



LAW SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA

PRESS RELEASE

17 August 2012: For immediate release

LAW SOCIETY EXPRESSES GRAVE CONCERN AT MARIKANA VIOLENCE

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) LSSA expresses grave concern at the use of live ammunition against workers involved in the strike at Lonmin Mines at Marikana yesterday. The consequent loss of lives is shocking. 'The LSSA extends its deepest condolences to the families of the deceased and hopes that the many wounded will recover. These workers have been the victims of an escalating breakdown in conflict resolution, particularly in the mining industry, brought about by all the stakeholders who placed vested interests over the lives of workers. This breakdown is symptomatic of our society and body politic in South Africa,' say LSSA Co-Chairpersons Krish Govender and Jan Stemmett.

They add: 'In the age of our constitutional democracy – where we ought to rely on the Rule of Law to resolve conflicts – it is becoming increasingly difficult to believe that South Africa, with all its great achievements over the past eighteen years, has the requisite capability, compassion, will and commitment to resolve the many conflicts that are being waged daily in the streets of our country as a result of failure within political organisations, trade unions, big businesses and communities. Violence, vigilantism, corruption, xenophobia, disrespect for the law and law enforcement agencies, as well as greed for power, influence and wealth are all collectively destroying the values of nation building, patriotism and respect for law and order. These are the warning signs of a failing State.'

There is a growing need for all the past and present leaders of all stakeholders – including political parties, workers' unions, NGOs, religious bodies, gender lobby groups, youth groups, community-based organisations, professional and business organisations, academics with socio-political and economic skills – to come together to find common ground in order to reverse the growing damage to our society and country that we see around us. 'The LSSA supports any call for a fresh approach to finding solutions to our present ills as the existing institutions carry the greatest responsibility for these crises,' say Mr Govender and Mr Stemmett.

The future of South Africa lies in the hands of all its people to once again forge unity, non-racialism, non-sexism, justice, peace and prosperity in a non-exploitative and clean environment and State.

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 21 000 attorneys and 5 000 candidate attorneys.