MILAN, ITALY: October 27, 2021 — With the 2021 Virtual CIBJO Congress already underway, the eighth of this year’s CIBJO Special Reports has been released. Prepared by CIBJO’s Coloured Stone Commission, headed by Charles Abouchar, the report looks at issues related to ethical sourcing, and how the principles of responsible supply chain management can be implemented without disenfranchising artisanal and small-scale miners, and small and medium-sized enterprises.
“With the overwhelming majority of rough coloured stones produced by ASM, which in turn channels its supply through a complex trading network that has developed organically over literally hundreds of years, the coloured stone industry is the most fragile structurally in all of the jewellery sectors,” Mr. Abouchar writes. “But literally millions of people rely on the income it generates, many of them living in some of the least developed and most poverty-stricken areas of the world.”

“If we try to impose our ethical value system without integrating the opinion and perspective of the local populations, we are likely to be regarded as imposing a new form of colonialism. This would be counterproductive,” the CIBJO Coloured Stone Commission notes. “Nobody should discount making the utmost effort to have the sourcing of our rough supply be as ethical as possible, but the complex realities of the artisanal mining sector means that we must be nuanced in implementing ethical rules.”

“In my opinion, we need to take a holistic view when developing ethical supply chains,” Mr. Abouchar continues. “In order to meet consumer expectations, we also need to cater to the expectations of those at the supply end, and the communities in the cutting centres as well. Initiatives that fully integrate local populations in the solution are the only way to develop sustainable and ethical sourcing programmes.”

CIBJO congresses serve as the official gathering place for the World Jewellery Confederation’s global membership, and are also the venue for the annual meetings of CIBJO’s sectoral commissions, where amendments can be introduced to the organisation’s definitive directories of international industry standards for diamonds, coloured stones, pearls, gem labs, precious metals, coral and responsible sourcing, known as the Blue Books.

The CIBJO Congress is also where the programme of World Jewellery Confederation Education Foundation (WJCEF), relating to responsible and sustainable activities in the industry and CIBJO’s ongoing cooperation with the United Nations and its development programme is reported upon.

To download a full copy of the CIBJO Coloured Stone Commission’s special report, PLEASE CLICK HERE.

The 2021 CIBJO Congress is taking place virtually from November 1-4, 2021, and November 15-18,2021.

The open sessions of the congress are being conducted on the new Zoom Events platform, which allows congress delegates to mingle and interact in a common area, between and during formal meetings.

Sessions are being timed to enable optimal attendance by delegates linking in from multiple time zones, and thus only one or two will be held on any given day, for not more than two and half hours in total. The proceedings will be recorded, so that those delegates who may be unable participate live will be able to review a session after the event.
Certain of the congress sessions, are open to public participation. Other sessions will be by invitation only. More information is available and registration possible on the dedicated CIBJO Congress website at: http://www.cibjo.org/congress2021/

CIBJO is the international jewellery confederation of national trade organisations. CIBJO’s purpose is to encourage harmonisation, promote international cooperation in the jewellery industry and to consider issues which concern the trade worldwide. CIBJO’s chief mission is to protect consumer confidence in the industry. CIBJO is the sole jewellery industry organisation to have Special Consultative Status with the United Nation’s Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) and is a member of the UN Global Compact.