

## Porgera Mine restart remains on hold

**Port Moresby, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023:** Barrick Gold Corporation Chief Executive Officer Mark Bristow has urged all PNG parties involved in the Porgera Mine reopening negotiations to complete the process by the end of the first quarter 2023.

Bristow was in country as part of his quarterly visits to all Barrick owned and operated mines. In Port Moresby, Bristow met with Prime Minister James Marape, Mining Minister Sir Ano Pala, State Owned Enterprise Minister William Duma, Internal Security Minister Peter Tsiamalili Jr, Vice Minister of State Negotiations Jimmy Maladina, State Solicitor Daniel Rolpagarea and State Negotiation Team Chairman Dairi Vele. He also travelled to Porgera to meet with landowner and community leaders. This is Bristow's 17<sup>th</sup> visit to PNG since joining Barrick as CEO in 2019.

"The Porgera Mine has been closed for almost three years without good reason. When I visited the mine again yesterday, the landowners and community pleaded for the restart of the mine so that the local economy could be revived and put an end to their suffering. Despite the partnership with the State that we have built, it is unfortunate that certain critical issues remain to be resolved to enable the restart of the mine." Mr. Bristow said.

Porgera was placed under care and maintenance in April 2020.

"Delaying the restart of Porgera is not in any stakeholder's interest, especially the people of Porgera and PNG who have been deprived of the economic benefits of the mine for too long. It would be remiss of us to ignore the impact that the mine closure has had on the residents of Porgera Valley, local and national businesses, and the country's economy as a whole. Barrick is ready to start the process of reopening the mine. What is needed is equal urgency on the part of all other parties to resolve the remaining issues," Bristow said.

While awaiting the restart of the mine, Bristow also urged government authorities to take necessary actions to restore essential government services to Porgera. Since the national elections of July last year, communities have been unable to access health, judicial, education and banking services in the Porgera Valley due to tribal conflicts, warlordism and ongoing law and order issues. Bristow was pleased with the news of the Ceasefire Agreement signed between the two warring clans this week in Wabag, and commended the Porgera Crisis Management team for their work in ensuring this important agreement was signed. Bristow agreed with the women's group in Porgera that more action still needs to be taken by Government Authorities and local leaders to ensure security and normalcy returns to the district.

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