

Porgera Violence

PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG) - THURSDAY 12 MARCH, 2020: Barrick (Niugini) Limited (“BNL”), the majority owner and operator of the Porgera Mine in Enga Province, PNG, has condemned the killing of at least nine people during an outbreak of tribal violence that occurred yesterday, in the Porgera Valley.

BNL Executive Managing Director, Mr Anthony Esplin, this morning confirmed local reports that at least nine people, including women and children, have died following a further outbreak of violence linked to a tribal conflict between two warring groups from Tari, in Hela Province.

“I can confirm that yesterday there was an attack by armed men near Suyan village approximately five kilometres from the Porgera Mine, with at least 9 people, including women and children, fatally shot by the attacking group,” Mr Esplin said.

“Police personnel are currently in attendance at the scene, and are investigating the murders with the assistance of local community leaders from the Porgera Law and Order Committee.

“BNL understands that this continuing violence is part of a long-running conflict between two outsider groups who are currently residing in and around the Porgera Valley,” Mr Esplin said.

“We condemn these killings in the strongest terms, and join with the local community in calling for an end to this senseless violence,” he said.

“While we have confirmed that no mine employees were involved in this incident, the ongoing violence affects everyone who lives and works in the Porgera Valley – they are living in fear as a consequence of this conflict, and the general decline of law and order in the Porgera District and beyond.

“Together with the community leaders of Porgera, we call on the National and Provincial Governments to act swiftly in bringing those responsible to justice, and will provide any appropriate support needed to bring about an end to this violent criminal behavior,” Mr Esplin said.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Porgera Mine is a joint venture between Barrick Gold and the Zijin Mining Group, which each owns 47.5%, with the remaining 5% interest held by Mineral Resources Enga (owned equally by Porgera Special Mining Lease landowners and the Enga Provincial Government). The Mine is operated by Barrick Niugini Limited (BNL).