



PRESS RELEASE

14 January 2013: For immediate release

LAW SOCIETY CALLS ON CAPE ATTORNEYS TO ASSIST TO RESOLVE FARM LABOUR CONFLICT

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) calls on attorneys in the Western Cape to make their services and skills available to assist farmworkers, farm owners and the other related stakeholders to reach an acceptable resolution to the labour conflict in the Cape winelands. 'We are mindful of the tragic outcome of the Marikana incident and must be certain not to repeat the mistakes by allowing unrest and conflicts to remain unresolved,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons Krish Govender and Jan Stemmett.

Unrepresented farm workers in need of legal representation should be assisted on a *pro bono* basis.

They add: 'Attorneys are trained to mediate in labour conflict situations. They can make their skills and offices available to bring the various parties to the negotiating table and facilitate the discussions while providing the correct and relevant legal advice to support the parties. In this way we will be assured that the rule of law and due process are respected and followed.'

Mr Govender and Mr Stemmett warn that the current situation could easily extend the conflict well beyond the current nature of the dispute. There are reports that people with grievances outside the labour dispute may be escalating the conflict. 'Attorneys can assist in separating the issues and ensuring that they are resolved in appropriate forums and with acceptable and legitimate legal outcomes.'

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA, KRISH GOVENDER AND JAN STEMMETT

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Editor's note:

The Law Society of South Africa brings together its six constituent members – the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers – in representing South Africa's 21 200 attorneys and 5 000 candidate attorneys.