

Newmont Ghana b says it will continue to respect and work with traditional authorities to follow established cultural norms and practices for dealing with the issues of cemeteries located within Yayaaso community. The company, which has come under attack recently for allegedly disrespecting the norms and values of the Birem traditional area said in a statement issued last week that it has not exhumed any human remains, relocated any mausoleum or culturally significant sites within its concession area, assuring its host communities that, it will continue to transparently and collaboratively engage with them with honesty, trust and respect.

Mr. Ranby Barnes, Newmont Ghana's Regional Vice President for Environment and Social responsibility stated that, 'We are very aware and respectful of the sensitivities surrounding sacred places and the communities relationship with their ancestors and will in no way interfere in these cultural matters. We will continue to consult with the traditional authorities and opinion leaders, elders and other stakeholders in our surrounding communities in all matters that affect them and work with them in a collaborative manner to implement collectively agreed upon decisions.'

Mr. Barnes went on to add 'In line with our usual practice of transparency and engaging and seeking the opinion of our communities prior to implementing our activities, Newmont Ghana has over the past seven years organised more than 600 meetings and participated in three Public Hearings held by the Ghana Environmental Protection Agency with various stakeholders groups as its Akyem project area'. The Environment Impact Statement submitted by Newmont Ghana for Akyem project and approved by the Ghana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contained the social and environmental impacts of the project and mitigation plans. The mitigation plans include those for the Yayaaso community, scattered hamlets and culturally significant sites and these issues have been extensively studied and publicly discussed.

In general, the majority of the project-affected communities have participated in extensive consultation over the last seven years and are supportive of the akyem project. There are some individuals who have residual issues that the company is working towards resolving if at all possible.

Since 2005, various representative committees have been established which negotiated for adequate and fair compensation and resettlement packages. Agreements for negotiations were reached: in 2010. Significant progress has since been made on compensation payments for crops, land use deprivation and immovable properties for farmers and landowners within the

mining area. A comprehensive resettlement package which included choice of resettlement site, house-types and designs has also been discussed and agreed on in 2010. Affected community members are currently going through the process of choosing their residential plots within the agreed re-settlement site and house designs for construction to begin. Currently there are 24 houses under construction for qualified households.

Newmont Ghana is also replacing existing churches and schools with improved infrastructure and adding new teachers quarters, a Junior High School, a community centre and a market place.. The company is also extending electricity and water to the resettlement site.

With the issue of culturally revered sites and royal mausoleum, Newmont Ghana understands that a committee of traditional leaders from both Yayaaso and Ahausena is holding various meetings to decide on the best traditional and culturally acceptable method to manage these sites. The committee has advised the company that they will provide the requirements for managing the issue, together with a roadmap of activities to be undertaken:

Newmont Ghana reiterates that as a company that respects the norms and traditions of its host communities and strives to be the most valued and respected mining company it will be guided by the final decisions of the traditional authorities and the community representatives.

The Akyem Project is a development project of Newmont Golden Ridge in the Birim North District of the Eastern Region. Newmont Ghana Gold, which operates the Ahafo Mine in the Brong Ahafo Region, is one of the five core operating districts of Newmont Mining Corporation (www.newmont.com) one of the largest gold companies in the world. It received its environmental permit from the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana in 2008. The Project's Mining Lease and Mining Area were approved by the Minister of Lands and Natural Resources through the Minerals Commission in 2010.

The Project has gone through extensive consultation and engagement processes with its project affected communities and other stakeholders. There have been open and transparent discussions on the Project's impact and mitigation measures.