used by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)extensively to fund their war efforts against the government of Sierra Leone, bringing in an estimated \$3.75 billion. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, The Republic of Congo, and Angola also participated in the illegal trade of conflict stones.

The money acquired from the sale of blood diamonds is used to purchase weapons, drugs, and to pay bribes. The continued sale of blood diamonds has allowed warlords and rebels to fuel their genocidal civil wars throughout Africa.



II. UN involvement

The United Nations first stepped in when in 1998; *The Global witness* published an article that summed up the correlation between illegal diamond trade, and conflict in Africa. Its first step towards solving the issue was the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1173 which officially acknowledge that illicit diamonds were being used to fund several major wars. In 2000 The UN released the Fowler report which detailed how the diamond trade actually worked, and which companies were involved in it. The Fowler report was so comprehensive that it sparked the passage of UNSCR 1295 which imposed harsher sanctions on nations participating in the trade, as well as establishing a panel of experts to investigate violations of UN Security Council resolutions concerning the trade of conflict stones. UNSCR 1295 also encouraged the diamond producing nations of Africa to meet in Kimberly South Africa where they created the Kimberly process. This set up new guidelines for the sale and transportation of diamonds, and encouraged the global community to pass laws that allowed for only officially sealed packages of stones to be cleared for distribution. In 2002 the World Diamond Congress adopted the Kimberly process of certification as its new standard for diamond exportation and import.



III. Possible Solutions

One possible solution is to have all countries adopt the Kimberly process certification system as a standard. Also encourage governments to create laws further punishing companies that involve themselves in the illicit trade of diamonds. As the AU it would also be possible to form a multi-national coalition to combat the rebel forces that are primarily responsible for the illicit diamond trade.

IV. Bloc Positions

- Western Bloc: Are likely to support resolutions against the illicit trade of diamonds also not afraid of embargoing diamond trade with countries who participate in it.
- Middle East Bloc: Very much against blood diamond trade.
- African Bloc: Completely against conflict diamonds, willing to do almost anything to stop illegal trade.
- Latin Bloc: removed from particular issue individual countries are likely to support resolutions.
- Asian Bloc: Officially against trade but have no real involvement with the issue



V. Guiding Questions

- 1) How can nations effectively regulate diamond trade?
- 2) How can the trade of blood diamonds be halted
- 3) Does your country have legislature in place to stop illicit diamond trade in your country.

Useful Resources:

<http://www.un.org/peace/africa/Diamond.html>

<http://geology.com/articles/blood-diamonds.shtml>

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=40296>