

To Honorable Deputy Minister of Police: Makhotso Magdeline MM Soty, Ms

CC Head of Office of the Deputy Minister of Police: Nomsa N Hani, Ms

CC; Personal Assistant: Thenjiwe T Kambule, Ms

We write to draw your attention to the failure of the policing system in the rural Eastern Cape to protect the community of Umgungundlovu from violence and intimidation. The community has been experiencing a wave of violence linked to efforts by a foreign multinational to mine the dunes of Xolobeni for rare metals, an operation that promises immense profits for some. Many in the community are opposed to the prospect of sand mining which they believe will destroy their livelihoods and destroy their way of life, whilst providing benefits to only a few.

The violence most recently culminated in the cold-blooded assassination of the chair of the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), Mr Sikhosiphi Radebe, himself an ex-MK soldier and fierce defender of the rights of the local community. The ACC has been leading opposition to the mining development. Mr Radebe was shot on the night of 22nd March 8 times by unknown men, who posed as policemen.

Mr Radebe's death did not come out of the blue. In 2003, Mr Mandoda Ndovela was killed after publicly criticising the mine. No-one has ever been brought to book for his murder. In December 2015, the village of Xolobeni witness a series of assaults, threats, shootings and attacks, resulting in the injury of at least 5 persons. Night-time attacks were conducted by unknown armed men on the home of the headwoman of Umgungundlovu.

A statement by Ms Nonhle Mbutuma (attached) indicates that the response of the police to that violence was to harass local activists and intimidate them, rather than seeking to find the culprits of the violence. Moreover, there were many instances that appeared to suggest that those responsible for the violence were operating with the tacit or explicit support of the police. Far from protecting the constitutional rights of the local residents, the police appeared to be acting at the behest of certain local leaders, who are in favour of the mining development. Men arrested and charged for the violence in December 2015 were released on bail and no restrictions placed on them. On Tuesday 22nd, Mr Radebe warned fellow activists of the existence of a hit list which included his name. Less than two hours later, he was shot dead. The community are not safe. Subsequently, at his funeral, mourners and journalists were attacked and injured.

We have seen you be an activist for justice and for a policing system that protects the poorest and most marginalised. Your interventions in Khayelitsha last month resulted in immediate action from the local police to realise the rights of a family living in an informal settlement so that they get the same treatment as a middle-class family in a wealthy urban area of Cape Town, when both families suffered the terrible murder of a child.

We appeal to you to exercise the same clarity in intervening to protect the rights of a rural community under threat and to make sure the SAPS in the area are part of the solution

rather than part of the problem. SAPS has a constitutional mandate create a safe and secure environment for all the people in South Africa. Please help make sure that the community of Umgungundlovu are able to see justice delivered and live without fear of violence and intimidation from shadowy forces.

Please investigate why the police are not protecting the community of Xolobeni and Umgungundlovu.

Please make sure they do their job and fulfill their constitutional mandate.

Please find the signed letter attached. I would be glad if you confirm receiving this email.

Your Sincerely

On Behalf of The People's Health Movement South Africa

Kathryn Stinson

PHM-SA Chair

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