

# the Journalist

CONTEXT MATTERS

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Monday 11 August 2014

**ATTENTION**

SUE VEY

SPOKESPERSON

LONMIN PLC

Dear Ms Vey,

Re: Feature Article for The Journalist

I am the Editor of an online media resource called The Journalist ( [www.thejournalist.org.za](http://www.thejournalist.org.za) ). To mark the second anniversary of the Marikana tragedy in August 2012 we are running in-depth interviews with Benchmarks Senior Researcher, David van Wyk, and Benchmarks Monitor Chris Molebatsi.

They raise several issues that require response from Lonmin. The deadline for this piece is close of business Tuesday August 12<sup>th</sup>. Here follows the main points being made by Van Wyk and Molebatsi:

1. Workers wounded in the conflict subsequently lost their jobs and/or were not adequately compensated. Can you supply details of compensation for workers who were wounded
2. Mr Molebatsi says since the tragedy there have been several suicides. Do you have any details of this?
3. Both men claim there has been no counselling for workers' children who experienced the violence and that orphans have not been taken care of. Please comment on the situation of the orphans. What kind of trauma counselling has Lonmin supported since 2012?
4. They say Lonmin has offered to pay for schooling but has not made it clear whether this offer is for 'no fee' or 'low fee' schools in rural areas or in urban areas. Molebatsi says the last school Lonmin built was in 2003 and that schools and facilities in the area are very congested because of the rapid growth in the local population in recent years. What is the company doing to relieve the congestion on community facilities in general?

5. Facilities are under great strain as more and more migrant workers bring their families. The Clinic cannot cope with demands and nothing is being done to supplement the existing health care facilities. Pollution and respiratory problems are serious issues. Another health problem is the illness because of the treated sewage water used underground. Please comment
6. They say very little is being done for the bereaved families. Please supply details of what has been done for the wives and children left behind. Both men say Lonmin has asked families to send a relative to replace the worker who lost his life. Please comment
7. Mr Molebatsi says that as a Monitor and Researcher he has spoken with bereaved women who are prepared to come and work on the mines. Van Wyk claims mining conditions are not conducive to the inclusion of women in the workforce. What special provisions are in place to ensure a safe working environment for women
8. After the strike and the increases, how do the wages of ordinary workers in South African mines now compare with those at Lonmin operations elsewhere in the world
9. Van Wyk claims that some sub contractors were not taken back after the strike and this is partially why Lonmin could pay the increases. Please comment
10. Both men are extremely critical of the so-called empowerment deal with the Bapo ba Mogale community of whom only about 2% voted for the deal. They claim:
  - a. It has not been properly negotiated with relevant leadership
  - b. It has not been a transparent process and it is driving a wedge in the community. "Divide and rule," says Molebatsi. Why is this deal being pushed through in this manner?
11. Despite a strike that lasted almost half a year there was hardly any increase in the platinum price (compared with the sharp rise in response to Eskom blackouts in 2008). Van Wyk says this points to a glut or stockpiling. Comment please
12. There have been warnings for several years of shafts that will have to be closed as a result of depleted resources. Van Wyk says that while the strike is being blamed for imminent closures these have been a long time coming. Please comment
13. Both men say the conflict is far from over and that there is a real threat of future violence because of the overall destabilising effect of mining operations on the community. Says Molebatsi: "We say there needs to be change but nobody cares to listen. There are people who have the power to make changes but there are those who benefit from the death of people. It is very painful. We are talking about families.. women and children." Please comment

I will be in touch on Tuesday.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Vollenhoven

Editor

The Journalist

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