

October 27, 2011

Addressing violence against women at Porgera

A status update on company actions in response to violence against women at the Porgera Joint Venture

Barrick Gold Corporation and the Porgera Joint Venture (PJV) have undertaken a series of actions and initiatives in response to complaints of violence against women at the Porgera mine in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The following provides an update on the status of these actions, based on company commitments made in a February 1, 2011 public statement.

Background

In its report, “Gold’s Costly Dividend,” published in early 2011, the international human rights group Human Rights Watch (HRW) detailed claims alleging violence against women in and around the Porgera mine site by employees of the PJV Asset Protection Department - the unit responsible for ensuring the security of the mine and its employees.

Based on communications with HRW starting in May 2010, Barrick began conducting extensive inquiries into these allegations, which proceeded over numerous months. Barrick commissioned outside legal counsel to oversee a thorough independent investigation, led by external investigators. Overall, nearly 700 company employees were interviewed. These extensive inquiries revealed evidence suggesting possible criminal conduct, including some instances of sexual assaults. Barrick and PJV also contacted the PNG Commissioner of Police, urged that a full criminal investigation be conducted, and provided relevant information to police. A PNG Special Police Task Force conducted its own in-depth investigation, and made several arrests.

PJV terminated employees who were found to have violated Barrick’s Code of Conduct. In addition, PJV terminated those who had knowledge of, but did not report, misconduct by others.

Barrick and the PJV wish to reiterate our condemnation of violence against women in the strongest possible terms. Violence against women is a serious crime and will not be tolerated at any Barrick workplace.

Barrick is unwavering in its commitment to respect human rights at all of its operations and those of its affiliates. We have zero tolerance for human rights violations and will investigate all reports, suspicions or rumors of human rights abuses and take strong and appropriate action. Our policy is clear, any employee implicated in serious human rights violations or other serious crimes, or who has direct knowledge of but fails to report such incidents, will be terminated.

While challenging conditions exist at the Porgera mine, these disturbing allegations, and the investigations that followed, led the company to take concrete, meaningful actions and strengthen processes, particularly with respect to security, human rights and women's welfare. Through this response, we hope to demonstrate our determination to prevent acts of violence against women and improve our performance.

Barrick and PJV will continue to engage with local communities, government partners and reputable NGOs to ensure that Porgera benefits local residents and contributes to greater economic and social progress.

Barrick and PJV responses

Community initiatives to combat gender violence

Violence against women is a pervasive problem in PNG and around the world. Barrick and the PJV are working with a range of partners to raise awareness of women's rights, build the capacity of community-based organizations and improve resources and services available to women affected by violence in the Porgera community.

- Funding was provided to the Porgera District Women's Association to hire a women's welfare liaison officer to provide support and assistance to victims of sexual and domestic violence. The women's welfare officer is providing services to women in crisis and has established a network of local leaders and organizations to engage in

advocacy, awareness and training on women's issues.

- Barrick is partnering with the Fiji Women's Crisis Center to provide training for PNG-based practitioners in women's welfare and human rights to better assist women affected by violence in PNG. Six individuals from relevant local institutions, including the Porgera hospital and PDWA, participated in a four-week program in June, and another six are participating in September. The Center's Regional Training Program, which was developed in conjunction with UNIFEM (now UN Women) and AUSAID, covers such areas as welfare services, support and legal redress for survivors of violence.
- Discussions with external organizations to develop a partnership to establish a Sexual Assault Referral Center servicing the Porgera District are ongoing.
- PJV is exploring a partnership with the Sisters of Mercy of PNG that will support the development of a local strategy to combat violence against women in the community. The Sisters of Mercy is an organization of religious women dedicated to serving impoverished communities in PNG and has considerable experience assisting women affected by violence.
- PJV is also exploring partnerships with other organizations with expertise in gender violence and hopes to finalize the details in the months ahead.

Improving security at Porgera

Following a comprehensive review of the Security function at PJV, numerous improvements have been made in order to strengthen alignment with international human rights standards.

- Mandatory human rights training for PJV security personnel has been upgraded to encompass sexual violence and harassment issues. This enhanced training has now been completed by all PJV security personnel and has been rolled out to third-party security contractors working for Barrick in other parts of PNG.

- All security operating procedures and training modules have been updated to reflect a greater emphasis on the protection of human rights.
- A plan to increase supervision of security personnel in the field on a 24-hour basis has been implemented.
- New digital radios featuring GPS tracking have been installed, and are now the primary means of communications for PJV security personnel. GPS tracking functionality allows for better oversight and coordination of security personnel at the mine.
- The installation of in-car cameras in all PJV Asset Protection Department security vehicles operating at the Porgera mine is now complete.
- PJV's CCTV security camera network is currently being expanded to provide coverage of the mine's major waste dump areas. This expanded CCTV network of high resolution thermal imagery cameras is expected to be in place and operational before the end of 2011.
- Additional female security guards have been hired, including a number in supervisory roles, bringing the total number of female security staff at PJV to 27.

In addition, Barrick became a member of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in November 2010 and is formally engaging with participating governments, civil society, and other extractive companies, as the company seeks further ways to improve security and human rights at all of its locations.

Remediation framework

The right to remedy is a critical element in addressing human rights violations, in accordance with United Nations special representative John Ruggie's Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights and international human rights norms. Barrick recognizes the need to provide remediation for human rights violations that may have been caused by mine employees at Porgera and is currently developing an independent remediation program.

Final details of the program will be confirmed over the coming months, following the consultation phase of the project. Engagement sessions will be held with expert advisors and key government and non-government stakeholders to finalize the remediation process, and to help plan the proposed community-based initiatives that are part of the longer-term outcomes of the project. This consultation process aims to ensure that the initiative both meets international standards, and is practical in the local context.

Strengthening grievance mechanisms

Progress has been made in improving grievance mechanisms at PJV so that community members have a safe and effective mechanism through which to lodge their concerns or complaints. This includes any victim of a crime or human rights violation, or person or employee who has information about such matters and wishes to make an anonymous report.

- A third-party assessment of grievance mechanisms was completed earlier this year.
- A dedicated grievance officer is being recruited to assist in strengthening the operation of these systems.
- The women's welfare liaison officer employed by the PDWA is now also available as an independent, third-party means by which grievances can be registered.
- Plans are underway to improve public outreach to explain complaint mechanisms, and efforts to reduce the backlog of existing grievances have been redoubled. Enhanced outreach will include upcoming Community Relations/Security visits to the communities surrounding the mine site.

Barrick conducts employee awareness campaigns on the company's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics and internal channels for reporting of misconduct, which involves all regions and sites, including Porgera. An awareness campaign was conducted at Porgera for all PJV employees over the past six months.

Enhancing global human rights compliance

Barrick has adopted a new corporate human rights policy based on international best practices and is now implementing a global human rights compliance program.

Progress is underway in numerous areas, including:

- New human rights, labour and indigenous peoples policies
- New procedures mandating immediate reporting of human rights allegations and investigation by independent sources
- Mandatory human rights training for all new employees and relevant existing employees, contractors and third-party suppliers
- New procedures for employee hiring and due diligence requirements, as well as background checks and certifications for certain employees and third-party suppliers.

In addition to these compliance elements, the company will conduct human rights assessments at all Barrick operations and projects, including those of its affiliates and subsidiaries. The assessments will be conducted by third-party experts and encompass leading human rights indicators, including sexual violence.

Engaging researchers and experts to improve understanding

A research program into the complex nature and causes of sexual assault and violence against women in Papua New Guinea is underway. The research aims to:

- Enhance PJV's understanding and awareness of the challenging circumstances associated with this problem;
- Ensure company-supported interventions are appropriate;

- Recommend methods by which the company can effectively interact with relevant government agencies and civil society organizations working in the field to address gender violence in PNG.

A final report outlining findings by external researchers is expected later this year.

Barrick has also developed a network of expert advisors comprising organizations and professionals with experience dealing with violence against women in Papua New Guinea to:

- Provide high level advice as required to the company on matters relating to violence against women and women's welfare issues specific to Papua New Guinea and Porgera;
- Assist in developing measures that seek to reduce violence, and in particular, sexual violence against women in the mining area that can be adopted by the Porgera community, mine, or state agencies; and,
- Assist in developing methods to oversee and monitor implementation of current and proposed initiatives regarding the above.