



Press release:

Board appoints Karen Rentmeesters as CEO ad interim of AWDC

Antwerp, April 15, 2024. As of Tuesday, April 16, Karen Rentmeesters, currently active as Chief Officer PR & Industry Relations at AWDC, will take on the role of CEO ad interim within the organization. With Karen Rentmeesters, who has been with AWDC for 15 years now, the Board of Directors is choosing someone who knows the organization well and can fall back on a lot of expertise thanks to years of experience. In the coming period, Karen will focus on carrying out ongoing business and appointing a new, permanent CEO for AWDC. The appointment of an ad interim CEO comes after current CEO Ari Epstein resigned last Thursday.

The Board of Directors of Antwerp World Diamond Centre has appointed Karen Rentmeesters as CEO Ad Interim of the organization after current CEO Ari Epstein decided to resign from that position last week.

"To fill the position of ad interim CEO, we deliberately chose someone with extensive experience in and knowledge of the diamond industry, a large network, and the necessary expertise. We are confident that Karen will take on this role with great enthusiasm and that, while waiting for a permanent CEO, she will flawlessly guide AWDC through its ongoing dossiers," says Isidor Mörsel, Chairman of AWDC's Board of Directors.

"I am honored to be asked to take on this position and will be fully committed to this new, temporary role," says Karen Rentmeesters. "In the coming period, together with the entire management team, I will do everything in my power to continue Ari Epstein's good work while providing the necessary peace of mind. This is in anticipation of the arrival of a new, permanent CEO. The entire diamond industry is in the midst of a period of transformation towards greater transparency and faces challenging times. As a sector federation representing the interests of the Antwerp diamond companies, it is important that we guide them through this period and offer them stability. I will be fully committed to that".

Karen Rentmeesters is 45, married, and mother of two children. She graduated from the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) in 2002, holding a Master's degree in Communication Sciences, after which she started her career in the Belgian media industry. She joined the Antwerp World Diamond Centre's (AWDC) PR & Communications department in February 2010, focusing on establishing and maintaining relationships with local and international industry stakeholders, setting up and implementing communications and marketing strategies and developing innovative events, content and tools to serve the Antwerp diamond community, as well as to reinforce and promote Antwerp as the world's oldest, largest and most transparent diamond trading hub, catering to the multi-billion-dollar diamond and jewelry industry worldwide. Throughout her career at AWDC, Karen has led teams of various sizes. She has built an extensive network and gathered in-depth knowledge and insight in the diamond industry at large, from mine to finger.



Karen Rentmeesters Headshot – download [here](#).

About AWDC

About us: The Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC), is an industry-established foundation whose mission is to serve and support the diamond trade in Antwerp, the world's leading diamond trade hub. AWDC is the coordinating body and the official representative of the Antwerp diamond industry, and as such is recognized internationally as the host, spokesperson and intermediary for the Belgian diamond community. In this capacity, AWDC liaises with governments on behalf of the Belgian diamond industry, and actively promotes support for the diamond industry at home and abroad. 84% of all rough diamonds and 50% of all polished diamonds pass through Antwerp. Diamonds represent 5% of the total Belgian exports and 15% of all Belgian exports outside the EU, making diamonds the most important export product outside the EU.

Not for publication:

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