

ActionAid South Africa launches report highlighting human rights violations at Anglo Platinum mine

On Monday 27 June, ActionAid South Africa (AASA) will be launching their latest research report titled, *Precious Metals II – A Systemic Inequality*. The report is a follow up to a similar study in 2008, and as such, demonstrates how Anglo Platinum has not delivered on their promises, and how the lives of people living in the area of AngloPlats Mogalakena Platinum Mine have been thrust into deeper insecurity as a result of their operations. The launch will follow the adoption of the first ever *People's Mining Charter*, on Sunday 26 June, at which Zwelinzima Vavi— former COSATU Leader; Joseph Mutunjwa— Head of AMCU; and Augusto Junkal— Brazilian Landless Workers Movement will give Key note speeches.

The research contained in the *Precious Metals II Report* was conducted in partnership with the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP) of Wits University. The report looks at the structural nature of the inequality experienced by the communities of Mapela in Mokopane and the manner in which the legislative regime governing the mining industry systemically violates the human rights of communities like Mapela. The report argues that this reality is not an oversight or merely the slow maturation of a long term liberation project, but rather a systemic crisis which permeates out from the very mechanisms and institutions introduced to overcome the inequality of the past.

The case study of the Mapela community has shown that despite overwhelming odds against their claim to human rights and a just dispensation, the community continues to resist and disrupt the “normal” functioning of their dispossession and impoverishment. The growing organisational ability of mining affected communities to collectively claim their rights, as is evidenced in the growth and popularity of Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA), and the increasing rate of protest and disruption at mines across the country, attests to the emergence of a new struggle for justice that finds its conception in the injustice of the system.

The executive summary states that, “AASA hopes that in seeking to bring this into focus, we will have contributed to the necessary and

urgent realignment of our mining regime, with the clear framework of South Africa's Constitution. We trust that this report will result in a much wider and democratic debate, which must include affected communities, the Department of Mineral Resources, Legislators, business, as well as the relevant constitutionally mandated Human Rights Institutions."

Christopher Rutledge— AASA's Mining and Extractives Coordinator says, "The state and mining companies must be held to account and the People's Mining Charter, which will be adopted a day before the launch, calls for democratic inclusion as the only way to ensure accountability. The Charter displays the power and resilience of mining affected communities and sends a clear message that they won't be silenced by capital and by any complicit state apparatus."

AASA and MACUA have over the last year consulted with and obtained a mandate from over 150 mining affected communities, which seek to affirm that, "Communities living near mining operations, both rural and urban, bear the brunt of the negative environmental and socio-economic impacts of mining activities. Their voices are often not heard in the decision-making processes around where and how mining should take place.

The People's Mining Charter will serve as a political programme around which mining affected communities will mobilise and engage mining companies and the state. It calls on the public to join them in demanding that there should be nothing about mining affected communities without their consent and involvement.