

# Beyond Borders



A PROTESTBARRICK.NET QUARTERLY REPORT ON IRRESPONSIBLE MINING • AUGUST 2009



## Special Focus on Mining Disasters and Company Lies



The Diaguita Huascoaltinos have their own form of democratic governance, based on their traditions. For the past two terms, their elected President Sergio Campusano has opposed Barrick's presence on their lands.



Houses burning near Barrick's Porgera Mine in Papua New Guinea. April 2009.

### WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Toxic Mining Spill in Tanzania: 30 people and 300 cows dead
- Diaguita Huascoaltinos register formal complaint with the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)
- Norwegian Government Pension Fund divests \$200 million due to Ethical Concerns
- Tour of Barrick Impacted communities visits Canada
- Based in part on Barrick Gold case study in North America, UNCERD formally condemns Canadian Mining
- Landowners Association petitions Barrick to relocate people near Barrick's Porgera Mine.



Leaders from Barrick Gold-impacted communities came to Toronto to speak at Barrick's Annual General Meeting. Photo: Allan Lissner

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## TRAGEDY MEETS DEADLY COVER-UP, ENRAGES LOCAL POLITICIANS

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On May 9, following heavy rains, runoff water from a containment pond began flowing into the Tigithe River in the Tarime district in the north of Tanzania. Villagers near Barrick's North Mara mine reported that the water had turned a reddish colour.

Immediately, 5 cows were reported to have died and dead fish and water life were found along the river. Barrick's environmental and water specialists found the river water to be acidic. However, a subsequent company statement said the increased water flow in the river has diluted the discharge, and pH levels had returned to normal.

It took until July, after a reported 30 people and 300 cows had died from the pollution, that the Tanzanian government stepped in to ban water use near the mine.

Tanzanian deputy minister for Home Affairs Khamisi Kagasheki, who visited the area and witnessed the seepage of acid into river Tigithe. He accused Barrick of deliberately downplay the matter.

"I have been shocked with what I have seen and lies by Barrick



officials have really annoyed me. I am very sorry," he told a meeting of local leaders and villagers in the area. This was after they showed him the areas affected by the leakage.

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Above: The waters on Tigite River were contaminated after heavy rains. Barrick has been accused of downplaying the pollution which took the life of 30 people and 300 cows. photo: Project HELP

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**"I have been shocked with what I have seen and lies by Barrick officials have really annoyed me. I am very sorry."**

– Tanzanian Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Khamisi Kagasheki, after visiting the area where acid had seeped into the Tigite River near Barrick's North Mara Mine.

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## NORWAY'S PENSION FUND DIVESTS FROM BARRICK, CITING ETHICAL CONCERNS



Norway's Ministry of Finance announced January 30 that it would exclude mining giant Barrick Gold from the country's pension fund for ethical reasons. The Council found Barrick's claim that "there are no irreversible significant and adverse chemical impacts on this river system" was not credible, noting that "all surveys [that the Council] has had access to show an unambiguous trend of elevated heavy metal concentrations in the sediments."

The Council was unable to find any scientific reports on human health since Barrick started to manage the mine and, through its own investigations of the mine site, had found that those living near the mine site were in direct contact with mine waste: through footpaths, gardens, alluvial mining, and water collection facilities.

In addition, the Council noted that local residents themselves have "no access to information regarding the content of hazardous substances in the tailings, air emissions and air quality, or the quality of the drinking water."

"Barrick's operation of the Porgera mine entails an unacceptable risk of extensive and irreversible damage to the natural environment... reinforced by the lack of openness and transparency in the company's environmental reporting," reads the Council's final report.

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Above, Left: The Porgera Mine, Papua New Guinea, Photo: Catherine Coumans.

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**"Barrick's operation of the Porgera mine entails an unacceptable risk of extensive and irreversible damage to the natural environment... reinforced by the lack of openness and transparency in the company's environmental reporting"**

– Press Release, Norway Ministry of Finance

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## IN THEIR OWN WORDS:

A MESSAGE FROM THE ELECTED LEADERSHIP OF THE DIAGUITA HUASCOALTINOS

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The image of mining companies has been affected by the harmful impacts of their activities on the environment and the surrounding communities. In response to public criticism, these companies have implemented policies on Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Relations.

According to these policies, Barrick Gold requires the consent of local communities to develop its projects. However, our community – the only organization with a territorial basis in the Huasco Valley and the owner of the ancestral land where they are located – was never consulted by the company to mine on our lands. Moreover, we have repeatedly expressed our rejection of the development of mega-mining projects in our territory.

Despite this, for several years Barrick Gold has conducted the process of reinventing the Diaguita culture, which is intended to make the public believe that they have the support of the Diaguita Huascoalinos. To this end, the company has brought in professionals from other parts of the country to conduct workshops on the ‘traditional’ Diaguita crafts, essentially inventing a nonexistent Diaguita culture and denying the ethnicity of our community. They have raised false leaders, who are now attending meetings with the company and the media, discrediting the real leaders of the community and creating irreconcilable divisions between community members and their neighbors.

All these actions have led to confusion and they have weakened the identity of the Diaguita Huascoalinos. To face this situation, we have implemented a strategy of intensive work, requiring a large investment of time and resources to strengthen our culture while countering the constant lies and rumors of the company.

After exhausting all the legal channels in our country, in 2006 the Assembly of our Community decided to sue the State of Chile for the Pascua Lama at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and today the demand is awaiting investigation. This case has also been presented to James Anaya, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations for Indigenous Affairs, Irene Khan, General Secretary of Amnesty International and Danielle Miterran, President of the Foundation for Freedom of France.

### THE HUASCOALTINOS PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE: OUR OWN DEVELOPMENT PATH

Our community has always built its road of development independently. Between 1997 and 2005, we had intensive discussions to develop a plan that would allow us to protect the natural balance of our land as our ancestors did, while maintaining our way of life and traditional customs. In 2005, we decided to make our Community lands a Private Wilderness Protected



Area. In this way, we took the tools existing in the Chilean legal system that could help us to protect nature and our territory, and merged it with our world vision, thus protecting our lands and all life forms that develop in them, including the human beings. This will be the first protected area in Chile with communal planning and management, where inhabitants make regular use of natural resources and where the preservation of our culture is as important as the conservation of our natural resources.

Given that our lands hold the main reserves of fresh water for the Huasco Valley, by preserving the supply of water and ecosystems at the top of our territory, we will ensure the life and livelihood of all who inhabit the bottom of the valley, whether or not they are part of the Huascoalinos community. We are now in the final stage of community planning and will soon begin operating the Huascoalinos Private Nature Reserve. This is our commitment and is the path that we will continue developing.

This initiative was presented to the Chilean environmental authority CONAMA in 2008 in the form of a Development Plan, which aimed to establish an administrative framework to ensure the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems in the upper part of the territory. However, CONAMA – for the first time in the history of the institution – refused to evaluate a project by declaring themselves incompetent. Thus, this initiative remains neither approved nor rejected.

Environmental conservation and mega mining projects are not compatible. We just want this company to leave and let us develop our projects in peace.

*This passage is excerpted from a document prepared by the Diaguita Huascoalinos Indigenous government and presented to Parliament by President Sergio Campusano and Albadina Carmona Villegas during their tour of Canada in April/May 2009.*

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Above, top: Sergio and Albadina with Daniella Guzman in Montreal, photo: Allan Lissner. Below, left: a photo of some Diaguita homes. Below, right: a sign that the Huascoalinos placed on the fence that Barrick erected, blocking land access. photos provided by Diaguita Huascoalinos



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**ABOVE PHOTO:** DIAGUITA HUASCOALTINOS PRESIDENT, SERGIO CAMPUSANO, AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE AKALI TANGE ASSOCIATION, JETHRO TULIN, ADDRESS A RALLY IN TORONTO ON MAY 2, 2009.

**COVER PHOTO:** THIS IS A WATER HOLE IN NYAMONGO THAT WAS BUILT BY BARRICK GOLD NEAR THEIR NORTH MARA GOLD MINE ON BEHALF OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES (THE EDGE OF THE MINE PIT CAN BE SEEN IN THE TOP LEFT CORNER). BUT THE WATER APPEARS MILKY AND DIRTY AND THE PLANTS AROUND THE WATER HOLE ARE DYING; THIS IS THE ONLY WATER SOURCE AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY.