



# THE GLOBAL DIAMOND INDUSTRY

ECONOMICS AND  
DEVELOPMENT VOLUME II

EDITED BY  
ROMAN GRYNBERG  
LETSEMA MBAYI



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**Economics and Development Volume II**

Edited by

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*I dedicate these volumes to my father Mr Michael Grynberg  
who was, amongst many things, a clothing manufacturer,  
a builder, a diamantaire, an art auctioneer and a survivor.  
He survived Hitler but those businesses that he ran that  
were buffeted by the strong commercial winds  
of global change did not survive.*



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# Introduction

*Roman Grynberg and Letsema Mbayi*

To historians of Africa, the name 'Kimberly' is forever associated with the diamond wealth accumulated by Cecil Rhodes in the 19th century. Rhodes was without doubt the greatest and wealthiest of all of Africa's warlords. This wealth, like that accumulated in the late 20th century from diamonds, appropriated by indigenous warlords, was used to fund conflict on the continent. In the case of Rhodes, it was the colonization and violent plunder of Zimbabwe. That the post-apartheid government in South Africa should succeed to 'rebrand' the name 'Kimberly' to be associated with the struggle against blood diamonds, is no small historical irony. It is also a marketing coup that may one day well eclipse De Beers' celebrated 'diamonds are forever' marketing slogan.

## I.1 Where is the future sparkle?

In Kimberley, the town where the diamond rush of the late 1800s took place and led to the founding of DeBeers (which also gave its name to the Kimberly Process), a group of young girls often find themselves having to sing their school song, under the close scrutiny of their stern music teacher. The first verse of the school song, sang by rows of less-than-eager young girls wearing horrid blazers with dark green and black stripes, goes as follows:

*The diamonds of our city, are sent across the seas  
But let them go, we will strive to show, her maids are more than these*