



## Media statement by the Bench Marks Foundation

### Lonmin shareholders to be challenged on Marikana obligations

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shareholders of mining company Lonmin will this week face a challenge from the Bench Marks Foundation to compel the company to meet its obligations in respect of workers' needs by the fifth anniversary of the Marikana massacre on 16 August 2017.

Bishop Jo Seoka, chairman of the Bench Marks Foundation, will attend the annual general meeting of the London-listed company on Thursday 26 January to lobby institutional shareholders to commit to divesting from Lonmin should it fail to meet the 16 August deadline.

These demands include that Lonmin:

- Implement a living wage for mine workers of R12 500 per month;
- Comprehensively address the housing needs of workers, 33 000 of whom live in informal housing without access to electricity, basic sanitation services or running water; and
- Compensate the widows, orphans and injured survivors, which Bench Marks Foundation argues should be in the region of 20 years' wages that workers would have earned had they not been killed or critically injured during the massacre.

Bishop Seoka said: "My attendance at Lonmin AGM is to expose the lie that Lonmin has fulfilled its obligations of meeting workers' housing needs, improving their living conditions, or implementing a living wage.

"We will not rest until justice is achieved for the massacred, arrested and the widows and orphans left behind.

"We call on investors at the Lonmin AGM to compel the company to address our demands and to set a time limit of 16 August 2017 to comply. Should this not happen, we will call for international solidarity to have Lonmin's mining licence revoked, as per President Jacob Zuma's statement in December 2016."

Prior to the AGM, Bishop Seoka will join international solidarity groups in a protest to be held outside the Lonmin AGM in London.

The protest will take the form of a sombre tribute to the 34 mine workers killed by South African police in August 2012, with images of each of the murdered miners and a reading of their names, punctuated by gunshot sound effects.

It has been jointly organised by Marikana Miners Solidarity Group, Plough Back the Fruits, London Mining Network and Bench Marks Foundation.

The Bench Marks Foundation has previously proposed to both the South African government and Lonmin that they consider subsidised revolving stock accommodation or subsidised rental accommodation for workers. This is because Lonmin’s plan for housing is to get workers to buy their own houses and stand as security.

Bench Marks has also demanded that Lonmin addresses the squalid conditions in which its workers live by ensuring adequate access to water, proper sewerage and sources to energy.

Although Lonmin has employed many of the widows of the killed miners and offered school support for children, Bench Marks Foundation says this is entirely inadequate and perpetuates the suffering of widows.

Ntombizolile Mosebetsane, a widow of the massacre, says: “My husband was killed at the Marikana massacre. I am now working in a job at Lonmin cleaning their yard, working outside in the hot sun, windy, breathing that polluted dust blowing around, for the very company that made sure my husband died. I am learning no skills doing this work that will make my life better. Lonmin tells me that this job is a kind offer so that I can earn the money that my husband worked for in their mines, so that I can feed my children.”

ENDS

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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