



## Media statement by the Bench Marks Foundation

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### **Bishop slams Africa Mining Vision**

Cape Town, Tuesday 7 February 2017

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Africa Mining Vision (AMV) represents the voice of foreign investors, and does not speak on behalf of the people of Africa, the chairperson of the Bench Marks Foundation, Bishop Jo Seoka, told the Alternative Mining Indaba in Cape Town today.

Speaking at a panel discussion on the AMV, Bishop Seoka said that the AMV was paternalistic and condescending.

“Powerful institutions and people, such as heads of state, have worked on the AMV. But heads of state don’t want to talk to us. So this vision represents an intervention on behalf of foreign investors.

“It does not take Africa beyond mining. What is there after mining?

“It does not challenge the foreign ownership of mines in Africa. These resources are God-given to Africa – yet Africans are not benefitting from that. It does not address global warming or climate change, nor issues confronting women and children.

“It calls for conditions conducive to foreign investment and speeds up the process of exploitation of our resources,” the Bishop said.

He challenged delegates to think strategically as to how they present the opposite to those whose efforts are based on the profit motive.

There was a need for development, but this must be done in cooperation with people in communities, the Bishop said.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Africa Mining Vision was adopted by heads of state in February 2009 following a meeting in October 2008 of African ministers responsible for mineral resources development. A concrete action plan for implementing the AMV was approved in December 2011.

The ECA says: “It is Africa’s own response to tackling the paradox of great mineral wealth existing side by side with pervasive poverty.”

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Bench Marks Foundation is an independent non-governmental organisation mandated by churches to monitor the practices of multi-national corporations to

- ensure they respect human rights;
- protect the environment;
- ensure that profit-making is not done at the expense of other interest groups; and
- ensure that those most negatively impacted upon are heard, protected and accommodated within the business plans of the corporations.

The Foundation was launched in 2001 by the Rt Rev Dr Jo Seoka who chairs the organisation and by member churches of the SACC.

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