

# GEMFIELDS

## Gemfields unveils USD15M state-of-the-art, industry-leading sort house



Mozambique, 22 February 2019

Today, Gemfields unveils a new ruby sort house on one of the most significant recently discovered ruby deposits in the world, at Montepuez Ruby Mine in Mozambique.

The first of its kind in the coloured gemstone industry, it will be on a par with the best diamond facilities in the world. This state-of-the-art facility, the result of an investment of USD15M, will allow Montepuez Ruby Mine (MRM) to consistently deliver a greater volume and spectrum of responsibly sourced rubies to the global market.

The facility itself will raise production levels significantly. It works by using the natural properties of rubies as a means of automated sorting. The process starts with washing of the raw material, before passing it under ultra-violet (UV) light. Rubies naturally fluoresce under UV light, meaning optical sorters can detect the fluorescence and employ blasts of air to direct individual rubies to separate channels for further sorting and grading.

The use of programmable logic controllers and data software under the UV light to conduct this process is faster, more reliable and more efficient than the human eye. It also allows the identification of a finer material component than before. A greater number of washing plants – the equivalent of washing 10,000 tonnes of ore per day – combined with UV optical sorting account for how throughput will increase exponentially, translating into significantly higher production figures. As commented by Kaung San, Ruby Grading Supervisor,

"Previously the sorting of rubies was largely manual, but it is very exciting to now introduce automated sorting which will require minimal manual sorting. Our productive capacity will increase exponentially."

However, the introduction of automation will not mean a reduction in workforce, in fact quite the opposite. Firstly, the greater throughput of the sort house means an expansion of the current active mining area, which will require an increase in workforce. Secondly, the manual part of the sorting process – categorisation and grading the rubies themselves – will require a greater volume of highly skilled employees. Rather than import this expertise, MRM is creating the first group of Mozambican gemmologists specialised in the selection and classification of rubies, which marks a substantial step for the ruby industry.

And finally, the installation of the technology itself has equipped the Mozambican workforce with the technical ability to understand, operate and manage facilities of this nature anywhere in the world, enabling their place as a specialised and competitive labour force in the international employment market.

Mervyn Dettmer, Head of Sort House, commented "We believe that this new machinery will enrich and expand the knowledge of our employees, creating development opportunities and specialisation in the field of gemmology within the local workforce."

The 15 million USD investment in this project is one of the largest investments of its kind in the Cabo Delgado province. It represents MRM's commitment, as a Mozambican-based company, to continue to contribute to the development of the Province of Cabo Delgado, the District of Montepuez, the local communities and the country of Mozambique. Its introduction will see improved productivity, more efficient production, a reduced margin of error and, in the medium and long term, a reduction in production costs. The increase in production and expansion in workforce not only benefits the local communities, it also generates greater contribution to the national economy through taxes. This means a greater positive impact for the people of Mozambique, a core value of Gemfields' operations.

2019 will be a significant year of investment and growth for Gemfields' ruby mine, as the new sort house will be complemented by the implementation of a new thickener to the wash plant, increasing capacity to 150 tonnes per hour (from 125 tonnes per hour). Two high capacity pre-screen plants will be brought on-line to remove the finer particle material prior to it being fed to the wash-plant, which will result in a greater concentration of the desired size material, further enhancing the wash plant feed capacity.

Sean Gilbertson, CEO, Gemfields stated, "We are proud of our pioneering approach and leadership position within the sector and continually work to improve the provision of responsibly sourced coloured gemstones. We are delighted to inaugurate this state-of-the-art, industry-leading ruby sort house today and will continue to strive to deliver best-in-class operations and promote transparency, trust and sustainable mining practices."

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## ABOUT GEMFIELDS

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Gemfields is a world leading supplier of responsibly sourced coloured gemstones.

Gemfields is the operator and 75% owner of both the Kagem emerald mine in Zambia (believed to be the world's single largest producing emerald mine) and Montepuez ruby mine in Mozambique (one of the most significant recently discovered ruby deposits in the world), as well as bulk sampling licences in Ethiopia, amongst others.

Gemfields aims to operate in a way that contributes positively to national economies, taking a leading role in modernising the coloured gemstone sector and building lasting, sustainable livelihoods for the communities around the mines. Gemfields believes that coloured gemstones should be mined and marketed by championing three key values - legitimacy, transparency and integrity.

Gemfields has developed a proprietary grading system and a pioneering auction and trading platform to provide a consistent supply of coloured gemstones to the global jewellery market. These key components of the company's business model, along with outright ownership of Fabergé (an iconic and prestigious brand of exceptional heritage), play an important role in the appropriate distribution and associated resurgence of the global coloured gemstone sector.

Gemfields' responsibly sourced gemstones are the preferred choice for show pieces created by many world-renowned luxury houses and cutting-edge designers.

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