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Next Graphite Announces Strong Year-End Update: Aukam Plant Construction Underway; JV Partner Closes Non-Brokered, Private Placement

Also Reporting: Extension Of Exclusive Prospecting License To 2019; Up To 43.01% Carbon As Graphite From Surface Sampling; European Manufacturer Of Graphenes Will Use Aukam Graphite In Tests Of High Performance Tires

LOS ANGELES, CA, Dec. 19, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Next Graphite, Inc. (OTC PINK: GPNE) ("Next Graphite," "GPNE" or the "Company"), a graphite development company in the African Republic of Namibia and co-license holder of the Aukam vein project, is pleased to recap multiple 2017 accomplishments: its Aukam Graphite Plant is approximately 50% constructed; positive sampling results continue; its exclusive Namibia prospecting license has been renewed; and its JV partner has concluded a significant round of financing and has entered into a LOI with its European graphene manufacturing partner.

Aukam Plant Construction: Plant construction is well underway and our JV partner, CKR Carbon Corporation, which is overseeing construction, anticipates plant completion in the second quarter of 2018. Initial production sampling will then commence.

Successful Testing of Aukam Graphite Continues: Work carried out on the project since January 2014 has involved detailed and regional geological mapping, geophysical surveys, sampling and assaying of graphite veins and dump material, metallurgical test work, bulk sampling, underground drilling and environmental impact assessments.

Surface sampling of graphite occurrences as of September 2017 has resulted in assays of 1.96% Cg (carbon as graphite) to 43.01% Cg from 22 samples of disseminated graphite, vein graphite and mineralized zone. The graphite occurrences were taken from over approximately 200m within a larger east-west zone of 500 meters of disseminated graphite. This zone broadly corresponds to a 700-meter long electromagnetic anomaly delineated earlier this year. Sampling is ongoing to fully delineate the potential of the graphite mineralization at Aukam.

Exclusive License Renewal: The Namibian Minister of Mines and Energy has approved the renewal of Exclusive Prospecting License (EPL) 3895 for a period of two years until April 3, 2019.

The renewed license covers an area of 27,870 hectares (278.7 square kilometers) over the historical Aukam vein graphite mine in southern Namibia. Recent work by the Company over the past two years has led to a better understanding of the quality and distribution of the graphite mineralization at Aukam. In particular exploration has demonstrated significant potential for expansion of the mineralization outside the old workings.

JV Partner Financing: Our partner announced that it closed a non-brokered private placement on November 23, 2017 and raised CD \$2,793,640. Proceeds from the offering will be used to complete the plant at Aukam, for the acquisition of mining equipment, for further exploration at Aukam, for product development, and for general working capital.

Graphene Manufacturer LOI: Our JV partner also announced that a leading European manufacturer of surface engineered nano graphenes (EMG) signed an LOI to formally develop and exploit Aukam graphite, to facilitate the manufacture of nano surface engineered graphenes for large volume mass-market applications. We will supply an industrial quantity of Aukam graphite concentrate to enable the manufacture and testing of more than 400 high performance tires by that European graphene manufacturing partner.

“I am very pleased with the progress we have accomplished with our joint venture partner at Aukam in 2017,” said Cliff Bream, CEO of Next Graphite. “Inevitable delays and challenges in exploratory mining activities have been overcome and the stage has been set for much-anticipated production revenues in 2018. We have opted to go to non-reporting status for the time being to concentrate on our focus on the Aukam plant and our drive to profitability, rather than spend time and money on public filings. We plan on resuming fully reporting status after we begin revenues, which we anticipate in the second quarter 2018,” Bream concluded.

About Next Graphite, Inc.:

Next Graphite, Inc. is a development stage company targeting the growing specialty graphite production industry. The Company’s Africa-based Aukam Graphite Mine was established in 1940 in the current Republic of Namibia and produced USD \$30 million of graphite at today’s prices. The site is located on approximately 69,000 acres (27,870 hectares) in southern Namibia close to the port city of Luderitz and is estimated to contain a significant amount of high grade, vein type graphitic material.

The property hosts three underground adits that were mined periodically between 1940 and 1974. Five dumps from the historical mining occur on the property and in September 2017 22 samples of disseminated graphite, vein graphite and mineralized zone were assayed at up to 43.01% Cg. The Company is working to transition from its current exploratory license to a full mining license and complete construction of a new graphite processing facility in 2018. Next Graphite’s joint venture in Namibia maintains high safety and environmental standards and has a comprehensive strategy of social engagement.

For more information, please visit: www.nextgraphite.com.

Safe Harbor Statement:

This press release contains forward-looking statements made under the "safe harbor" provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward looking statements are based upon the current plans, estimates and projections of Next Graphite Inc.'s management and are subject to risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from the forward looking statements. Such statements include, among others, those concerning market and industry segment growth and demand and acceptance of new and existing products; any projections of sales, earnings, revenue, margins or other financial items; any statements of the plans, strategies and objectives of management for future operations; any statements regarding future economic conditions or performance; uncertainties related to conducting business in Africa, as well as all assumptions, expectations, predictions, intentions or beliefs about future events. Therefore, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. The following factors, among others, could cause actual results to differ from those set forth in the forward-looking statements. Among others, could cause actual results to differ from those set forth in the forward-looking statements: business conditions in Africa, general economic conditions; geopolitical events and regulatory changes, availability of capital, the Company's ability to maintain its competitive position and dependence on key management. This press release does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any security and shall not constitute an offer, solicitation or sale of any securities in any jurisdiction in which such offer, solicitation or sale would be unlawful prior to registration or qualification under the securities laws of such jurisdiction.

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