



January 25, 2012

Dear Kimberley Process Participants and Observers:

I wish you all a Happy New Year and hope that you and your families had festive holiday seasons.

Let me first thank the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Matthieu Yamba for chairing the Kimberley Process in 2011. KP Chair Yamba and his team led the initiative through a challenging but critical year. We are grateful to them

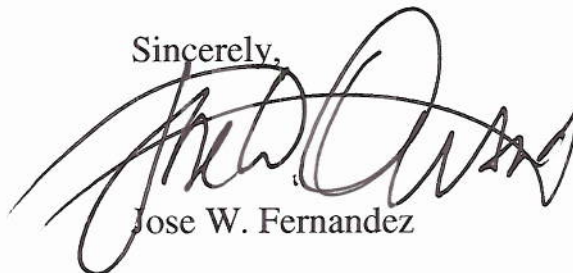
Ambassador Milovanovic and members of our staff will attend the annual Mining Indaba during the week of February 6 in Cape Town to engage in broad consultations with Indaba participants, in coordination with the Vice-Chair. Additionally, we intend to convene periodic teleconferences with Participants and Observers, as well as with experts who can provide input on the critical issues we face, so that together we can consider the best course forward. We will work closely with members of the Committee on KPCS Review throughout the coming months to ensure the Committee has the support it needs to fulfill its mandate.

We believe, like many of you, that we must strengthen the KP and develop reforms in ways that apply clearly, effectively, and equally to all KP Participants, such that no Participant believes it is being held to a different standard. To achieve this, the United States intends to be forward-looking and consider together with you how best to ensure the KP can modernize to meet current and future challenges to the rough diamond trade in ways that meet both business and policy concerns. As such -- and as established in the Kinshasa decision regarding KPCS review and as set forth in our joint statement with South Africa -- we will prioritize from January through Intersessional the evaluation of the KP's core mandate and definitions.

Finally, in the coming weeks, our team will finalize the logistical details of 2012 Intersessional and Plenary. Once complete, our embassies will provide complete information, including on visas. At all times, please contact us with any questions or concerns at: kpcs.chair@state.gov (we will also establish an e-mail address through the "kimberleyprocess.com" domain but are working through revisions being made to the website).

Friends and colleagues, let me again thank all of you for your show of confidence in selecting the United States to lead the Kimberley Process in 2012, a year that will set the stage for the tenth anniversary of the KPCS in South Africa in 2013. In particular, we wish to thank those of you who, during last year's Plenary meeting, urged us to take on this role. We will do our utmost to fulfill your expectations and ensure that the KP has a productive year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jose W. Fernandez', written over a horizontal line.

Jose W. Fernandez