

## Media release

### **Varda Shine, DTC CEO addresses the Diamond Empowerment Fund gala evening**

20 September 2011 Hong Kong Ladies and gentlemen, a very warm welcome to *Diamonds in the Sky* in Hong Kong! It's wonderful to see you all here and I would like to thank each and every one of you for turning out to show your support for this sparkling initiative.

Russell and I planned to host a gala evening out here on behalf of the Diamond Empowerment Fund to highlight the amazing work undertaken on education initiatives by this charity and to share this with the leaders of the diamond industry in the East. As we were looking into how we could set this up, however, it quickly became apparent that we already had fantastic allies in this part of the world in Chow Tai Fook and the China Charity Federation.

Although the China Charity Federation has a wider remit, focusing on areas such as healthcare and disaster relief as well as education, there was clearly a strong touch point with the Diamond Empowerment Fund. We both have an overwhelming desire to give people the opportunity to have a better life, better prospects and the chance to be a leader of the future through access to an education.

It is my personal belief that an education is the greatest gift it is possible to offer. The American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey encapsulated this when he commented that

*Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself*

We all recognise how our schooling gave us some basic skills before we headed out into the 'real world', but Dewey's insight is that education itself *is* the real world. All the major elements of our lives – our jobs, our homes and maybe even our relationships – would have been out of reach if we had not been granted the amazing privilege of being taught how to write, how to add and how to interact with others.

And while the chance to be able reach our potential thanks to our education is something that many of us take for granted, for so many people around the world it is nothing more than a distant dream – the opportunities are so sparse that the dream can seem as far away as the stars in the night sky.

Well tonight, ladies and gentlemen, *Diamonds in the Sky* will endeavour to help bring those far away dreams much closer to those in need and provide a better start in life for the emerging talent in diamond nations.

Investment in education and the incubation of leaders of the future must always be our social priority as it is this which leads to sustained progress, economic growth and prosperity. Providing unrestricted access to schooling really is the first step in creating a virtuous circle of development.

As with all lofty ambitions, however, we all need to pull together to make a lasting change in the world. Tonight we hope we can unite our efforts like never before and reach our target of raising \$3million for these wonderful causes. We have the chance to use our positions of privilege in the best possible way and to share with others some of the opportunities that we have had the very good fortune to enjoy.

You will shortly see some video highlighting the work of the two amazing organisations that *Diamonds in the Sky* will be supporting tonight, so all that is left for me to say is please give your support generously and help the young stars of the future get a better start in life so that they can shine and sparkle like diamonds in the sky.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much

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**Notes to editor:**

**THE DIAMOND TRADING COMPANY (DTC)**

The DTC is the rough diamond distribution arm of the De Beers Family of Companies and is the world's largest supplier of rough diamonds, by value. With activities in sorting, valuing and diamond beneficiation, the DTC has representative offices in the UK, and South Africa, as well as joint venture operations in Botswana and Namibia with the governments of those countries.

Formed in 1934, the DTC was incorporated in 1986 and established as a stand-alone company within the De Beers family in July 2004. DTC's vision is to be the world's most effective rough diamond distributor maximising long-term value for Producer and Sightholder partners, while assisting in the creation of viable downstream industries in producer countries.

For more information about the DTC please visit [www.debeersgroup.com](http://www.debeersgroup.com).