



10 Years After the Marikana Massacre: Still no Justice

On August 16, the murdered South African miners will be remembered worldwide / Platinum importer BASF bears responsibility for human rights and environmental protection

Press release – 15 August 2022

On 16 August 2012, 34 miners were shot dead at the Marikana platinum mine in South Africa. Plough Back the Fruits (PBTF), the South African-European campaign, reminds on the 10th anniversary of the massacre that miners are still imprisoned and many survivors are still waiting for the promised compensation and an official apology from those responsible. The German chemical company BASF, the main importer of platinum from the Marikana mine, has looked the other way for too long, shirking responsibility for respecting human rights and environmental protection in its platinum supply chain.

Around the globe tomorrow, miners who were shot dead by South African police at the gates of the then Lonmin Marikana mine 10 years ago will be remembered for ending a strike for living wages and decent living conditions. In South Africa, events commemorating the massacre are being held in Johannesburg, Cape Town and other places (<https://awethu.amandla.mobi/calendars/10th-anniversary-marikana-events>).

The then-incumbent South African **Anglican Bishop of Pretoria, Dr Johannes Seoka**, who had spent decades campaigning for the rights of workers in the mining industry, had travelled to Marikana on 16 August 2012 to try to prevent the looming disaster and mediate between the striking miners and Lonmin management - to no avail. "There was no doubt that both Lonmin and the police were taking a hard line against the strikers, calling them 'criminals and murderers'," Seoka recalls in his book "Marikana - An Open Wound" (<https://www.kasa.de/publikationen/detail/marikana-eine-offene-wunde-1/>), published to mark the 10th anniversary of the massacre. Now retired, Bishop Seoka, one of the spokespersons for Plough Back the Fruits, demands that all those responsible at the time be held accountable: "It is a scandal that ten years after the massacre, still nothing has happened."

"The situation of the people in Marikana has hardly changed in the past ten years," reports **Thumeka Magwangqana** from the **women's group Sinethemba** in Marikana. "Like all mining communities, the surrounding communities of the platinum mine suffer disproportionately from tuberculosis and silicosis as a result of platinum mining. Their provision of adequate houses, electricity, water and sanitation systems remains worrisome. Even the salaries of those who work in the mine remain at 2012 levels when inflation is taken into account. Thumeka Magwangqana is also appealing to the South African government to release the miners who are still in prison. "I know the trauma they are going through."

"The platinum business continues and is booming," explains **Maren Grimm** from the **Plough Back the Fruits** campaign. The beneficiary is now the mining company Sibanye Stillwater, to which Lonmin was sold in 2019 for 226 million US dollars. The company has the worst health and safety record in the South African mining sector. Despite lip service to the contrary, Sibanye Stillwater has not faced up to the tragic legacy of the massacre." Sibanye Stillwater is one of the largest players in the world platinum market, listed in the US and South Africa. "We call on BASF to end its 'business as usual' and use its market power to push its business partner in South Africa to make fundamental changes."

In the UK, the **Marikana Solidarity Collective** is holding a vigil in honour of those killed in London outside the South African High Commission (4.30pm - 6pm, Trafalgar Square, London). **Richard Solly**, coordinator of the **London Mining Network**, said, "London continues to be at the centre of the injustices faced by the families in Marikana. Profits from Marikana continue to flow into the City of London. Following the takeover by Sibanye Stillwater, former Lonmin investors held 9% of Sibanye Stillwater shares, including London-based asset management firms such as Investec, Majedie and Ninety One. The takeover was carried out despite objections from the South African miners' union AMCU and has led to the loss of thousands of jobs. The biggest buyer of Marikana's platinum, chemical giant BASF, also has up to 35 operations in the UK and 9% of its shares are owned by British and Irish investors. Sibanye Stillwater's attempt to avoid responsibility cannot go unchallenged.

<https://londonminingnetwork.org/2022/08/10-anniversary-marikana/>

For **Barbara Müller**, there are several reasons why **KEESA**, the **Swiss Campaign for Debt Relief and Redress in Southern Africa** is involved with Plough Back the Fruits. "As the world's most important commodity trading centre, Swiss corporations profit from exploitative conditions in mines like Marikana. Switzerland owes this position not least to the collaboration of banks (Goldpool) and commodity traders like Marc Rich (origin of Glencore and Trafigura) with the former South African Apartheid regime. In addition, a representative of Xstrata, a Zug-based company, sat on the board of Lonmin and was partly responsible for the company refusing to talk to the miners. It is regrettable that the Corporate Responsibility Initiative, supported by a broad coalition, which wanted to oblige internationally active extractive companies worldwide to respect human rights and protect the environment, very narrowly failed in a referendum in 2020," said the KEESA activist.

"However, there were also successes," says **Markus Dufner** of the **Association of Ethical Shareholders Germany**. "Our campaign made it possible for Bishop Seoka, as well as widows of killed miners and a miner who survived the massacre with serious injuries, to speak at general meetings of BASF and Lonmin since 2015. Until then, the German chemical company had kept quiet about the Marikana massacre. It was not until Plough Back the Fruits that shareholders and a wider public became aware that BASF was importing platinum from South Africa to produce catalysts for the German car industry. This made it clear that BASF also bears responsibility for respecting human rights in the supply chain. Last but not least, the Marikana case contributed to the German Parliament passing a supply chain law in 2021."

Dr Boniface Mabanza, **Ecumenical Services on Southern Africa (KASA)**, will also participate in the rally tomorrow at 12 noon at the BASF factory site (Gate 2) in Ludwigshafen.

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Publications and further information on the campaign and the 10th anniversary of the massacre can be found at: <https://www.kritischeaktionaere.de/kampagne-plough-back-the-fruits/10-jahre-nach-dem-massaker-von-marikana-immer-noch-keine-gerechtigkeit/>

Supporting organisations of the campaign:

- [Bench Marks Foundation](#)
- [Marikana Support Group](#) / Marikana Solidarity Collective
- Widows of Marikana
- [Brot für die Welt](#)
- [Dachverband der Kritischen Aktionärinnen und Aktionäre](#)
- [KASA – Kirchliche Arbeitsstelle Südliches Afrika](#)
- [KEESA – Kampagne für Entschädigung und Entschuldung im Südlichen Afrika](#)
- [London Mining Network](#)
- [SOLIFONDS](#)

Events on 16 August 2022

- 12:00 Rally with Plough Back the Fruits and other non-governmental organisations in Ludwigshafen in front of the BASF plant, Gate 2

- 16:30 - 18:00 10 Years Since the Marikana Massacre: Still No Justice, Still No Peace. Vigil in front of the High Commission of South Africa, Trafalgar Square, London, Marikana Solidarity Collective and London Mining Network; <https://londonminingnetwork.org/2022/08/10-anniversary-marikana/>

In South Africa, events commemorating the massacre are taking place in Johannesburg, Cape Town and other locations: <https://awethu.amandla.mobi/calendars/10th-anniversary-marikana-events>.

Publications

- Jo Seoka, Marikana - An Open Wound. The struggle for fair wages and compensation after the 2021 massacre, Werkstatt Ökonomie, Heidelberg July 2022
(<https://www.kasa.de/aktuell/detail/kasa-online-book-launch-marikana-eine-offene-wunde/>; <http://basflonmin.com/home/de/marikana-an-open-wound/>)

Anthology "For example BASF - On Corporate Power and Human Rights"

<https://www.kritischeaktionaere.de/en/ionmin-plc/african-raw-materials-for-germany-basf-as-an-example-of-supply-chain-responsibility/>

- Brot für die Welt, study "Waiting for Justice: Marikana's Continuities and Discontinuities a Decade after the Massacre", Aug 2022, online version to be published on 15 Aug.

Exhibitions

- Plough Back the Fruits: An excerpt of the exhibition Marikana Ten Years On (National Arts Festival in Makhanda, mid-2022) has appeared at Marikana from 10 August 2022 as part of Marikana Uncensored (see Upcoming Events). https://www.bench-marks.org.za/10-years-since-marikana-the-death-of-south-african-innocence/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=10-years-since-marikana-the-death-of-south-african-innocence

- We will make our voices heard! Marikana widows fight for justice ...

<https://www.kasa.de/service/ausstellungen/detail-ausstellungen/wir-werden-uns-gehoer-verschaffen-die-witwen-von-marikana-kaempfen-fuer-gerechtigkeit/>