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01/26/2010



Vale supports restoration of Christ the Redeemer statue

Vale has concluded an agreement with the Archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro to sponsor the restoration of the Christ the Redeemer statue, symbol of Rio, the "Marvelous City," and Brazil, and voted one of the new Seven Wonders of the World in 2007. The understanding also includes the maintenance and conservation of the statue and surrounding terrace for the next five years. The agreement will be signed today, 26 January, at Vale's head office, at an event to be attended by the Archbishop of Rio, Dom Orani, and Vale's CEO, Roger Agnelli.

The restoration work is due to begin before the end of the month, and is expected to last until May or June 2010. Visits to the statue will not be interrupted during this period, although for safety reasons the monument will be covered with a transparent sheet. In order to determine the work required to fully restore the 30-meter-tall statue, a detailed study was undertaken. Some parts of the statue's soapstone mosaic covering were found to be missing, and a number of small cracks were found, as well as irregularities in the joints between the mosaic pieces and moisture stains. These are surface problems that do not harm the monument's esthetics, but they require care to prevent them from developing into more significant damage.

Vale's director of communications, Fernando Thompson, explained why the mining company is investing in the project: "This is a carioca project, because the statue is in Rio; it is also a Brazilian project, because it is a national symbol; and it's a global project, because it was voted as one of the new Seven Wonders of the World. So it's completely natural for Vale, a Brazilian and global company, which is recognized as a world leader in iron ore, to associate with the statue. We want to project this Brazilian icon globally," he said.

The statue of Christ was inaugurated in 1931 after five years of construction work. The 30-meter-tall statue, which stands on an eight-meter pedestal, is located 709 meters above sea level on top of Corcovado Mountain. The statue was planned by engineer Heitor da Silva Costa, although the final design was created by artist Carlos Oswald. The hands and head of the figure were sculpted by French artist Paul Maximilian Landowski.

More information



Mônica Ferreira

monica.ferreira@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3845-3636

Fatima Cristina

fatima.cristina@vale.com

Rio de Janeiro

+55 (21) 3485-3621