



Media Statement by Bench Marks Foundation

## State must financially support needy parties in Farlam Commission

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17 July 2013

### For immediate release

It is unforgivable that there has been a lack of financial support for the mineworkers who were wounded and arrested during the Marikana massacre last year, resulting in them being unable to take part in the Farlam Commission. This applies also to families of the miners who were killed during the massacre.

So says Chairperson of the Bench Marks Foundation, Bishop Jo Seoka, who was closely involved in bringing about stability in the immediate post-Marikana period.

Having been involved in trying to resolve the impasse between the miners and the mines, Seoka believes that the absence of state funding for all parties involved in the events that unfolded on 16 August 2012 indicates the paucity of commitment by government to get to the bottom of what actually happened on that fateful day.

“Financial support has only been extended to a select few,” says Seoka. “While some parties, such as the minister of police, have the means to hire a senior advocate to sit and listen to the proceedings due to state support, others are unable to have legal representation at all due to lack of funds.

“Our hope is that the application brought by Advocate Dali Mpofu for funding from the state will be successful so that he can continue to represent the mineworkers who were wounded and arrested. If not, this will be seen by some that government has taken sides and wants an outcome that exonerates the police and itself for what happened.”

Seoka said that for justice to prevail, workers and communities need adequate representation. This demands an impartial government role.

“At this stage, this impartiality is not clearly evident. How can the Farlam Commission continue without representation for the mineworkers, or for the families of the mineworkers who were killed? Its credibility will be severely jeopardised,” he said.

The Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) announced that it would join the family members of the miners who were killed in Marikana in temporarily withdrawing from the Marikana Commission until the judgment is handed down. Both parties temporarily withdrew from the hearing on 16 July 2013.

Go to [www.bench-marks.org.za](http://www.bench-marks.org.za) to view other articles and videos on Marikana or contact Bench Marks on 011 832 1743.

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**Notes to editors:**

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.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu launched the Foundation in 2001 and the Rt Rev Dr Jo Seoka chairs the organisation.