



THE NATIONAL
NEWS PAPER
MONDAY MARCH
28, 2011

MINISTRY OF MINING

Private Mail Bag
Port Moresby Post Office
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR MINING

Telephone: (675) 321 1961
(675) 321 2945
Facsimile: (675) 321 4995

BARRICK'S CULTURAL SLUR UNWELCOMED IN PNG

It was reported in the *Post Courier* on Tuesday 18th January 2011 that the Police had began arresting terminated employees of Barrick at the Porgera Mine who were implicated in alleged sexual assaults against women.



Barrick conducted its investigations and subsequently invited the Chief Ombudsmen and the Police Commissioner to conduct their own investigations into these allegations of human rights abuse and the Police Chief was very vocal and firm with the issue and those involved.

In the *Globe And Mail* of 19th February 2011 (a Canadian Newspaper), the founder and Chairman of Barrick Gold Corp., Mr. Peter Munk made dismissive comments in defence of Barrick by stating that firstly, it would be impossible to police the behaviour of 5,500 employees, and secondly, that it is so particular in countries "*where gang rape is a cultural habit.*"

This comment by Mr. Munk, that this is a cultural habit is totally insensitive and disrespectful to the country that Barrick operates in. It insults the eight hundred plus cultural and ethnic diversity of Papua New Guinea.

As the Minister responsible for the Mining Industry in Papua New Guinea, I am very disappointed that a major global investment partner of such reputable standing could be so insensitive to a localised law and order issue by branding it as a "cultural habit". This is disrespectful of the project communities surrounding the Porgera mine whose culture does not espouse such western norms as gang rape.

Pack rape is an introduced Western culture. Our ancestors looked upon such behaviour with disgust and would have executed or banished the perpetrators. The PNG culture, demands respect, love and protection for our mothers, sisters, other female folk, children, the old and the weak. The cultural setting has always maintained order in the communities but the introduction of Western norms have also brought about the break down in society and disrespect to others.

I call upon Mr. Munk and the Barrick Board to retract this statement and make a public apology to the people of Papua New Guinea.

Approved for Release


HON. JOHN PUNDARI, MP
Minister for Mining