

MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGO: 11H00 SEPTEMBER 07 2005**

**“DIAMONDS FOR DEVELOPMENT AIRSHIP” ARRIVES IN CAPE TOWN**

**CAPE TOWN** – De Beers today unveiled its newest and most innovative method of exploring for diamond deposits. The company presented its airship-based airborne gravity gradiometer, an instrument that measures minute changes in the earth's gravity.

The airship, which is almost as big as a football pitch, will help the company to discover new mining opportunities in southern Africa, initially in Botswana, where it will operate in 2005 and 2006. The application of this technology will provide De Beers and partner companies with a competitive advantage in the field of diamond exploration.

This partnership between a 118-year-old South African diamond company and a 107-year-old German airship company, Zeppelin, bringing this unique technology to Africa in an innovative application, is evidence of the De Beers Group's commitment to economic development in the region, through its consistent investment in new technologies and associated supporting infrastructure. De Beers, together with its partners in mining, Debswana in Botswana and Namdeb in Namibia, will be taking advantage of the historic arrival of the airship in southern Africa to illustrate the initiative “Diamonds for Development in Africa “.

De Beers Group Manager of Exploration, Bill McKechnie said: “We believe that this use of an airship in diamond exploration of this scale is a first in Africa, and in fact in the world. This exciting technology comes at a time when we are going through a period of restructuring and intensifying the search for new viable diamond deposits to meet the demand for natural gem diamonds.

McKechnie added that the airship would be faster and cost-effective than the current gravity surveying methods because, “It has now become easier to scope large pockets of land from the air. A further advantage is that gravity data complements magnetics data and thus provides additional insights for geological interpretation.



**DE BEERS GROUP SERVICES**

De Beers Group Services (Proprietary) Limited Registration No. 2004/025047/07

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De Beers Chairman Nicky Oppenheimer also welcomed the project and new technology and the hope it brought to the southern African region.

He congratulated the scientists and engineers of De Beers, Bell GeoSpace and Zeppelin involved. From Johannesburg he commented, "There is always a fascination in diamonds and one would have to go far to combine a more romantic association than Zeppelin airships and De Beers diamonds. I am immensely proud that people from the De Beers Group of companies have been involved in such innovative and lateral thinking."

He concluded by saying; "this announcement makes me particularly pleased to be associated with another De Beers and partners initiative to contribute towards the diamonds for development in Africa story."

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#### NOTE TO EDITORS:

**THE Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik (ZLT) gravity gradiometer instrument is a partnership with Bell Geospace and De Beers. De Beers played a leading role in the development of the commercial application of Bell Geospace's gravity gradiometer technology and its incorporation into the Zeppelin. It is the first time that than an airship will be used in such an operation.**



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