

## **HE Dr Ahmed Albanna, Director of African Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Speaks at Opening of Dubai Diamond Conference 2015**

- *Speech focused on growing importance of U.A.E.-Africa relations*
- *FNC Chairman Mohammed Ahmed Al-Murr attended as Guest of Honour*
- *Herman Van Rompuy, former president of the European Union, delivered keynote address*
- *Dubai Diamond Trade Valued at \$30 billion*

**Dubai, UAE: 21 April 2015:** The Dubai Diamond Conference, which opened this morning at the Almas Conference Centre, Almas Tower, DMCC, was attended by more than 500 delegates who heard H.E. Dr Albanna highlight the increasing importance of economic and diplomatic ties between the U.A.E and the nations of Africa.

Among the key points discussed were the \$18 billion of non-oil trade between the U.A.E. and Sub Saharan Africa; The U.A.E.'s membership of the African Union; and the growing diamond trade.

In keeping with H.E. Dr Albanna's speech, the two-day Diamond Conference brought together international leaders of the diamond industry from a host of African ministers and traders, to financiers and world-renowned jewelers. The programme will draw upon the delegates' vast range of experience and perspective to fuel dynamic discussions and stimulate innovation and growth in the diamond industry in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Executive Chairman of the DMCC, highlighted the growth in the Dubai diamond trade from around \$5 million at the DMCC's inception in 2002 to a value of \$30 billion today.

Mr. Bin Sulayem said: "We are pleased to welcome so many important Ministers from Africa, diamantaires, traders and experts to the Dubai Diamond Conference to discuss the growing importance of the trading routes between Africa, Dubai and Asia. This two day event is the highlight of the global diamond calendar, which befits Dubai's position among the top three diamond centres in the world."

The Conference includes a series of five panel discussions: Retail in Challenging Markets, Africa First, Ethical Trade, Synthetics, and Diamond Financing.

**Speakers at the conference include:** Herman Van Rompuy, Former EU President; His Excellency Ahmed A.R. Albanna, Director of African Affairs, UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Hon. Ngoako Ramatlhodi, Minister of Mineral Resources of the Republic of South Africa; Hon. Prof. Dr. Francisco Queiroz, Minister of Geology and Mines of the Republic of Angola; Hon. Walter K. Chidakwa, Minister of Mines and Mining Development of the Republic of Zimbabwe; Paul Rowley, Executive Vice President of De Beers Sightholder Sales; Eng. Carlos Sumbula, CEO of Endiama; Vishal Mehta, CEO of Dimexon; Andrey Polyakov, Executive Vice President of Alrosa; Dr. Robert Mhlanga, Chairman of Mbada Diamonds; Mr. Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Executive Chairman, DMCC; Mr. Peter Meeus, Chairman of the Dubai Diamond Exchange (DDE); Ms. Maryam Al Hashemi, Director of the UAE Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

**-ENDS-**

**DMCC - Made For Trade**

DMCC is dedicated to enhancing Dubai's position as the global gateway for commodity trade. The most successful markets create conditions that enable producers, traders and consumers to thrive. DMCC is a Dubai Government Authority committed to developing these ideal conditions for trade and enterprise. DMCC has a strong track record in commodity trade facilitation and we encourage and support business through the platforms we provide. These include our Free Zone, commodity exchanges, legal and regulatory frameworks and our strong real estate offering. As part of our DMCC Free Zone expansion strategy to provide large corporates with a commercial property offering unique to the Dubai marketplace – DMCC is developing the 'Burj 2020 District' with the world's tallest commercial tower, the 'Burj 2020', as its centrepiece. [www.dmcc.ae](http://www.dmcc.ae) Dubai

The **Dubai Diamond Exchange** (DDE) is a DMCC platform and a leading diamond centre based in the Almas Tower. From buyers to sellers to service providers - everything the industry require in terms of infrastructure and a marketplace is available under one roof in a secure environment at Almas Tower including: DDE, vaulting, boiling, polishing, certification, transport and logistics services and the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Dubai's strong leadership and vision has enabled the Emirate to quickly transform itself into a key link in the global transport and distribution system. Since its inception in 2002, DMCC has successfully established Dubai as the global gateway for commodities trade by building and enhancing its physical and financial infrastructure, regulatory standards, products and services, including the launch of the DDE and the Dubai Gold and Commodities Exchange (DGCX). This has positioned Dubai as one of the world's leading diamond centres.