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Joint Statement by CEOs Vale and BHP Billiton

Our immediate priority is to understand the full extent of the consequences of the tailings dam breach and how we can provide further help

Together with Jimmy Wilson, BHP Billiton President Iron Ore and Peter Poppinga, Vale Executive Director, Ferrous Minerals, we spent this morning on site at the Samarco mine with CEO, Ricardo Vescovi De Aragão, and meeting with community leaders.

Our immediate priority is to understand the full extent of the consequences of the tailings dam breach and how we can provide further help.

We visited the tailings dam complex, including the site of the failed Fundão dam and affected downstream Santarém dam as well as the Germano dam which is being closely-monitored by Samarco.

We also met with the Samarco incident response teams and civil authorities who have worked tirelessly to evacuate the local community and search for missing people.

On behalf of all of the employees of Vale and BHP Billiton, we offer our profound sympathies to the family, friends and loved ones of the people who died as a result of this tragic incident. We are deeply concerned for the welfare of the employees, contractors and members of the local community who are still missing. Our thoughts are with you all in this distressing and uncertain time.

We were overcome when we saw the devastation in and around Bento Rodrigues. We cannot rebuild the lives of the families who have lost loved ones but we redouble our commitment to Samarco to support the response effort.

As an immediate step, Vale and BHP Billiton pledge to support Samarco in creating an Emergency Fund for rebuilding works and to help the affected families and communities. It is our intention to work with the authorities to get this fund functioning as soon as practicable.

Vale and BHP Billiton also have health, safety, environment and geotechnical experts onsite supporting Samarco's response. We have also had discussions with Samarco and authorities about the additional support we can provide. Investigations are continuing and Samarco will provide further updates relating to the response and operations.

Again, as joint shareholders in Samarco, we would like to offer our sympathies and prayers to the people of Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo and the people of Brazil.

Murilo Ferreira

Chief Executive Officer, Vale

Andrew Mackenzie

Chief Executive Officer, BHP Billiton

More information



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