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**PRESS RELEASE**

**New Pogera Limited (NPL) lodge Special Mining Lease (SML)**

NPL is a company owned jointly by Kumul Minerals Holdings Limited (KMHL), Barrick Niugini Limited and Mineral Resources Enga Limited (MRE).

The application was lodged by the Chairman and Director of NPL Dr Illa Temu, and received by the Registrar of Mines and Executive Manager for the Regulatory Operations Division (ROD) of the Mineral Resources Authority (MRA), Stanley Nekitel.

When receiving the application, Mr Nekitel said the application would go through the normal assessment process that would involve a number of internal processes including the wardens hearing, technical assessment, the Mining Advisory Council (MAC) deliberations, the Minister's and the National Executive Council's (NEC) decision on the application.

This important occasion was witnessed by the Mining Minister Honourable Sir Ano Pala.

Hon Pala said the occasion marked an important step in the regulatory process of reviving the old Porgera, under the new Porgera Project Commencement Agreement (PPCA).

"I now ask my regulator, the Mineral Resources Authority (MRA), to fast track this process so that within the next three months, we can see the new Porgera mine up and running. This would bring much needed services and benefits to the concerned parties and affected people," said the Minister.

He said Porgera project was a very important economic asset to the country, and that the government intended to re-start the mine immediately. The Minister acknowledged the leadership of Prime Minister Honourable James Marape, adding that under his guidance, the State was able negotiate a better deal for the country, landowners and the MRE, after lengthy negotiations and court battles.

Minister Pala expressed his gratitude towards the board, management, shareholders of BNL, their partner Zijin Mining Group, KMHL and NPL.

The lodgment of the SML application follows the approval and registration of the transfer of Exploration Licence # 454, and SML 11 to NPL, and the subsequent surrender of SML 11 and all ancillary tenements by NPL.

In a prepared statement, Dr Temu said the lodgment of the application was a significant step towards the restart of the mine.

"It is an important milestone for the re-opening of the Porgera gold mine. It is a big step forward on BNL's journey with the State to re-open the mine as true partners."

He said the parties were focused on satisfying the remaining conditions under the New Porgera Commencement Agreement (NPCA).

Present at the lodgment of the SML application was the Managing Director of Kumul Minerals Holdings Limited, Sarimu Kanu and BNL's Country Manager Karo Lelai.



**Photo: Lodgment ceremony yesterday**