

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

Apartheid-era Murder Charges Against 270 Miners "Absurd"

Brussels, 31 August 2012 (ITUC OnLine): The laying of murder charges against 270 South African miners under a common purpose law notorious during the apartheid era is absurd, according to the ITUC. Prosecutors announced the charges on 30 August, after 34 workers were killed confronting police at the Marikana platinum mine two weeks ago.

"The use of this common purpose law is simply unacceptable, and effectively involves collective punishment which has no place in post-apartheid South Africa. The authorities need to ensure instead that the rule of law is properly applied, and that the underlying causes of the mounting discontent, in particular rising inequality, are addressed," said ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow.

The ITUC stands with COSATU and their leader Zweli Vavi who condemns the actions of police in charging mine workers for the killing of their colleagues and calls for the immediate release of the mine workers.

Cosatu General Secretary, Zweli Vavi said last night 'Charging mine workers for the killing of their own colleagues by the police goes beyond what words can describe. We demand their immediate release.'

The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 153 countries and territories and has 308 national affiliates.

Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org> and <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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