

The Science Museum Group:

Science Museum, London
National Science and Media Museum Bradford
Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester
National Railway Museum York
Locomotion, Shildon

group.sciencemuseum.org.uk

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

By email only to Survival International
advocacy@survivalinternational.org

2 December 2021

Dear Adrian Burragubba, Phillip Kujur, Siti Maimunah and Joseph Zane Sikulu,

Thank you for your letter. The Science Museum Group respects the rights of all people and is committed to engaging the public on climate change, the defining issue for the 21st century, which demands our urgent attention. Two current exhibitions at the Science Museum address aspects of this grave challenge, which was also the focus of this year's Manchester Science Festival, and our Climate Talks series which has run throughout the year. Several representatives of indigenous communities were among more than 60 speakers featured in the Climate Talks, discussing how to tackle the problems facing communities around the world due to climate change.

Your letter makes some very specific allegations about the activities of Adani Mining. I feel that these are questions for that company, and also the relevant national governments.

The sponsorship agreement the Science Museum recently announced was with Adani Green Energy. Adani Green Energy is part of the Adani Group, which includes five other businesses with interests spanning ports, airports and coal mining. Each of the businesses is an independent, publicly traded entity with its own board of directors.

This clear distinction is important, specifically because of Adani Green Energy's potential to have a very positive impact, both in supporting millions of people in India who have currently no access to electricity and in expediting India's transition away from coal.

In my view, we should be encouraging companies such as Adani Green Energy to go further, faster, just as we should encourage governments to drive forward regulatory frameworks that help green tech to prosper and make fossil fuels less attractive options.

I asked our Director, Sir Ian Blatchford, to respond to the comments in your letter that relate to him, and he has asked me to convey the reply shown in blue below to you.

I endorse all that Mary has written here. As your letter refers specifically to an interview I gave, Dame Mary agreed that it would be appropriate for me to respond to this portion of your letter. It was not my intention to comment on the detailed working practices of Adani Mining nor to dismiss the concerns of anyone. I was asked a question during a wider interview responding to criticisms and some inaccurate claims about the Science Museum by a campaign group, Culture Unstained. The point I was seeking to make in my answer was that it would be for Adani Mining to respond to allegations about its activities in Australia and that a proper discussion of such allegations should involve other relevant voices, in this case the people impacted by mining activities, the mining company and the Australian Government. Yours, Ian

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Your letter calls on the Science Museum Group to end its relationship with Adani Green Energy and also to rule out receiving funding from any company involved in extracting fossil fuels.

Given the enormous expertise and wealth tied up in major energy companies, they need to play a much bigger role in urgent change to prevent a climate catastrophe. This potential explains the position taken by the Science Museum Group over the past decade that it would be counter-productive to rule out engaging with the entire sector. We believe the right approach is to engage, debate and challenge companies, governments and individuals to do more to make the global economy less carbon intensive. Sponsorship decisions are made on individual companies, but with so much at stake it is to be expected there will be robust internal and external discussion about where to draw the line.

We respect your disagreement with our approach. Differing opinions and debate are integral to our work, both as part of the cultural community and as a science institution.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Mary Archer'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Mary' and the last name 'Archer' clearly distinguishable.

Dame Mary Archer DBE
Chair, Science Museum Group

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