

Press Release

Tuesday 30th April 2019

Embargoed until 2:00 PM (BST)

Blood Diamonds: Risks and Reparations

Shareholders Against Blood Diamonds group accuse CEO and Board of Anglo American of misleading customers, shareholders and the public by claiming blood diamonds that fund grave human rights violations by government forces are conflict-free.

Shareholder human rights activists attending the AGM in London this afternoon of Anglo American, the mining conglomerate which owns the De Beers and Forevermark diamond brands, issued a 24 page statement exposing how the company's diamonds have generated revenues used to fund violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, war crimes and crimes against humanity, by the Israeli government.

In February a UN Human Rights Council report of an Independent Commission of Inquiry into the killing of 189 unarmed Palestinians including thirty five children and the maiming and wounding with live ammunition of over 6100 more found that Israeli soldiers committed war crimes and crimes against humanity and intentionally targeted civilians including children, medics, journalists and persons with disabilities.

Both De Beers and Forevermark have extensive trading relations with diamond companies in Israel where the industry generates an estimated \$1 billion/yr in funding for the Israeli military. Despite this De Beers claim their diamonds are responsibly sourced and 100% conflict free.

This misrepresentation by the world's leading diamond company exposes Palestinian victims of diamond-funded violence to continuing serious violations of their inalienable human rights including killing, maiming, injury, ethnic cleansing, discrimination and severe psychological trauma.

Furthermore, it exposes Anglo American to legal sanction, the De Beers and Forevermark brands to potentially ruinous reputational damage and financial loss and shareholders to commensurate financial jeopardy.

We call on Anglo American brands De Beers and Forevermark to immediately end the trade in diamonds that are a major source of funding for a regime guilty of grave human rights violations

Ends.

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Notes for Editors

Shareholders Against Blood Diamonds, Anglo American Shareholder Alert: Blood Diamonds - Risks and Reparations, April 30 2019. <http://inminds.co.uk/docs/AAAgm.pdf>

United Nations Human Rights Council, Report of the detailed findings of the independent international Commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory A/HRC/40/CRP.2 18 March 2019.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIOPT/Pages/Report2018OPT.aspx> (Accessed 24/4/2019)

Jerusalem Post, December 19, 2018, Netanyahu: Strong Economy Critical for Israeli Military Might - "Israel is responsible for generating 88% of the vast security budget that funds the IDF" <https://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Netanyahu-The-IDF-is-the-only-army-fighting-Iran-and-we-are-winning-574769>

June 2018 – **Human Rights Watch**, Israel: Apparent War Crimes in Gaza
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/13/israel-apparent-war-crimes-gaza>

June 2018 – **Human Rights Watch**, EU Should Push to Protect Rights in Diamond Trade
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/13/eu-should-push-protect-rights-diamond-trade>

May 2018 – **Palestinian Chronicle** - Special Report: Israel's Blood Diamonds: Watchdogs Turn a Blind Eye

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/israels-blood-diamonds-watchdogs-turn-blind-eye/>

Israeli trade statistics can be found here -

https://tradecompetitivenessmap.intracen.org/TP_EP_CI.aspx

Israeli Diamond Exchange Oct. 2015 - President of Israeli Diamond Exchange blocks WDC reform widening the definition of conflict diamonds "to include countries who flout human rights laws not just in mining areas but also in diamond trading centers."

<http://www.en.isde.co.il/article.aspx?id=29402>

Dec. 2016 - **Global Research** – Sean Clinton - Blood Diamonds: More than One Fifth of Diamonds Sold Worldwide are Funding Bloodshed and Violence

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/blood-diamonds-more-than-one-fifth-of-diamonds-sold-worldwide-are-funding-bloodshed-and-violence/5561214>

June 2013 – **South African Civil Society Coalition** call for Israel to be excluded from KPSC

<http://mediareviewnet.com/2013/06/press-statement-south-african-officials-must-reject-israeli-blood-diamonds-and-secure-jobs-in-diamond-beneficiation/>

Dec 2011 - **Global Witness** leaves Kimberley Process, calls for diamond trade to be held accountable - "Most consumers still cannot be sure where their diamonds come from, nor whether they are financing armed violence or abusive regimes."

<http://www.globalwitness.org/library/global-witness-leaves-kimberley-process-calls-diamond-trade-be-held-accountable>

Amnesty International - "Impunity continued for war crimes committed by Israeli forces during Operation "Cast Lead" in 2008-2009, and there were no indications that independent investigations would be conducted into violations committed during the November 2012 Gaza-Israel conflict." <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-2013>

Human Rights Watch – "Official statements that reflect the military having adopted an unlawful basis for attacks are evidence of war crimes because they show intent."

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/12/20/israelgaza-unlawful-israeli-attacks-palestinian-media>

Bt'Selem report into human rights violations during Operation Pillar Of Defense 14-21 November 2012 http://www.btselem.org/download/201305_pillar_of_defense_operation_eng.pdf

UNHRC - "The Mission finds that the conduct of the Israeli armed forces constitutes grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention in respect of wilful killings and wilfully causing great suffering to protected persons and, as such, give rise to individual criminal responsibility. It also finds that the direct targeting and arbitrary killing of Palestinian civilians is a violation of the right to life." *UN Human Rights Council Report of the Fact-Finding Mission of the Gaza Conflict* –

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>

Israeli political economist, Shir Hever, "Every time somebody buys a diamond that was exported from Israel some of that money ends up in the Israeli military, so the financial connection is quite clear. Overall the Israeli diamond industry contributes about \$1 billion annually to the Israeli military and security industries." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q76ktVtvgVg>

Amnesty International - "Israeli forces killed hundreds of unarmed Palestinian civilians and destroyed thousands of homes in Gaza in attacks which breached the laws of war, Amnesty International concluded" - <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/impunity-war-crimes-gaza-southern-israel-recipe-further-civilian-suffering-20090702>