

### Japan's First Lady visits Rio Tinto's rare pink diamonds

15 July 2014

Rio Tinto's iconic Argyle pink diamonds were part of the inaugural visit to Western Australia by Japan's First Lady Mrs Akie Abe at the invitation of the Western Australian Government.

The 2014 Argyle Pink Diamonds Tender collection, comprising around 50 of the rarest and most valuable pink diamonds in the world, were showcased in an exclusive preview for Mrs Abe. The diamonds are the finest of a year's production from Rio Tinto's Argyle mine in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. Mrs Abe was the first to view a hero of the collection, a 1.59 carat Emerald cut Fancy Intense Purplish Pink named Argyle Toki™. The name, depicting the delicate pink underwings of a rare Japanese bird, symbolises the importance of Japan as the premier export market for rare pink diamonds.

Rio Tinto Diamonds managing director Jean-Marc Lieberherr said "We were delighted to welcome Mrs Abe and show her at first hand these beautiful gems, the pinnacle of Australia's mineral wealth and symbolic of our enduring relationship with Japan."

The Japanese market has been critical to the development of Rio Tinto's rare pink diamond business over the past 30 years. The pink diamond jewellery phenomenon started in Japan in the late 1980s when Japanese designers boldly embraced Argyle's pink diamonds and incorporated them in beautiful and innovative designs. Today Rio Tinto sells around 30 per cent of its Argyle pink diamonds into Japan where there is an unerring appetite for the smallest, palest pink diamonds, through to the rarest reds.

Rio Tinto's Argyle mine produces virtually the entire world's supply of rare pink diamonds. The 2014 Argyle Pink Diamonds Tender collection will be officially launched in August and will tour the world until October. Around 150 collectors, connoisseurs and luxury jewellers are invited to place sealed bids on the diamonds. Prices for these diamonds can exceed US\$1million per carat, hence their stature as "the most concentrated form of wealth on earth." This year's collection will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Argyle Pink Diamonds Tender.

#### About Argyle Pink Diamonds

Pink diamonds, produced at Rio Tinto's Argyle Mine in Western Australia, are highly coveted as the world's most sought after gems. The Argyle Diamond Mine produces more than 90 per cent of the world's pink diamonds, which are sold in a broad range of colours and sizes to an international customer base.

The market for pink diamonds is quite separate to white diamonds, and due to their rarity, pink diamonds typically command prices far in excess of white diamonds.

The best diamonds are reserved for the annual Argyle Pink Diamonds Tender. Rio Tinto's Argyle Pink Diamonds business is located in Perth, Western Australia, alongside its cutting and polishing factory. Website: [www.argylepinkdiamonds.com.au](http://www.argylepinkdiamonds.com.au)

#### About Rio Tinto Diamonds

Rio Tinto is one of the world's major diamond producers through its 100 per cent control of the Argyle mine in Australia, 60 per cent of the Diavik mine in Canada, a 78 per cent interest in the Murowa mine in Zimbabwe. These three mines allow Rio Tinto to produce diamonds for all market segments. Rio Tinto also has an advanced diamond project in India. Rio Tinto's share of the production from its three operating mines is sold through its Diamonds Sales and Marketing office in Antwerp, Belgium with

representative offices in Mumbai, Hong Kong and New York. Rio Tinto Diamonds is a leading supporter of the Kimberley Process as well as a founding member of Responsible Jewellery Council.

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