



drishti

Broader Definition of 'Conflict Diamonds'

 drishtiias.com/printpdf/broader-definition-of-conflict-diamonds

India is concerned over **widening of definition of 'conflict diamonds' under the Kimberley Process**, as suggested by developed countries such as the US and Canada.

The proposal is to **include human right abuses and child labour issues**. This may end up as a **non-tariff barrier** for developing countries.

Non-tariff Barrier

- A nontariff barrier is a **trade restriction, such as a quota, embargo or sanction**, that countries use to further their political and economic goals.
- Countries commonly use **nontariff barriers in international trade**.
- Nontariff barriers often release countries from paying added tax on imported goods and create other barriers that have a meaningful yet different monetary impact.
- Countries can use nontariff barriers in place of, or in conjunction with, standard tariff barriers.

India's Stand

- While the concerns are largely based on reports of human rights abuses in the **diamond fields of Zimbabwe and Angola** which includes killing of villagers. India is afraid that once the **exercise of broadening the definition of conflict diamond begins**, many other issues could get incorporated and a **lot of subjectivity may flow in**.
- This becomes more important since India is the **world's largest centre for cut and polished diamonds** and **accounts for 75% of the world's polished diamonds exports**.
The sector is **labour-intensive** and employs over 4.64 million workers, which is expected to go up to 8.23 million by 2022.
- India is against human rights abuse and labour law violations, but there are other agencies including the **UN Human Rights Commission** and the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** to address them.

The Kimberly Process was never meant to address such issues. While countries like Zimbabwe and Angola need to be checked, India and some other **developing countries engaged in peaceful trade should not be at the receiving end.**

Background

- Over the last couple of years, a number of members including Canada, the EU and the US have been complaining that the Kimberley process **addresses a very narrow band of issues and ignores the rest.**
- Thereby, Canada, in last year's plenary meeting in Brussels, put forward a **proposal to expand the definition of conflict diamonds** to include **rough diamonds used by public security forces or private (including criminal or mercenary) armed groups** to acquire wealth through the **illegal control, bribery, taxation, extortion or dispossession of people.**
- **India is the chair of the Kimberley System Certification Scheme (KPCS) for the year 2019,** and will have to mobilise **other developing countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Brazil and Vietnam to oppose unintended barriers to trade.**