

**Media Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**Friday, 02 November 2012**

**North West Legislature Speaker Convened Workers' Seminar for Miners, Employers and Community**

On Wednesday, October 31, the Speaker of the North West Provincial Legislature, (NWPL) Hon. Supra Mahumapelo met with the mining houses, municipalities, Trade unions, Tribal Authorities and the community in a Workers' seminar at Madibeng Local Municipality Chambers in Brits.

The purpose of the seminar themed; **“Strengthening relationships among mine owners, workers, community, and government for sustainable economic development in the Province”**, was to encourage a dialogue amongst the stakeholders in the mining sector in order to minimize conflicts similar to those experienced in the mining sector recently.

The Speaker of the NWPL, Hon. Supra Mahumapelo together with the Mayor of the Madibeng Local Municipality, Ms Poppy Mogongou shared the same vision of putting all heads together to ensure that all citizens of South Africa live and enjoy a better life, making sure that the economy of this province grows despite its challenges.

“Mining is one of the sources for the livelihood of this province and critical in the economy, we need to talk and form a relationship that is sound between stakeholders, so that the future generations can benefit on the work we do today”, said Hon. Mahumapelo

Ms. Poppy Magongwa mentioned that the massacre that occurred at Wonderkop on 16 August 2012, where 34 miners were killed during a strike for better wages and living conditions should never repeat itself and as the Mayor she will ensure that there is sustainability and that “we let our people benefit in our democratic country”.

“Wonderkop houses more than five times its population of what it can bare, where there is lack of water, sanitation, poor air quality and degradation of the environment that tell a tale of unfulfilled promises,” said Ms. Magongwa.

The same living conditions apply to other nearby communities surrounded by most of the mining houses according to Dr. Livingstone Makondo, the Senior Educational Development Practitioner at the University of Venda.

“Miners still live in hostels, more than 80 miners still share a shower, and some live in tin shacks just to have some privacy, even if there is no running water and still use the open field as a toilet; on the other hand the mining elites continue to reap profits, they need to change or face the music, mines must build family units for workers, improve conditions and facilitate home ownership, it cannot be just the role of government to improve people’s lives,” said Mr. Makondo

Ms. Kgomotso Tshaka from Wesizwe Bakubung Platinum mines mentioned that the mine has formulated a strategic plan to ensure that there is fruitful relationship between miners and its employer, by forging dialogue sessions between its stakeholders.

“We aim for a constructive and a more collaborative relationship between Local and Regional Government to tackle on the issues of communities, in order to improve outcomes, policy, decision-making processes, knowledge, cooperation and innovation, and ultimately delivery of business objectives,” said Ms. Tshaka

Mr. Hugh Eiser, the Attorney for Bapo ba ga Mogale Traditional Leadership shared a different view with the relationship they have with Mining Houses, more especially with Lonmin Mines.

He mentioned that there is a serious challenge of political interference by senior politicians in the North West Government which undermines the sound stable environment for the conduct of mining.

“This started in September 2011, when the then MEC demanded elections throughout the province, but refused to sanction them in the Community, the

government is going as far as to oppose applications by the Community to force it to hold elections,” said Mr. Eiser.

“Lonmin has seized the opportunity provided by this governance gap and the misconduct of the Premier and NWG to prejudice the Community, it is aggravating its disgraceful conduct by co-operating with the Premier in perpetuating the governance vacuum, by supporting the Premier in delaying the elections even further,” said Mr. Eiser.

All stakeholders could not respond as they did not attend the meeting.

Hon. Hlomane Chauke was not impressed by the non-attendance of the CEOs of the mining companies saying that it is a clear sign that they undermine them and their authority.

“We are very key people in government, we have a situation in the province and we need to be taking critical decisions in terms of how we solve this crisis at the mining industry, people are being killed every day, and the affected mining authorities choose to defy the Speaker of the Legislature when he has called them, it is a clear sign of undermining the Legislature and its authority,” said Hon. Chauke.

Hon. Mahumapelo recommended that a full report on the Bapo ba Mogale will be raised with the Legislature through the Standing Committee on Provincial Public Accounts, where all issues will be followed up, following a debate.

“We will also investigate the so-called “D” account where all royalties belonging to the community are deposited into, we must be unpopular and hold those accountable responsible, we will track on all issues, be on the website indicating progress on issues that have been raised,

“We will monitor challenges and progress on all mining industries, community and traditional houses monthly, lastly there is nobody in the Constitution who can stall the election of the Tribal Council, no one! We will make sure that those elections take place as part of oversight,” said Hon. Mahumapelo.