

BEC Acknowledges the Required Landowner Support for BCL Application Not Met

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Subiaco, Western Australia (FSCwire) - The Board of [RTG Mining Inc.](#) ("RTG", "the Company") (TSX Code: RTG, ASX Code: RTG) refers to the ABG press release which was reported in the following link:
<http://bougainville.typepad.com/newdawn/2017/12/211217state-on-panguna-mine-by-aloysius-laukaipress-realease-the> and which was posted at 6:56pm on Friday 22nd December 2017.

RTG notes that the ABG has announced that the Bougainville Executive Council ("BEC") has confirmed that the [Bougainville Copper Ltd.](#) ("BCL") Application for extension of the term of its expired exploration licence EL 1 ("Extension Application") covering the old Panguna mine did not receive the necessary consent of the Special Mining Lease Osikaiyang Landowners Association ("SMLOLA") Landowners, which is a basic requirement under the Bougainville Mining Act ("BMA") for approval of such an application.

For the sake of clarity, the Warden's Hearing addressed only the question as to whether or not there was the required Landowner support for the BCL Extension Application. It did not address the alternative proposal by RTG and the Landowner lead consortium.

On behalf of both RTG and the SMLOLA we thank the ABG for supporting and endorsing the long held position of the SMLOLA leadership, who have worked tirelessly to protect its members (the customary owners of the land on which the old Panguna mine is located) from the return of BCL. This culminated in the successful Warden's Hearing lead by Mr Philip Miriori, where a clear majority of landowners confirmed they were firmly opposed to any return of BCL.

The President of the ABG, the Honourable Dr John Momis has said that his government will consult with the Panguna Landowners on an appropriate arrangement or the best alternative model for the development of the Panguna Mine. RTG further notes the ABG has also sought to impose a moratorium over the grant of new licenses over Panguna, whilst that consultation process progresses.

We have been advised that under the BMA a moratorium can only be implemented if there is no existing exploration licence. For that to be the case, it implies the BCL Extension Application is considered to be at an end. The press release by the President of Bougainville, the Honourable Dr John Momis however does not address or comment on that point and BCL has today announced that it has not been advised of the status of its purported application and is seeking clarification.

The legal advice that the Landowner controlled and lead consortium has received, is that the BCL EL ceased to exist more than 15 months ago given the extension application was no valid, long before the introduction of the moratorium. Consequently the legal advice is that the Exploration Licence ("EL") Application lodged by the consortium, should have been registered and processed in accordance with the BMA, which would predate the moratorium recently announced by the ABG.

We appreciate, given the near term plans to continue with the Referendum on Independence, as supported by the recent Joint Supervisory Body Meeting between the Governments of Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, the ABG may believe time is needed to properly consider the matter, which the moratorium could provide. The reopening of Panguna is important for the economic development of Bougainville and as such is supported by the majority of Bougainvilleans. President Momis has also recognised the need to secure strong landowner support and maintain peace and unity among all Bougainvilleans.

Notwithstanding the above legal position, the SMLOLA and RTG concur with the desires of the ABG to explore and deliver a solution for Panguna that will ensure harmony and a successful new mine, supported by the majority of landowners.

Mr Philip Miriori, the Chairman of the SMLOLA said, "We want to thank President Momis and our ABG for listening to and respecting the Landowner opposition to BCL's return. The Panguna community broadly wants the mine to reopen. We welcome very much the statement of the President that the ABG will now consult with the Panguna Landowners to determine the best alternative model for the development of Panguna."

Both the SMLOLA and RTG continue to believe the future of Panguna is best determined by discussion and

negotiation with all parties and our submissions to the ABG provide a sound and realistic development strategy that remains the only application that has received the support of the SMLOLA.

ABOUT RTG MINING INC

[RTG Mining Inc.](#) is a mining and exploration company listed on the main board of the Toronto Stock Exchange and Australian Securities Exchange Limited. RTG is focused on a proposal with a landowner lead consortium to secure an exploration licence at the high tonnage copper-gold Panguna Project in Bougainville PNG and the high grade copper/gold/magnetite Mabilo Project in the Philippines, while also identifying major new projects which will allow the Company to move quickly and safely to production.

RTG has an experienced management team which has to date developed seven mines in five different countries, including being responsible for the development of the Masbate Gold Mine in the Philippines through [CGA Mining Ltd.](#), and has B2Gold as one of its major shareholders in the Company. B2Gold is a member of both the S&P/TSX Global Gold and Global Mining Indices.

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Source: [RTG Mining Inc.](#) (TSX:RTG)

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