



## **ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS MEMORANDUM OF DEMANDS TO KUMBA IRON ORE MINE**

Wednesday, 22 June 2022

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), an organisation which represents the working class, the poor, and the dispossessed masses of our people, presents this memorandum to Kumba Iron Ore Mine, here in the Northern Cape, as part of the greater struggle for the return of the means of production to the indigenous people of Africa.

The second Cardinal pillar of the EFF calls for “The Nationalisation of all mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy”. This demand bases itself on centuries of colonial dispossession and the abuse of African people for cheap, disposable, and exploitable labour, in order to steal the wealth from the soil of Africa.

The history of mining in South Africa is one that is characterised by the criminality of colonialism, the abuse of African labour, and the murder of our people who were buried in shallow graves – while diamonds, gold, iron ore, uranium, copper, and platinum were shipped off to profit a white-minority capitalist class.

Moreover, the mining sector, which has historically been controlled by the likes of Cecil John Rhodes, the Oppenheimers, and De Beers cartels, has stripped Africans of their dignity, and Africa of its mineral resources. In fact, the development and industrialisation of the Western World has been premised on the naked poverty and under-development of Africa, and Southern Africa in particular, in terms of mining.

Today, this mine forms part of the mining cartel that exploits cheap labour of African people, and even goes to an extent of murdering mineworkers, in defence of profits and super-exploitation.

It is a mining sector that exists in the midst of massive unemployment, poor provision of Infrastructure, housing, water, education and healthcare. As things stand, unemployment in South Africa sits at 35.3%, with 66.5% of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 either unemployed or outside of schooling. This means that over 3.4 million young people are either unemployed, or are not participating in any schooling or training.

Unemployment amongst African-Black women also stands at 42.4%, which is 4.2% of the national average.

Since 2019, which is when the money launderer and the Marikana assassin, Cyril Ramaphosa, became President, over 1.7 million people have lost their jobs. The government of the day, which sustains the profit-maximisation efforts and illicit financial flows of mines such as this one, has abandoned its responsibility to create jobs, and said that it is parasites such as Kumba Iron Ore Mine, that should create employment.

This is after promising jobs in the 2021 Local Government Elections, but just a few months later, the puppet of mines such as this one, told South Africans that he has no responsibility to create jobs.

Kumba Iron Ore Mine therefore stands as a participant and benefactor of the unemployment, suffering, and the exploitation of African people.

It is a verifiable fact that this mine, does not create jobs, and punishes those who dare demand human treatment and a living wage. It is also a verifiable fact that this mine undermines local business and participates in the monopolising of the trading and marketing industry and stifles dissent through racist dismissals.

In fact, due to the capitalist and racist practices of Kumba Iron Ore Mine;

- Emerging local black mining businesses struggle to access markets that are accessed by big companies like Kumba;

- Cosmetic and window-dressing transformation packages are provided to local black businesses, which are PR exercises which do not materially change the distribution of wealth in the sector;
- People in Mapoteng continue to live in poor conditions, with lack of housing, roads, water, and adequate healthcare;
- The health of the people of Mapoteng is deteriorating due to the red dust which could be avoided if the area were to have tar roads, and healthcare for lung-related illness was provided
- The people of Siyathemba were removed from their place in Dingleton with empty promises of a better life from Kumba;
- The Dingleton area is used by Kumba Iron Ore Mine to mine and make profit, and the people of Siyathemba have benefitted nothing after being displaced;
- The same goes for the people of John Taolo Gaetsewe (JTG) who do not benefit from the mining of Kumba Iron Ore Mine, which refuses to develop communities;
- Kumba Iron Ore Mine continues to marginalise black employees and discriminate against black managers who get fired almost every day for being sympathetic to the struggles of poor black people.
- The children of the people of Khathu and Kuruman are unemployed, are not in school, and are victims of severe alcohol abuse, while a mine in the area does nothing to improve their conditions, even though it makes millions from mining in the area;
- Kumba Iron Ore Mine owns and uses 80% of the railway infrastructure in the area, and refuses junior miners access to the rail line, a monopoly which undermines small and emerging miners, who are African in majority;
- In 2012/2013, Kumba Iron Ore Mine illegally and without following due process, dismissed 124-employees for going on strike, displaying intolerance and injustice for workers rights;

These are but some of the atrocities and exclusions practiced by Kumba Iron Ore Mine. The EFF, as the first respondent of the poor and neglected people of the Northern Cape therefore has the following demands. We demand that:

1. Kumba Iron Ore Mine help emerging and local companies, by either buying their products or assisting them with access to the markets they have monopolised
2. Kumba Iron Ore Mine should set aside genuine business opportunities packages for local SMMEs
3. Kumba Iron Ore Mine must commit to building a quality healthcare centre in the Mapoteng area, which will specialise in treating and curing severe lung-illnesses
4. The Kumba Iron Ore Mine must build schools and renovate the schools in Kuruman, and also provide training for the youth to capacitate them in mining engineering, electrical engineering, and skills related to absorbing the youth into the mining industry
5. The Kumba Iron Ore Mine must commit to creating a bursary and further establishing satellite campuses of the Sol Plaatjie University across the province, which will specialise in mining, agriculture, and water-infrastructure development
6. We demand the reinstatement of the 124 dismissed employees who were dismissed in 2012/2013, coupled with compensation
7. A provision must also be made for compensating those who are unable to return to work owing to being deceased, approaching pension, and/or those who are currently on pension

We make these demands in honour of the millions of Africans who have died in mineshafts, and denied the opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labour and the mineral wealth of their land.

These demands are made in honour of Mgineni “Mambush” Noki and the 34-miners who were slain in defence of profit by the Cyril Ramaphosa and the ANC government.

We make these demands in salutation to the brave people of Xolobeni in the Eastern Cape, who continue to resist imperialism from seeking to profit from their indigenous and ancestral land.

We make these demands in solidarity and pride with the workers of Sibanye-Stillwater mines who registered a victory of a 6.3% increase over a three-year period of their salaries.

We send strength to the workers and widows of Marikana, and call on them to remain courageous and continue to fight for reparations, as they are doing in the civil case against Cyril Ramaphosa for the murder of workers in Marikana in 2012.

The EFF expects a response to all these demands within 14-working days. If there is no believable and practical response within the 14 days, we will as the leadership of the EFF, outline a clear and practical programme on how we will undermine and disrupt the mining cartel all across the Platinum-Belt and the mining sector.

**ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

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