

MAJOR INCIDENT ANNOUNCEMENT

BIMHA MINE UNDERGROUND COLLAPSE

The Board of Directors of Zimplats advise that a major underground collapse occurred at one of its mines at the Ngezi site 150 kilometres south-east of Harare. The collapse has affected nearly 50% of the current mining footprint at the Bimha Mine, the largest of Zimplats' four mines. As a result of the proactive response from the management team and the timely evacuation of all personnel, no injuries or damage of mobile equipment were reported.

The collapse was triggered by the accelerated deterioration of ground conditions associated with a major shear, the Mutambara Shear, that transgresses through half of the mining area. The fault was first identified in 2011 but has become more problematic over the last year both along the declines and within the stoping footprint of the Bimha Mine. A number of initiatives to address regional ground stability and employee safety have been undertaken during this period at a cost of more than US\$6 million.

However, despite these efforts, significant and accelerated ground deterioration was observed from May this year. Information gained from ground monitoring equipment installed to track the extent and magnitude of the deterioration has led to a decision to abandon and permanently close approximately half of the mining footprint in areas where major falls of ground have occurred. As a result production from the Bimha Mine has been downscaled by 50% equating to 45 000 ounces of platinum in matte production. Preliminary estimates indicate that it will take 15 months (2 on twin decline development) to reach full production of 8 fleets and 50 months to reconnect to current declines (FY19).

A team of company experts supported by internationally renowned senior experts and consultants have been engaged to conduct detailed investigations and to make recommendations on the appropriate remedial action to return the mine to full production. Two of the eight fleets that were deployed at the Bimha Mine will be reallocated to redeveloping the declines to open up the bottom roadways. The remaining six fleets will be absorbed either within Bimha or the other mines. Reconnecting the declines is expected to take 50 months.

All statutory notifications have been completed and all emergency systems put on high alert. Daily inspections and reviews continue to be undertaken.

Further announcements will be made in due course.

For any further enquiries please contact

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