



Fifth pre-CIBJO Congress 2024 Special Report released, considers challenges of ethical coloured stone supply chains



MILAN, ITALY: September 18, 2024 – With fewer than seven weeks to go to the opening of the 2024 CIBJO Congress in Shanghai, China, on November 2, 2024, the fifth of the pre-congress Special Reports has been released. Prepared by the CIBJO Coloured Stone Commission, headed by Charles Abouchar, the report examines the challenges faced by members of the coloured gemstone sector in ensuring ethical provenance in their supply chains, where materials are most often artisanally mined and handled by multiple traders.

In an industry where a supply chain typically traverses multiple borders, social and environmental laws and regulations are unevenly created and enforced in different countries, with standards tending to be more lax in some of the nations where products are sourced and manufactured, the Coloured Stone Commission President wrote.

“We fully support the idea of working in the direction of progress,” Mr. Abouchar continued. “But properly verifying the precise source of each coloured gemstones can be complicated and often impossible. Such obstacles are exacerbated because, in the absence of uniform standards, not all buyers and sellers in the supply chain are abiding by the same rules.”

Noting that there are measures that can be taken to ensure that a coloured gemstone is ethically sourced and traceable, he said that to work within such a system one currently is obliged to limit what and where you buy to only those goods and dealers who can demonstrably comply with proper standards. “This is limiting and can be discriminatory, particularly in a sector where the overwhelming majority of goods are artisanally mined,” he stated. “It inevitably comes at cost, and makes it more difficult to operate competitively in the market.”

Such challenges do not mean that members of the coloured gemstone sector should abandon the mission to create ethical and even traceable supply chains, he wrote, but a realistic attitude is required. “[W]e should appreciate that progress is achieved incrementally, and that continuous improvement for the foreseeable future is the better alternative to absolute perfection,” he noted.

The Coloured Gemstone President recommended that members of the industry make use of tools developed within CIBJO and which are made available to the industry at large at no cost, including the [Responsible Sourcing Blue Book](#) and the accompanying [CIBJO Responsible Sourcing Toolkit](#).

The report also discusses the proliferation of descriptors being used to describe and market gemstones, colour instability in treated sapphires, what happens when new research invalidates older gem lab reports, and inconsistencies in the reporting of the origin of gemstones.

To download a full copy of the CIBJO Coloured Stone Commission’s 2024 Special Report, [PLEASE CLICK HERE](#).

CONTACT:

Steven Benson, CIBJO Communications
communications_1@cibjo.org

The World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO) is the international jewellery confederation of national trade organisations. CIBJO's purpose is to encourage harmonisation, promote international cooperation in the jewellery industry and to consider issues which concern the trade worldwide. CIBJO's chief mission is to protect consumer confidence in the industry. The World Jewellery Confederation is the sole jewellery industry organisation to have Special Consultative Status with the United Nation's Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) and is a member of the UN Global Compact.