

## Rio Tinto gradually resumes exploration activities in La Granja

*Following an exhaustive risk analysis and the reopening of the road, the mining company sends a team of workers to gradually resume operations*

**Lima, March 11, 2008.** Rio Tinto last week resumed in a limited fashion its exploration activities at the La Granja project, located in the district of Querocoto (Chota, Cajamarca). Following 14 days in which its activities were suspended, and the completion of a risk analysis and subsequent creation of a plan for a staged resumption of activities, the company concluded that the site is a safe working environment for its employees and contractors.

The main access road to the camp and neighboring communities was reopened last Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, and it's already in use, in a limited way. The company continues monitoring it for possible future landslides given that the rainy season still continues. These efforts would not be possible without close coordination with and support from local authorities and residents.

The actions to be resumed comprise those that present the lowest risk, including geological sample logging and inspecting the condition of prospecting platforms and retention ponds. Simultaneously, a construction team has gone back to working on finishing the exploration camp expansion.

Rio Tinto is taking all measures necessary to fully resume its activities as soon as possible. The company anticipates that in the coming days, the team at the camp should expand and gradually resume their full range of responsibilities.

On February 19, Rio Tinto decided to suspend its exploration activities due to the heavy rainfall, which caused the mud and rockslides that blocked the access road to the La Granja exploration camp.

### **About La Granja Project**

The La Granja copper project is located in the district of Querocoto, in the province of Chota, in the region of Cajamarca. The Rio Tinto Group obtained the project in late January 2006 through a public bidding process carried out by the Peruvian Government. Rio Tinto evaluates the possibility of developing La Granja Project through the pre feasibility studies. In this stage the geological, environmental, social and economical conditions are analyzed in order to decide if it is viable to construct a mine.

### **About Rio Tinto**

Rio Tinto is a leader in finding, mining and processing the earth's mineral resources. The Group's worldwide operations supply essential minerals and metals that help to meet global needs and contribute to improvements in living standards. Major products include aluminum, copper, diamonds, energy products (coal and uranium), gold, industrial minerals (borates, titanium dioxide, salt and talc), and iron ore. Wherever Rio Tinto operates, the health and safety of its employees is the first priority. The Group seeks to contribute to sustainable development, minimizing adverse effects and working as closely as possible with host countries and communities. The group is currently present in Australia, North America, South America, Asia, Europe and South Africa.

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