

OPEN LETTER TO BARRICK GOLD SHAREHOLDERS

Today, during Barrick's annual general meeting, communities in Argentina and Chile protest the binational Pascua Lama project in the streets of Buenos Aires, Santiago, San Juan and Vallenar.

We represent and support communities that have resisted the binational Pascua Lama project in the Andean cordillera for more than ten years. Since project construction began in 2009, the Huasco Valley community in Chile has become increasingly convinced that contrary to company promises, the project will bring only death and destruction:

1. Barrick fined: Chilean authorities determine that Barrick is non-compliant with a formal commitment to protect glaciers and fine the company for its misconduct.
2. Drought: The Huasco Valley, located on the edge of a desert, depends on glaciers for its water resources. Communities link the loss of a local river to the destruction of glaciers.
3. Pollution: Pascua Lama will double the quantity of cyanide imported into Chile. Barrick's El Indio mine caused irreparable pollution of local waters with arsenic and mercury. Agricultural producers in Huasco fear that their valley will suffer a similar fate.
4. Worker deaths: 16 workers have died, on just the Chilean side, since Barrick began its operations. The most recent death was only recognized by Barrick when local pressure made the news impossible to contain.
5. Untenable tax agreement: Under pressure from Peter Munk and Aaron Regent, the presidents of Chile and Argentina finalized a tax agreement for the project in just one week. Negotiations had languished for more than three years. However, Argentina has failed to fulfil institutional commitments made under the agreement, which are opposed by its citizens.
6. Multi-million dollar public relations campaign: In March 2011, Barrick initiated a nation-wide publicity campaign on TV, newspapers and radio to promote its "responsible mining." Campaign inaccuracies and omissions hid the true impacts of the Pascua Lama operations.

If Barrick truly seeks to act responsibly, it should halt actions, such as those described above, that threaten nature and human rights. Pascua Lama is not welcome on our land. Corruption promoted by Barrick is prejudicial to democracy. Damage caused by the company's operations, with your complicity, severely compromises the lives of thousands of people. Pascua Lama is not viable.

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