



Kelvin Dushnisky,
President
Barrick Gold Corp.
Via e-mail

August 17, 2017

Dear Mr. Dushnisky,

On July 12, MiningWatch started to receive information from partner organizations in Porgera that a corrosive substance had been disposed of by the Porgera Joint Venture (PJV) mine causing burns to numerous villagers who came into contact with the substance.

On July 15, Barrick (Niugini) Limited (BNL), operator of the PJV mine, put out a brief [statement](#), published on Barrick Gold's (Barrick) web site.¹ Since then there has been no further information published by BNL or Barrick.

A steady flow of information coming from local organizations indicates that the information provided by BNL/Barrick thus far is inadequate and potentially misleading.

- BNL/Barrick's statement does not provide accurate information on the number of people affected, noting only that "some people" were affected. Reports from villagers consistently put the number of affected villagers at over a hundred.
- BNL/Barrick's statement further notes that people "have experienced minor skin burns" and "skin irritations," but pictures sent by Porgerans indicate potentially serious burns covering sensitive areas of the body.
- BNL/Barrick's statement provides inadequate information on the nature of the corrosive material that has caused the harm mentioning only "mine waste material containing a high proportion of lime." There is no exact information about the proportion of lime in the disposed waste, nor about the nature of the lime or other substances included in the waste containing the lime, and what effect these substances can be expected to have on those coming into contact with them.
- BNL/Barrick provides no exact information about where the corrosive waste was deposited (one or more locations and names of locations) and how much corrosive waste was deposited.
- BNL/Barrick provides no information on what caused this incident.

¹ Hazardous Waste Incident – Porgera Mine. <http://barrick.q4cdn.com/808035602/files/porgera/BNL-Statement-Hazardous-Waste-Incident-07152017.pdf>

- BNL/Barrick says it is providing medical assistance to some people but provides no details as to how many people are being treated, how they are being treated and by whom.
- BNL/Barrick provides no information on how BNL/Barrick is providing remedy for those effected.

I am writing to seek answers to the following questions:

- How many people in total were in contact with the corrosive waste material?
- What is the exact nature of the burns that people have experienced?
- What was the proportion of lime in the waste that caused the burns and what other potentially hazardous substances were in the waste?
- Where was the corrosive waste deposited? How much corrosive waste was deposited?
- What is the cause of this incident?
- How many people are receiving medical treatment by BNL/Barrick? How are these people being treated? Where are they being treated and by whom? How is BNL/Barrick deciding who will be treated?
- What is being done to provide remedy to those harmed? Does the remedy framework reflect the UN Guiding Principles' Effectiveness Criteria for non-judicial remedy mechanisms? Is there a transparent public remedy framework in place? Who is implementing the provision of remedy? Do those effected have access to independent legal advice?

I look forward to receiving answers to these questions.

Sincerely,



Catherine Coumans

Electronic copy provided:

John Thornton, Executive Chairman of the Board

Peter Sinclair, Chief Sustainability Officer

Others