



Joint statement on response to colour instability in some sapphires and rubies

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The World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO), the American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) and the International Colored Gemstone Association (ICA) are once again expressing concern about the presence in the marketplace of irradiated rubies and sapphires, particularly sourced in Sri Lanka.

The materials in question, which have a pleasing but temporary appearance, were earlier reported upon in a 2022 press release entitled “Irradiation of Rubies: a Cautionary Note.” The issue was also addressed in the 2024 pre-CIBJO Congress Special Report produced by the CIBJO Coloured Stone Commission, which drew attention to the colour stability of yellow, orange and padparadscha coloured sapphires. It noted that the issue that has become increasingly important, given that the irradiation of coloured gemstones is now widespread, and for some of these treated stones the resultant colours are not stable.

More recently, AGTA highlighted the issue in an “Important Notice,” raising the concerns in the United States, where it is reported that many dealers have been forced to stop purchasing from Sri Lankan merchants yellow, peach and padparadscha sapphires, as well as rubies, because of concerns about their colour stability. A significant number of these gemstones are reportedly unstable, with the colours fading to almost white or light pink tones, or, in the case of irradiated rubies, turning dark red over time. AGTA also reported that vendors may be using radiation from various sources to create the temporary, undisclosed treatments.

Following its notice, AGTA was heartened by a response from the Sri Lankan Gem and Jewellery Association (SLGJA), indicating that an industry awareness campaign was being rolled out. SLGJA also reported its desire to strengthen test reporting and to encourage full disclosure. To promote this, SLGJA said, policy and regulatory discussions will take place with a view to introducing stricter regulations and penalties for those engaging in undisclosed treatments.

CIBJO, AGTA and ICA, on behalf of their membership around the world call on the authorities in Sri Lanka and elsewhere to address the concerns expressed about

irradiated rubies and sapphires, in the manner that has been outlined by the SLGJA. This should be done with urgency, since if the present situation is allowed to continue it will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the industry, and by extension on consumer confidence in coloured gemstones.

CIBJO, AGTA, and ICA welcome the intervention of SLGJA and look forward to witnessing the implementation of best practices that assure an ever-stronger business in gemstones traded globally.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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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.