



- Bringing together the United Nations, governments, the industry and civil society

Turin, 11 April - A preliminary consultative stakeholders and expert' meeting on the establishment of a mechanism for the traceability and certification of ethical origin of the coloured gemstones was convened by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute ([UNICRI](#)) in cooperation with the Vienna International Justice Institute and the International Colored Gemstone Association.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the public and private sectors from several countries namely Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania and the Russian Federation.

The coloured gemstones' global industry accounts for US\$ 10-12 billion per year, 80% of the coloured gemstones production comes from small scale informal mining. The supply chain from mine to market is extremely fragmented with a high degree of opacity. The high value and easy portability of the gemstones provide lucrative opportunities for illegal activities, often

characterized by the involvement of organized criminal groups managing fraudulent practices.

This project aims at establishing an instrument in the form of certificate of origin and its corresponding tracking system for colored gemstones based on the improvement of environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance along the supply and value chains, through a pragmatic approach.

It takes, as a basic assumption, that growth of the coloured gemstone industry could be positively aided by more virtuous governance practices of the stakeholders in tackling different threats and abuses. These range from security issues to illicit trafficking, fraud, theft, money laundering, critical environment and ecosystem impacts, unsafe and unacceptable working conditions.

Thomas Stelzer, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Co-ordination and Inter-Agency Affairs at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), underlined the importance of the project which brings together the United Nations, concerned governments, the industry and civil society.

Jonathan Lucas, Director of UNICRI, sustains that the ultimate aim of the project is that of providing governments as well as the private sector with a new crucial tool and mechanism to strengthen virtuous governance practices of the key actors in tackling different threats, and to promote ethical measures, transparency and sustainable development in the colored gemstone sector and the gems and jewelry industry.

Source: [UNICRI](#)