

# Chamber president rebukes Canada's Ontario for trebling diamond-mining royalty

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South Africa-Canada Chamber of Business president **Bruce Shapiro** on Tuesday rebuked the government of Ontario for raising its diamond royalty base in spite of two premiers assuring De Beers that it would remain unchanged.

Shapiro told Terrapinn's Africa Mining Congress in Johannesburg that, even though the premiers had stated publicly that there would be no change for De Beers, the royalty base had been trebled from 5% to 15% at a stage when De Beers had reached the tailend of its \$1,5-billion-plus diamond-mine investment in Ontario's inhospitable north.

"What I am telling you is that what happens in Africa also happens in a supposedly well governed country like Canada," Shapiro said.

While African aberrations were headlined, those of Canada, US and UK were not.

"If I were De Beers, I would pursuing this in a legal manner," Shapiro said, also drawing attention to Canadian mining-licence difficulty when there are first-nation claims over land.

The leaders of an indigenous population had recently been jailed for trespassing on a mining property over which they still had a claim and the Whitefish first nation had only weeks ago instituted a \$550-million lawsuit against Sudbury and the surrounding areas, which it claims it owns.