

## **APPENDIX 3.10.4**

### **MINUTES OF PUBLIC FORUM AT ABNABNA VILLAGE MAY 19 2009**

**Minutes of Public Hearing Held on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Abenabena**

**Present****A. Representing Abenabena**

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Nana Ntie Bediako | Chief Of Abenabena      |
| 2. Nana Ankoma       | Abenabena Queen Mother  |
| 3. Nana Mako         | Queen Mother Of Powuako |
| 4. Kwaku Branya      | Linguist Of Powuako     |
| 5. Nana Ankoma       | Abusuapanin             |
| 6. Nana Sanaahene    | Chief Elder             |
| 7. Kojo Assien       | Chief Elder             |
| 8. Nana Oko 11       | Chief Of Dampoase       |
| 9. Op. Kwame Amoako  | Chief Elder             |
| 10. Kwabena Enan     | Chief Elder             |
| 11. Nana Amankwaa    | Mamparhene              |
| 12. Nana Kwabena     | Obuapain Keagyana       |
| 13. Stephen Ampong   | Kontuhene Kwagyama      |
| 14. Kojo Owusu       | Chairman                |
| 15. Nana Owusu       | Chief Nkyirifi          |
| 16. Samuel K. Oduoh  | Asst Secretary          |
| 17. Op. Kofi Mensah  | Dwatwa Hene             |
| 18. Op. Kwabena Oko  | Chief Elder             |
| 19. Nana Asafoankye  | Chief Elder             |
| 20. Nana Kontuhene   | Chief Elder             |
| 21. Nana Kyeame Bio  | Chief Elder             |
| 22. Samuel K. Nsiah  | Chairman                |
| 23. Kwabena Ennum    | Chief Elder             |

**B. Representing Central Ashanti Gold Ltd.**

- Stephen Osei Bempah                      Snr. Mining Engineer
- Dr. Edward Watkin                        Environmental Manager
- Mr. Joseph Boampong                    Project Officer

**C. In Attendance**

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Anthony Kwame Darko       | Presiding Member            |
| 2. Ms. Mary Magdalene Arthur | District Health Service     |
| 3. Samuel Yaw Adom           | Dist. Environmental Officer |

4. Mohammed N. A. Washes	D D C D
5. Opoku Antwi Gabriel	Dist. Educ. Officer
6. Eric Coffie Rivers	General Secretary - ASM
7. Hon. Frimpong Ebenezer	Assemblyman
8. Hon. Anthony I. Baidoo	Assemblyman
9. Mr. Bismark Boateng	Medical Scientist
10. Hon. Bridget Ayepah	Assembly Member
11. Hon. Ayirebi Mentu Emmanuel	Assembly Member
12. Maxwell Kofi Gyamfi	G.P.R.T.U Secretary

**D. Others**

282 Members from the community were present.

**OPENING**

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer from a Pastor and then pouring of libation by the traditional council.

**RESPONSE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Public Hearing was chaired by the Presiding Member: Mr. Darko who in his opening address explained that he was delegated by the District Chief Executive to Chair the function as the DCE had to leave the meeting to attend to another pre – scheduled appointment. He emphasized that the DCE would have loved to be present during the meeting but for its late commencement this was not possible.

**WELCOME ADDRESS**

The Abenabena Chief welcomed all dignitaries and implored all members of the community to be calm and tolerant during the meeting. He stressed that it is each person's dedication to peace; tolerance; unity and harmony that can make all achieve the purpose for which they have convened. The Chief explained that he does not fully understand what would be discussed at the meeting but he believed that it is for this purpose of clarification that the meeting was being organized so that all can know and understand the mine activities.

**BACKGROUND OF CENTRAL ASHANTI GOLD LTD.**

Mr. Osei Bempah began his speech with an apology for the late commencement of the meeting and thanked the house for their patience and high respect they exhibited for the Company. He explained that although several meetings had been held with the chief and his elders, the Company had not been formally introduced to Traditional stool and the entire community at large. One factor that had stalled their efforts to make this formal introduction was the fact that the concessions had been the property of Anglo Gold Ltd. It is only in the last quarter of 2008 that Central Ashanti Gold Ltd received the transfer deed.

At this point the Public Forum has been organized so that CAGL can openly explain to all members of the community the activities that it has been doing thus far and intends to do in future. He explained

that even in December 2008 the chief of Abenabena and his elders were visited by a team he led and where the decision of the Board of Directors of the company to halt exploration activities temporarily was explained. This was because the company was to make stock taking.

At the moment “Feasibility Studies” are being done so that it can be known whether the project is viable or not. It is hoped that the feasibility report would be ready by the close of July 2009.

The purpose for this meeting is to know the expectations of the community should the project is commenced so that these expectations may be addressed in the feasibility report.

Also CAGL would like to work peacefully with all members of the community, and the Company would like to know how this can be done. CAGL intends to have a consultative committee in each village it will operate in. The purpose of this committee is to make an avenue where problems can be resolved amicably and in a timely fashion. “This idea” he affirmed; “has already been discussed with the Chief and his elders”. He explained that a formal introduction of these members shall be made openly so that their acceptance by the community would be known by all.

Mr. Osei Bempah explained that there had been two previous mining companies in the area: Cluff Mining and Ashanti Gold Company in the year 1994 and 1996 to 2001 respectively. Thus AGC bought the Gold Company from Cluff in 1996 and due to a fall in gold prices on the World Market, AGC folded up in 2001. This did not mean that there was no gold in the concessions any more.

He explained that it was in 2006, that Perseus Mining Ltd an Australian Public Company and Stratys Investment Ltd. started negotiations on a lease transfer agreement with AGC. Under this agreement AGC gave the concession to Perseus Mining Ltd.

The next step which was the most important was to receive a transfer deed from the Government of Ghana, and the good news is that Perseus Mining Ltd has secured the certificate for ownership transfer from the Government of Ghana.

The Mining Concessions in Ayanfuri, Abenabena, Nananko and Dadieso now belongs to Perseus Mining Ltd.

From 2006 Perseus Mining employed Sun Gold Limited a subsidiary of the Company for drilling operations within the concessions. As Sun Gold may be redeployed to another area for exploration Perseus Mining Ltd needs another name to use for its mining operations. After much brainstorming the name Central Ashanti Gold Ltd was chanced upon. This is because the gold belt that runs from the Coast to Konongo is called Ashanti Gold Belt. The area where the project is located is within the Central part of the Geological map. Thus for ease of identification by international investors the Directors selected the name “Central Ashanti Gold Ltd.” Should all go well this would be the name that shall be used?

#### **CHAIRMAN’S RESPONSE TO MR. BEMPAH’S SPEECH**

The Presiding Assembly Member in his response noted that Mr. Osei Bempah’s speech was impressive and it is worth noting the transparent manner in which the Company hopes to do business with the Chief and the community even before the project takes off. He explained that he has brought a team with him that includes doctors, health care workers, agriculturalist, and environmentalist. Notwithstanding he would like the Traditional Chief to give his comments on what has been said so far.

### **CHIEF'S COMMENT**

The Chief noted that every leader prays for something good to come to his stool land, he is glad that the project is coming to his town. Nevertheless ever since Perseus Mining Ltd. began its operation it has not sought to approach the Traditional authority via the stipulated channels as custom demands. He explained that this is of real concern to him. In every community there are “dos and don'ts” that must be adhered to by all members of the community. Although the company has been having occasional consultation with the Traditional Authority this is not enough. The company needs to formally approach the Traditional Authority, so that it would be known to the Authority how much of its stool land would be involved. In return the Authority can report to the Paramount Chief. The chief stressed that he would not like a situation where the Paramount Chief is not properly briefed on what is happening. He is not in the known either if any legal documents have been submitted to the District Assembly. As he has high confidence in Mr. Osei Bempah, he is appealing to him personally that these customs should be respected and performed.

### **MR. OSEI BEMPAH'S COMMENT ON CUSTOMARY RITES**

Mr. Osei Bempah explained that the Customary Rites had not been observed since the concessions had belonged to Ashanti Gold Company, and it would have been improper for Central Ashanti Gold Ltd. to have gone ahead to perform these rites on property that was not its' own. Now that the transferred deed has been received, he assured them that Central Ashanti Gold Ltd. as legal owners of the property would officially approach The Traditional Authorities so that the necessary customary rites would be duly performed.

### **INTRODUCTION OF THE CAGL TO THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY**

The Presiding Member Mr. Darko, also expressed that the Company needs to officially introduce itself and register with the District Assembly. He advised that the laid out procedures of the Assembly should be adhered to. He also assured the Traditional Authority that the district would ensure that the right procedure is followed at all times.

### **THE CHIEF'S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chief expressed his ardent hope to have the mine operation commence. He assured all that a peaceful and conducive environment would be created for the Mining Company. However he encouraged Central Ashanti Gold Ltd. to render all necessary paperwork to the Assembly and also have the customary rites performed as soon as possible.

### **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

#### **• THE NAME CENTRAL ASHANTI GOLD LTD.?**

“From Mr. Osei Bempah's Speech we have learnt that the name of the company is now Central Ashanti Gold Ltd. *He who pays the piper picks the tune.* Since the company would operate in Western Region, it beats my imagination that the “Western” is not mentioned. My fear is that if one is not careful at the time of payment of royalties they will be paid to the Ashanti Region instead of the Western Region”.

- **PRIORITY TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF ABENABENA IN EMPLOYMENT**

“I am a Citizen of Abenabena Stool Land although few people know me. We are all in agreement that the mining company should come. I would like to for warn my people that mining activities bring with them there own challenges – which include pollution of water bodies, destruction for farm lands and crops, and if necessary destruction of towns and villages. But what does the community get from all these inconveniences? Work of course... Thus when it comes to employment into the mining company, the company should give priority to the citizens of Abenabena. Since natives are scattered all over the country, I would like to suggest that all vacancies in the company should be placed in the hands of the District Assemblies and the chief. It is only when the community is unable to provide a qualified person that the company should look for other places. For unskilled labour please let the bulk of labour come from our community.”

- **ALLOTMENT OF MINE AEA FOR GALAMSEY ACTIVITIES**

“My name is Eric and I am the General Secretary of Ghana Small Scale Miners Association. The Government has agreed that any big mining company should allocate a little portion of it’s concession for small scale miners known as galamsey. We shall also expect you to give us this allocation so that those who cannot find jobs with your company can also do this business to make a living. I am appealing to Engineer Osei Bempah and his group.”

- **MUTUAL RESPECT TO BE EXTENDED TO ALL BY THE COMPANY**

“I am appealing to management of the company to ensure that a cordial relationship exists between the company and the inhabitants. We want mutual respect to be extended to every member of the community irrespective of their status, age or sex. We also want respect to be given to our traditional Heritage, according to our customs and traditions.”

- **FARMERS TO DEDICATE PRICE DURING COMPENSATION AND FLEXIBLE PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

“Another area of concern is the crop compensation. What we want to see is that, the farmer and the company should mutually agree on a price. The price should be acceptable to the farmer before crops are destroyed. We would also like an easy payment arrangement for the farmer, else please leave the farmer alone.”

- **COMPANY NOT TO IMPOSE PROJECTS ON COMMUNITY**

“When the Company wants to embark on any developmental project; we humbly plead that the company’s authorities should sit down with the benefiting community to point out the project they need before embarking on any developmental project. Please do not impose any projects on us.”

- **PLANT TO BE LOCATED IN ABENABENA SO ELECTRICITY CAN BE EXTENDED TO TOWN**

“Another very important concern of the community is *plant* location. Nana should use his authority in full force to ensure that the plant is located in Abenabena. This way Abenabena can enjoy the fringe benefits that come with it. These include: Electricity, Clinic, Schools and a host of other amenities.”

## **RESPONSES**

### **1. CROP COMPENSATION**

In his reaction to Crop Compensation the Presiding Member indicated that there is government legislature on how compensation should be made. Also the Department of Agriculture already has price guidelines for each crop. Thus it is not a farmer or the mining company that dictates the price rate for compensation per se.

**2. PLANT LOCATION**

Mr. Osei Bempah indicated that the location of the “Plant” is determined after many factors have been considered by various consultants. In fact it is the feasibility study and Environmental Impact Study that determines the location. He would thus like to plead with the community to allow the company a freehand to do its work. In its stead he encouraged all present to consider how they may benefit from the inception of the Mining Company.

**3. NAME OF THE COMPANY**

The Presiding Member encouraged the community, and stressed that what is important is that the mining company is coming to Wassa Area. And all should rejoice over that. Whatever name the company wishes to use is not really an issue. What all should pray for is that the funds would be raised and the mine would commence work. In stead of fighting over the name each members of the community should prepare themselves to seize the opportunity they have. The community members should begin to send their wards and relations to learn adequate skills to enable them to become gainfully enrolled in the mining company. Should they toy with the opportunity they may find themselves wanting when the mine is operation?

The meeting was brought to a close by a closing prayer from the Pastor.