

**To the Government and the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa  
To the Government of the North West Province of South Africa  
To the Embassy of South Africa in Germany**

**We denounce the premeditated mass murder of at least 109 miners by the government of South Africa!**

The whole world has watched as half-starved and dead miners have been recovered from the Stilfontein mine near Johannesburg. The South African government, namely President Cyril Ramaphosa, state ministries and the police are responsible for this!

Despite all pleas and protests from relatives and helpers, the government refused to take rescue measures for thousands of trapped miners for months. On the contrary, it knowingly sent them to their deaths. This goes directly back to the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa (ANC), who described the mine in Stilfontein as 'a crime scene'. Khumbudzo Ntshavheni (ANC), Minister in the Office of the President, openly expressed the inhuman, fascist mindset towards the migrant miners: 'They are criminals. We will not help them. We will smoke them out!'<sup>1</sup> And the police minister Senzo Mchunu (ANC) proclaimed 'No mercy!'

This was the public announcement of the mass murder, which was also linked to criminalising and sabotaging the solidarity and help of many volunteers!

How low the ANC, a former liberation organisation, has sunk in its hysterical agitation against migrants! Anyone who unconditionally represents the interests of capital, even forming a government with fascists, is also capable of knowingly murdering innocent people. Such people open the door to the establishment of fascism in South Africa! The Stilfontein massacre will go down in history as an eternal stain on the ANC!

Hypocritically, the denial of aid as a measure in the fight against illegal mining is also presented as being in the general interest of the South African people. For example, Mining Minister Gwede Mantashe claims on X: 'Illegal mining undermines the achievements of freedom and shared prosperity and ultimately undermines our constitutional democracy'<sup>2</sup>.

Whose freedom and prosperity are at stake and what does illegal mining even mean? Mining monopolies have the freedom to close their gold mines when they no longer generate enough profit and to throw thousands of miners onto the streets. What is illegal, however, is when miners climb into disused mines and dig for gold at their own risk and at the risk of their lives.

The ANC government is fighting the migrant miners for political and economic interests. They are using the narrative of 'criminal migrants' to divide the people in order to disintegrate the protest and struggle against their own anti-grassroots policies. At the same time, they do not want to stand by while profits flow out of the country. 'However, according to estimates by an industry association, the government and the industry lose several hundred million dollars a year in sales, taxes and licence fees as a result.'<sup>3</sup> Following this capitalist logic, the action against the miners was called "Operation Vala Umgodi - close the hole"!

Since November 2024, the German-South African Friendship Society Marikana has been reporting on this crime, publicising it in Germany and to partner organisations, initiating fundraising campaigns and sending solidarity to the miners, aid workers, trade unionists and NGOs in Stilfontein.

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1 Video by Newzroom Afrika on X <https://x.com/Newzroom405/status/1856657295356174659?mx=2>

2 <https://x.com/GwedeMantashe1/status/1879093309681160533>

3 <https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/panorama/illegale-goldmine-suedafrika-verhungert-tote-100.html>

At the beginning of December 2024, we protested in the strongest possible terms to the government of the North West region in South Africa against this inhumane behaviour towards the trapped miners - no response.

**The German-South African Friendship Society demands:**

**Those responsible for this mass murder must stand trial and resign from their posts!**

First and foremost President Cyril Ramaphosa, Minister of the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, Minister of Mines Gwede Mantashe and Minister of Police Senzo Mchunu!

**Serious attempt to recover all the dead at Shaft 10 and 11 by professional helpers!**

**Release, impunity, labour and residence rights for the rescued migrant miners!**

**Compensation for the families of the victims! Dignified burial of the victims at the expense of the state!**

**Psychological support for all traumatised helpers!**

**No criminalisation of MACUA and other helpers!**