

# Nine Years On, Still No Justice for the Dead of Marikana

*On the 9th Anniversary of the Marikana Massacre, campaigners gather in remembrance of the dead and in solidarity with those still fighting for justice.*

LONDON, UK, August 16, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On 16th August 2012, the South African Police shot dead 34 platinum rock drillers on strike for a living wage from Lonmin (London Mining). Lonmin used to be a subsidiary of Lonrho, a notorious company founded during Cecil Rhodes' brutal white supremacist occupation of southern Africa.

The miners were on strike for a wage of R12,500 a month. Lonmin, the worst payer in the platinum industry, refused to even negotiate. Instead it urged the ANC government to use police force to break the strike. The police dutifully shot 17 miners, with no warning. They hunted down and shot another 17 miners in cold blood.



A protester at the Marikana strike, nine years ago

The day before the massacre, Lonmin board member and current president of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa urged ministers to take 'concomitant action' against the strikers. The decision to

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*Dr Andy Higginbottom*

protect profits at the expense of Black lives speaks volumes about the colonial history of mining in South Africa. Although Lonmin may have sold their operations, profits from Marikana continue to flow to the City of London. Former Lonmin investors hold 9% of Sibanye-Stillwater shares and London-based asset management funds, including Investec, Majedie and Ninety One, remain investors in the new company. Sibanye has the worst health and safety record in South Africa's mining sector. 20

mineworkers died in its mines in the first six months of 2018. The takeover went ahead in 2019 despite objections from the mineworkers' union AMCU and has led to over 5,000 job losses. The largest consumer of Marikana's platinum, giant industrial chemical company BASF, has up to 35 subsidiaries in the UK and 9% of its shares owned by British and Irish investors.

While Sibanye has launched a 'community renewal' project in Marikana, local and international campaigners are calling for more. They want to see justice done. Despite a subsequent commission into police action that demonstrated a clear chain of command from the ANC government to police commissioners to operational commanders, no minister or police officer has ever been convicted for the killings. President Cyril Ramaphosa has never visited Marikana or met with the workers' widows to apologise. London based financiers continue to profit from the mine and have never been held to account.

Dr Andy Higginbottom, one of the organisers of the vigil, said:

"The lives of African mineworkers matter. They were killed because a British company Lonmin refused to pay them a living wage.

To this day London based mining companies and financiers are raking in profits from South Africa. To this day African women and communities are fighting dispossession of their lands. We are here today in solidarity with their social resistance.

In remembering the miners killed by the police in 2012 we are also looking forward to breaking Rhodes legacy of racism and exploitation."

Demonstrators at Monday's vigil will be reading aloud the names of the miners killed on the day. They will be carrying yellow flowers, the symbol of the Marikana Solidarity Campaign. The vigil is organised by Marikana Solidarity Collective and sponsored by London Mining Network, Pan Afrikan Social Community Forum, Women of Colour GWS, and Caribbean Labour Solidarity.

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