

Lucara Diamond Corp. Announces Q2 2023 Results

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VANCOUVER, Aug. 9, 2023 - [Lucara Diamond Corp.](#) ("Lucara" or the "Company") (TSX: LUC) (BSE: LUC) (Nasdaq Stockholm: LUC) today reports its results for the quarter ended June 30, 2023.

Q2 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Guidance maintained.
- Revenue for the quarter ended June 30, 2023 totalled \$41.1 million.
- The Q2 2023 operating cash cost of \$27.97 per tonne of ore processed⁽¹⁾ was well below the expected annual operating cash cost range of \$32.50 to \$35.50 per tonne of ore processed.
- All key operational metrics were on plan, with 0.7 million tonnes of ore and 0.9 million tonnes of waste mined, 0.7 million tonnes of ore processed, and 90,497 carats recovered from direct milled ore.
- Cash flow generated from operating activities was \$9.2 million.
- An updated schedule and budget for the Karowe underground expansion project ("Karowe UGP") was released. The duration of the construction period increased, extending the anticipated commencement of production from the underground from H2 2026 to H1 2028. The revised forecast of costs at completion is \$683 million.
- The long-term outlook for diamond prices, combined with the potential for exceptional stone recoveries and the continued strong performance of the open pit could mitigate the modelled impact on project cash flows due to the schedule slippage.
- An investment of \$22.5 million in the Karowe UGP in Q2 2023 focused on sinking and grouting programs in the ventilation and production shafts.

Eira Thomas, President & CEO commented: "Karowe delivered another solid quarter against plan in Q2 and as we returned to mining in the south lobe, the proportion of specials (diamonds greater than 10.8 carats) increased and has so far included the recovery of 13 stones over 100 carats that will be polished and sold in the latter half of the year. The rebased schedule and budget will delay production from the underground and has increased costs by approximately 25%, however, sufficient surface stockpiles ensure that the mill will operate to capacity during this period and the project remains economically robust. The expansion continues to have the support of our largest shareholder."

REVIEW FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

- Operational highlights from the Karowe Mine for Q2 2023 included:
 - Ore and waste mined of 0.7 million tonnes respectively.
 - 0.7 million tonnes (Q2 2022: 0.7) of ore processed
 - A total of 90,497 carats recovered (Q2 2022: 12.5 million carats)
- The Karowe Mine has operated continuously for over two and a half years without a lost

time injury.

- Financial highlights for the three months ended June 30, 2023

Revenues of \$41.1 million (Q2 2022: \$52.3 million) reflected a continuation of weaker diamond prices and a planned change in product mix beginning in early 2023. During Q2 2023, 12% of the carats processed were recovered from the Centre Lobe and 88% were recovered from South Lobe material (Q2 2022: 100% South Lobe ore). Most of the carats recovered in the second quarter will be sold in the third quarter of 2023.

- Operating margins of 59% were achieved (Q2 2022: 67%). A strong operating margin continues to be achieved despite price softness in the rough diamond market.
- Karowe's +10.8 production, sold through HB, accounted for 63% (Q2 2022: 65%) of total revenues recognized in Q2 2023.

- Adjusted EBITDA⁽¹⁾ was \$15.7 million (Q2 2022: \$24.4 million), with the change directly attributed to a decrease in revenues.
- Net income was \$5.0 million (Q2 2022: \$12.5 million), or \$0.01 earnings per share (Q2 2022: \$0.03).

- During Q2 2023, the Company invested \$22.5 million into the Karowe

UGP. Grouting programs were the focus in both the ventilation and production shafts. A grout cover was completed in the ventilation shaft along with remedial grouting behind the concrete liner in previously dry portions of the shaft. In the production shaft, a grout cover was initiated 10 metres earlier than planned due to increased water inflows related to a water-making subvertical joint feature. Additional grouting was required to seal off areas within an earlier grout cover.

- Shaft sinking in the ventilation shaft was comprised of 30 metres of vertical advance in April followed by grouting. Sinking resumed in July 2023, 8 days ahead of schedule.
- In the production shaft, a total of 27 metres of vertical advance was achieved during Q2, with the remainder of time dedicated to grouting.

- All components of the bulk power supply upgrade, including the Letlhakane and Karowe Substations and 132 kV power line, were handed over to Botswana Power Corporation.
- Mobilisation for civil works related to construction of the bulk air cooler contractor commenced in late June.
- A contract for fabrication of the permanent men and materials winder was signed during the quarter, representing the last major component for the permanent winders.

- (i) See "Non-IFRS Financial Performance Measures"

Cash
position
and
liquidity
at
June
30

DIAMOND MARKET

The longer-term outlook for natural diamond prices remains positive, anchored on improving fundamentals around supply and demand as many of the world's largest mines reach their natural end of life over the next decade. Following on the record high diamond prices achieved in early 2022, a softer diamond market emerged in the latter half of 2022, which has persisted into the second quarter of 2023, the result of global economic concerns combined with geopolitical uncertainty, including the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Prices of lab-grown diamonds increased during the period. Intense competition combined with improvements in technology continue to drive prices of lab grown diamonds down. This further differentiates this market segment from the natural diamond market and highlights the unique nature and inherent rarity of natural diamonds. The longer-term market fundamentals remain unchanged and positive, pointing to strong price growth over the next few years as demand is expected to outstrip future supply, which is now declining globally. Due to these near-term commitments, there is concern regarding the Company's ability to meet its commitments and discharge its obligations in the normal course of business. While Management believes the Company will be able to resolve the noted items through its ongoing engagement with its Lenders, there can be no assurance that those efforts will be successful. See further details in the section "Liquidity and Capital Resources" of the Company's MD&A for the quarter ended June 30, 2023 and refer to Note 1 of the condensed interim consolidated financial statements for the three and six months ended June 30, 2023.

2023 OUTLOOK

This section of the press release provides management's production and cost estimates for 2023. These are "forward-looking statements" and subject to the cautionary note regarding the risks associated with forward-looking statements. Diamond revenue guidance does not include revenue related to the sale of exceptional stones (an individual rough diamond which sells for more than \$10 million), or the Sethunya.

No changes were made to the Company's 2023 Guidance (released in December 2022).

Karowe Diamond Mine Full Year - 2023

In millions of U.S. dollars unless otherwise noted

Diamond revenue (millions)	\$200 to \$230
Diamond sales (thousands of carats)	385 to 415
Diamonds recovered (thousands of carats)	395 to 425
Ore tonnes mined (millions)	1.9 to 2.3
Waste tonnes mined (millions)	2.2 to 2.8
Ore tonnes processed (millions)	2.6 to 2.9
Total operating cash costs ⁽¹⁾ including waste mined ⁽²⁾ (per tonne processed)	\$32.50 to \$35.50
Botswana general & administrative expenses including marketing costs (per tonne processed)	\$3.50 to \$4.50
Tax rate ⁽³⁾	0 %
Average exchange rate - USD/Pula	12.0

(1) Operating cash costs are a non-IFRS measure. See "Non-IFRS Financial Performance Measures".

(2) Includes ore and waste mined cash costs of \$7.00 to \$8.00 (per tonne mined) and processing cash costs of \$12.00 to \$13.00 (per tonne processed).

(3) The Company is subject to a variable tax rate in Botswana based on a profit and revenue ratio which increases as profit as a percentage of revenue increases. The lowest variable tax rate is 22% while the highest variable tax rate is 55% (only if taxable income were equal to revenue). Capital expenditures are deductible when incurred. With planned capital expenditures of up to \$105 million for the UGP, a tax rate of 0% is forecast for 2023. Should capital expenditures vary from plan, the Company could be subject to current tax.

DIAMOND SALES

Karowe diamonds are sold through three separate and distinct sales channels: through the HB sales agreement, on the Clara digital sales platform and through quarterly tenders.

HB SALES AGREEMENT FOR +10.8 CARAT DIAMOND PRODUCTION FROM KAROWE

For the three months ended June 30, 2023, the Company recorded revenue of \$25.8 million from the HB agreement (inclusive of top-up payments of \$5.1 million), as compared to revenue of \$32.4 million (inclusive of top-up payments of \$13.1 million). Lower revenue in Q2 2023 is reflective of an ore mix which included Centre Lobe material.

The decrease in revenue in Q2 2023 versus the comparative quarter can be attributed primarily to the number of high value diamonds delivered to HB in preceding quarters which were sold in the current period. Top-up values will typically increase as the more valuable stones move through production and are sold. The lower top-ups recognized in Q2 2023 reflect the value of the stones delivered, consistent with the change in

product mix during H1 2023.

Recovered Specials equated to 6.6% of the weight percentage of total recovered carats from ore processed during Q2 2023 with 12% of the carats recovered from the Centre Lobe and 88% recovered from South Lobe material (Q2 2022: 100% South Lobe ore). Natural variability in the quality profile of the +10.8ct production in any production period or fiscal quarter results in fluctuations in recorded revenue and associated top-ups. This result is consistent with the resource model and expected.

Despite the overall decrease in revenue recognized in Q2 2023, diamond market fundamentals continued to support healthy prices from the multi-year highs observed at the peak in Q1 2022.

CLARA SALES PLATFORM

Total volume transacted on the platform was \$5.7 million in Q2 2023, with non-Karowe goods representing 48% of the total sales volume transacted, generating revenue of \$5.5 million. The Company continues to be focused on growing third party volumes through the platform in 2023, both from primary diamond producers and the secondary market sources. The number of buyers on the platform reached 100 as at June 30, 2023.

During Q2 2023, the sales volume transacted decreased as volumes and lower valued goods were placed for sale due to the shift in product mix from the Karowe Mine. A soft market was observed; however, prices have remained fairly flat between Q1 2023 and Q2 2023 with strength in the stones between 5 to 10.8 carats in size.

QUARTERLY TENDER

A total of 67,673 carats were sold in the May 2023 tender, generating revenues of \$9.8 million (Q2 2022 tender: \$10.5 million from the sale of 59,926 carats). Rough diamond prices remained near a multi-year high point at the time of the Q2 2022 tender. The Q2 2023 tender reflected a 17% decrease in the market from the comparative quarter's tender.

KAROWE UNDERGROUND EXPANSION UPDATE

The Karowe UGP is designed to access the highest value portion of the Karowe orebody, with initial underground carat production predominantly from the highest value eastern magmatic/pyroclastic kimberlite ("EM/PK(S)") unit. The underground expansion is expected to extend mine life to at least 2040 and is forecast to contribute approximately \$4 billion in additional revenues using conservative diamond price assumptions which are un-escalated and exclude exceptional stone revenues.

On July 16, 2023, an update to the Karowe UGP schedule and budget was announced. This update was initiated in response to slower than planned ramp up to expected sinking rates, and, to account for time incurred to date, as well as for anticipated future grouting programs. Grouting programs took longer than anticipated due to a combination of high-water volumes in the sandstone lithologies between 870 and 752 metres above sea level in depth (144 metres to 262 metres below the shaft collar) combined with technical challenges associated with the transition to main sinking.

The updated schedule incorporates a 28% increase in the duration of construction, extending the anticipated commencement of production from the underground from H2 2026 to H1 2028. The revised forecast of costs at completion is \$683 million (including contingency), a 25% increase to the May 2022 estimated capital cost of \$547 million. The increase of \$136.0 million in estimated capital to reach project completion is predominantly related to increased schedule duration and related labour costs (about 56% of the total), grouting costs (approximately 20% of the total capital increase), with the balance of the increase attributable to Owner's costs, procurement, and indirect project costs. As at June 30, 2023, capital expenditures of \$264.5 million had been incurred and total capital commitments of \$369.7 million had been made, inclusive of incurred amounts. The Company has notified its lenders of the expected increases to both the schedule duration and the projected cost to complete the Karowe UGP. The Company's debt package consists of a \$170 million Project Loan to fund the development of an underground expansion at the Karowe Mine, and a \$50 million WCF.

The Karowe UGP remains technically and economically feasible, however, the impact of actual and modelled delays changes the revenue profile due to the use of lower-grade, stockpiled ore for mill feed rather than high-grade ore from the underground as previously planned. Sufficient surface stockpiles of South, Centre and North Lobe kimberlite ore are available to maintain current, un-interrupted mill feed to the plant for the duration of the anticipated delay. The long-term outlook for diamond prices, combined with the potential for exceptional stone recoveries and the continued strong performance of the open pit could mitigate the modelled impact on project cash flows due to the schedule slippage.

During the three months ended June 30, 2023, a total of \$22.5 million was spent on the Karowe UGP development, primarily in relation to ongoing construction activities, including:

- Main sinking in the production and ventilation shafts:
 - In response to water inflows from the sandstones, covered by the "2023 Budgeting" sandstones layers: In the Mosolotane sandstone aquifers has required additional, some remedial grouting in previously dry portions of the shafts is expected that these factors account for most of the cost increase.
 - Planned grouting events to the base of the Mosolotane sandstone/mudstone transition zone are expected to be completed early in Q4 2023. After completion of the current sandstone layer being grouted below collar, an additional grouting event is planned in the ventilation shaft (213 metres below collar as of June 30, 2023). Thereafter, further grouting is not anticipated to be required until sinking reaches the granite basement lithologies in late 2024. Grouting in the granite lithologies is expected to be localized, rather than formational in nature.
 - Procurement of underground equipment, including dewatering pumps, underground crush and convey systems and the permanent stage winder.
 - Construction of the bulk air cooler system.
 - Preparation of tender documents for a request for proposal for the underground lateral development work; and,
 - Continuation of detailed design and engineering of the underground mine infrastructure and layout.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS - Q2 2023

	Three months ended June 30,		Six months ended June 30,	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Operating cash flow per share before working capital adjustments of U.S. dollars, except carats or otherwise noted				
Operating cash flow per share	\$ 41.1	52.3	\$ 83.9	120.5
Operating expenses	(16.7)	(17.0)	(34.9)	(34.9)
Net income for the period	5.0	12.5	6.0	31.5
Earnings per share (basic and diluted)	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.07
Operating cash flow per share ⁽¹⁾	0.04	0.05	0.07	0.13
Cash on hand	26.7	40.8	26.7	40.8
Amounts drawn on working capital facility ⁽²⁾	35.0	-	35.0	-
Amounts drawn on project finance facility	90.0	65.0	90.0	65.0
Karowe Revenue	38.6	50.0	79.9	117.2
Carats sold	72,717	66,167	156,091	146,462

(1) Operating cash flow per share before working capital adjustments is a non-IFRS measure. See "Use of Non-IFRS Performance Measures" below.

(2)

Excludes amounts drawn from the Clara revolving credit facility.

QUARTERLY RESULTS OF OPERATIONS - KAROWE MINE, BOTSWANA

	UNIT	Q2-23	Q1-23	Q4-22	Q3-22	Q2-22
Sales						
Revenues from the sale of Karowe diamonds	US\$M	38.6	41.3	40.1	46.5	50.0
Karowe carats sold	Carats	72,717	83,374	81,264	99,301	66,167
Production						
Tonnes mined (ore)	Tonnes	682,636	541,400	484,705	920,410	1,091,192
Tonnes mined (waste)	Tonnes	907,051	761,295	199,385	453,860	357,764
Tonnes processed	Tonnes	720,345	700,678	690,946	693,398	719,207
Average grade processed ⁽¹⁾	cpht (*)	12.6	12.8	12.5	11.4	12.0
Carats recovered ⁽¹⁾	Carats	90,497	89,640	86,655	78,879	86,317
Costs						
Operating cost per tonne of ore processed ⁽²⁾	US\$	27.97	26.65	26.20	29.33	28.78
Capital Expenditures						
Sustaining capital expenditures	US\$M	2.4	0.8	9.9	4.0	4.1
Underground expansion project ⁽³⁾	US\$M	22.5	30.5	22.3	23.9	29.1

(*) carats per hundred tonnes

(1) Average grade processed is from direct milling carats and excludes carats recovered from re-processing historic recovery tailings from previous milling.

(2) Operating cost per tonne of ore processed is a non-IFRS measure. See "Use of Non-IFRS Performance Measures" below.

(3) Excludes qualifying borrowing cost capitalized in each quarter.

CONFERENCE CALL

The Company will host a conference call and webcast to discuss the results on Thursday, August 10, 2023 at 7:00am Pacific, 10:00am Eastern, 3:00pm UK, 4:00pm CET. To join the conference call please use the following link <https://emportal.ink/44C1eWS> or the phone numbers listed below.

Conference ID:
88318539 / Lucara Diamond

Dial-In Numbers:

Toll-Free Participant Dial-In North America (+1) 888 390 0605

UK Toll free 0800 652 2435

Local Vancouver

(+1) 416 764 8609

Webcast:

To view the live webcast presentation, please log on using this direct link:

<https://app.webinar.net/5XdGxGqNErz>

The presentation slideshow will also be available in PDF format for download from the Lucara website (Link to presentation).

Conference Replay:

A replay of the telephone conference will be available two hours after the completion of the call until August 17, 2023. The pass code for the replay is: 318539#.

Replay number (Toll Free North America) (+1) 888 390 0541

Replay number (Local) (+1) 416 764 8677

On behalf of the Board,
Eira Thomas
President and Chief Executive Officer

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ABOUT LUCARA

Lucara is a leading independent producer of large exceptional quality Type IIa diamonds from its 100% owned Karowe Diamond Mine in Botswana. The Karowe Mine has been in production since 2012 and is the focus of the Company's operations and development activities. Clara Diamond Solutions Limited Partnership ("Clara"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Lucara, has developed a secure, digital sales platform that uses proprietary analytics together with cloud and blockchain technologies to modernize the existing diamond supply chain, driving efficiencies, unlocking value and ensuring diamond provenance from mine to finger. Lucara has an experienced board and management team with extensive diamond development and operations expertise. Lucara and its subsidiaries operate transparently and in accordance with international best practices in the areas of sustainability, health and safety, environment, and community relations. Lucara has adopted the IFC Performance Standards and the World Bank Group's Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines for Mining (2007). Accordingly, the development of the Karowe underground expansion project ("UGP") adheres to the Equator Principles. Lucara is committed to upholding high standards while striving to deliver long-term economic benefits to Botswana and the communities in which the Company operates.

The information is information that Lucara is obliged to make public pursuant to the EU Market Abuse Regulation and the Swedish Securities Markets Act. This information was submitted for publication, through the agency of the contact person set out above, on August 9, 2023 at 2:30pm Pacific Time.

NON-IFRS FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This news release refers to certain financial measures, such as adjusted EBITDA, adjusted operating earnings, operating cash flow per share, operating margin per carat sold and operating cost per tonne of ore processed, which are not measures recognized under IFRS and do not have a standardized meaning prescribed by IFRS. These measures may differ from those made by other corporations and accordingly may not be comparable to such measures as reported by other corporations. These measures have been derived from the Company's financial statements, and applied on a consistent basis, because the Company believes they are of assistance in the understanding of the results of operations and financial position. Please refer to the Company's MD&A for the quarter ended June 30, 2023 for an explanation of non-IFRS measures used.

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain of the statements made and contained herein and elsewhere constitute forward-looking statements as defined in applicable securities laws. Generally, these forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as "expects", "anticipates", "believes", "intends", "estimates", "potential", "possible" and similar expressions, or statements that events, conditions or results "will", "may", "could" or "should" occur or be achieved.

Forward-looking statements are based on the opinions and estimates of management as of the date such statements are made, and they are subject to a number of known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of the Company to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievement expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. The Company believes that expectations reflected in this forward-looking information are reasonable, but no assurance can be given that these expectations will prove to be accurate and such forward-looking information included herein should not be unduly relied upon.

In particular, forward-looking information and forward-looking statements may include, but are not limited to, information or statements with respect to the Company's revenues, sales, diamond recoveries, ore and waste mined, ore processed, cash costs and expenses, and the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, economic and geopolitical risks, expectations regarding longer-term market fundamentals and price growth, the disclosure under "2023 Outlook", the Company's ability to extend the maturity date of its current WCF from its existing Lenders prior to expiry and the related terms, the Company's ability to receive a deferral of the deadline to fill the COF, the impact of supply and demand of rough or polished diamonds, expectations regarding top-up values and processing, the benefits to the Company of diamond supply agreements with HB and the ability to generate better prices from the sale of the Company's +10.8 carat production as a polished stone, projected capital costs associated with the Karowe UGP, estimated capital costs, the timing, scope and cost of additional grouting events, the Company's ability to comply with the terms of the Facilities which are required to construct the Karowe UGP, that expected cash flow from operations, combined with external financing will be sufficient to complete construction of the Karowe UGP, that the estimated timelines to achieve mine ramp up and full production from the Karowe UGP can be achieved, that sufficient stockpiled ore will be available to generate revenue prior to the achievement of commercial production of the Karowe underground mine, the economic potential of a mineralized area, the size and tonnage of a mineralized area, anticipated sample grades or bulk sample diamond content, expectations that the Karowe UGP will extend mine life, forecasts of additional revenues, future production activity, the future price and demand for, and supply of, diamonds, expectations regarding the scheduling of activities for the Karowe UGP in 2023, future forecasts of revenue and variable consideration in determining revenue, estimation of mineral resources, development plans.

There can be no assurance that such forward looking statements will prove to be accurate, as the Company's results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in this forward-looking information as a result of those factors discussed in or referred to under the heading "COVID-19 Global Pandemic, Economic and Geopolitical Risks" and "Risks and Uncertainties" in the Company's most recent MD&A and under the heading "Risks and Uncertainties" in the Company's most recent Annual Information Form, both available at <http://www.sedar.com>, as well as changes in general business and economic conditions, the ability to continue as a going concern, changes in interest and foreign currency rates, changes in inflation, the supply and demand for, deliveries of and the level and volatility of prices of rough diamonds, costs of power and diesel, impacts of potential disruptions to supply chains, acts of foreign governments and the outcome of legal proceedings, inaccurate geological and recoverability assumptions (including with respect to the size, grade and recoverability of mineral reserves and resources), and unanticipated operational difficulties (including failure of plant, equipment or processes to operate in accordance with specifications or expectations, cost escalations, unavailability of materials and equipment, government action or delays in the receipt of government approvals, industrial disturbances or other job actions, adverse weather conditions, and unanticipated events relating to health safety and environmental matters).

Accordingly, readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements which speak only as of the date the statements were made, and the Company does not assume any obligations to update or revise them to reflect new events or circumstances, except as required by law.

SOURCE [Lucara Diamond Corp.](#)

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