

Bafokeng to participate in day-to-day running of Styldrift

14 November 2008

Source: www.miningweekly.com

Author: Dennis Ndaba

The king of the Royal Bafokeng Nation (RBN), Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi, says that the planned R10,3-billion Styldrift mine will see the RBN involved in the day-to-day running of a mining operation, rather than being mere “passive royalty recipients”.

Currently, RBN – Africa’s richest indigenous tribe – receives royalties from mining companies that exploit its mineral reserves.

Speaking at the sod-turning ceremony to mark the start of the development of the 50:50 joint venture project between world number one platinum producer Anglo Platinum (Angloplat) and Royal Bafokeng Holdings (RBH), in Phokeng, in Rustenburg, last week, he said: “The ceremony cements our partnership with Angloplat, already on a solid footing with the success of the Boschkoppe operation, the revenue of which has contributed to the socioeconomic development of both the RBN and other local communities.”

The Styldrift project will double the Bafokeng Rasimone platinum mine’s current production to 450 000 oz/y.

With estimated reserves of 68-million tons, Styldrift is expected to yield about 5,4-million ounces over its 27-year life-of-mine.

Angloplat CEO Neville Nicolau said that the project would boost the company’s production profile and add value to the North West province. “We will ensure that the project remains fatality free, aligned with our vision of zero fatalities.”

RBH CEO Niall Carroll said that the company was looking forward to starting the project, which would provide a significant number of sustainable job opportunities for the RBN, as well as the greater community.

The project is expected to create up to 4 000 jobs by 2035.

Shaft sinking will start in 2009, with development and ramp-up in 2013. Steady-state production of platinum will be reached by 2015.

The capital expenditure for the mine will be apportioned equally between the two parties, and will be repaid over an eight-year period between 2008 and 2016.