

## Press Release: German Raw Material Policy: Access to platinum more important than human rights?

German Mineral Resource Agency invites mining company which is co-responsible for massacre in South Africa in 2012.

**Berlin, 21. April 2015:** The German Mineral Resource Agency (DERA) invites the British-South African mining company Lonmin Plc for a high-ranking workshop on the supply of platinum group metals for the German industry for tomorrow. Lonmin bears responsibility for the Marikana Massacre in August 2012 in South Africa, where 34 striking miners were killed. According to the workshop programme the Lonmin representative is invited to give a presentation on „sustainable platinum mining“. The German NGOs represented in the *Arbeitskreis Rohstoffe* (Working Group on Raw Materials) are perplexed by this invitation. They expect the state-run DERA to demand information from Lonmin Plc about compensation in South Africa, and on how they are planning to prevent massive human rights violations in future.

„DERA was founded in 2010 in order to facilitate sustainable supply of raw materials for Germany. In the light of the massacre in Marikana the invitation of Lonmin raises the question of DERA's perception of sustainability. DERA should strongly call upon Lonmin Plc to actively support the investigations into the conflict causes, to provide adequate compensation, and to take precautionary measures that ensure such incidents will never happen again“, says Michael Reckordt from *Arbeitskreis Rohstoffe*. This is particularly important because South Africa is by far the largest supplier of platinum for the world market, and German industry fully depends on these supplies.

On 16. August 2012, 34 striking miners died in Marikana, South Africa, when the police used violence to stop a week-long strike. The incidence is considered to be the biggest armed assault on civilians in South Africa since the end of Apartheid. During the Commission of Inquiry, set up by president Zuma, the co-responsibility of the British-South African company Lonmin for the massacre was highlighted several times.

The strikes was preceded by the delayed implementation of the state-enacted „Social and Labour Plan“. The company had promised the building of 5.500 houses for miners within a decade – of which only three were built. The striking workers in Marikana thus demanded better working and living conditions, wage increases, and direct negotiations with the management. Lonmin refused all communication with the workers and instead supported the militarised police intervention which led to the massacre actively according to press reports.

DERA was founded in October 2010 in order to advise and support German industry on access to raw materials. Its implementation is part of the German raw material strategy. German civil society, represented in the *Arbeitskreis Rohstoffe*, criticises this strategy for being biased exclusively towards the interests of corporations supporting a high resource consumption in general. Human rights, social and environmental standards, and the development of a strategy for a circular economy are thus constantly neglected.

Contact:

AK Rohstoffe, Michael Reckordt, Phone: 030 428 05 479 / Email: [michael.reckordt@power-shift.de](mailto:michael.reckordt@power-shift.de)

Website: <http://alternative-rohstoffwoche.de> ///

This press release is supported by:

