



## **COSATU condemns murder charges**

The Congress of South African Trade Unions is absolutely outraged at the decision of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to charge the 270 arrested Marikana mineworkers with the murder and attempted murder of their 34 fellow workers who were shot dead and the 78 who were injured on 16 August 2012.

The NPA should have waited for the findings of the Judicial Commission of Enquiry, which is tasked with uncovering the truth of what happened on 16 August and the preceding period, before jumping the gun and laying such charges. It is showing its contempt for the Enquiry and potentially jeopardising its independence and relevance by pre-judging the arrested workers on the basis of their own version of the facts.

COSATU also restates its concern over the allegations about the bad conditions in which the accused workers are being held in custody and demands that they should be released on bail immediately.

The Commission of Enquiry must be allowed to complete its work as quickly as possible, and must thoroughly examine all the very serious allegations being made in the media about the role of the police in the day's tragic events.

The NPA's decision also exposes again the lack of proper training within the SAPS and the NPA, who have arrested 270 people en masse, rather identifying specific individuals, finding evidence and charging them for specific offenses.

COSATU however calls for the SAPS to find those individuals responsible for the murder of scores of NUM members and other workers in the platinum mines since February 2012, and the 10 people, including the two police officers who were brutally murdered on the eve of the massacre.

COSATU is extremely concerned that about half of those arrested are not employees of Lonmin. The question that hopefully the Judicial Commission of Enquiry will ask is: Who are these people? Who brought them to that mountain and for what purpose?

*Patrick Craven (National Spokesperson)  
Congress of South African Trade Unions  
110 Jorissen Cnr Simmonds Street  
Braamfontein  
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