



Liqhobong Mine Enters Final Commissioning Stages

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**Firestone Diamonds plc
("Firestone" or the "Company") (AIM: FDI)**

Liqhobong Diamond Mine Enters Final Commissioning Stages

Firestone Diamonds plc, the AIM-quoted diamond mining company, is pleased to announce all major construction activities are now complete at its Liqhobong Diamond Mine ("Liqhobong" or the "Project") in Lesotho. Mining activities have started and commissioning of the processing plant is now in the final stages. Liqhobong is owned 75% by Firestone and 25% by the Government of Lesotho.

Highlights

- Three million man hours exceeded without a lost time injury
- All major construction activities now complete
- Historic stockpiles being processed in wet plant commissioning
- First blast and mining of primary ore commenced for stockpiling
- Final commissioning to conclude in coming weeks
- First diamonds from commissioning phase expected to be recovered in October
- Ramp up to commercial production on track to begin this quarter

As at 5 October 2016, all major construction activities were complete and over three million man hours have been exceeded without a single lost time injury. Commissioning is now well advanced with the historic stockpiles being processed initially as part of the wet plant commissioning phase. Over the coming weeks, the Company expects to complete the commissioning of the recovery plant and sort house in anticipation of first diamond recoveries later this month. In addition, Firestone has begun mining of the main pit kimberlite and maiden ore is being stockpiled for processing once the historic stockpiles have been processed.

Firestone will include further details of the commissioning process in its next quarterly update, expected in the week commencing 17 October 2016.

Stuart Brown, Chief Executive Officer, commented:

"I am delighted to announce that Liqhobong has entered the start-up phase, with all major construction activities now complete and commissioning of the plant well advanced. The first ore from historic stockpiles has been put through the plant and the Company has begun the mining of the main pit kimberlite as it begins production activities in earnest.

Firestone remains fully financed throughout its ramp-up period and we look forward to commencing diamond sales, from January 2017, and providing further updates in due course."

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Background information on Firestone

Firestone is an international diamond mining company with operations focused on Lesotho. Firestone is currently in the process of commencing production at the Lihobong Mine Development Project in Lesotho to become a one million carat per annum producer.

Lesotho is emerging as one of Africa's significant new diamond producers, and hosts Gem Diamonds' Letseng Mine, Firestone's Lihobong Mine, as well as Namakwa Diamonds' Kao Mine and the Mothae development project.

For more information please visit: www.firestonediamonds.com.

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