



MEDIA STATEMENT

TO : ALL MEDIA
EMBARGO : IMMEDIATE

DR ZWELI MKHIZE'S STATEMENT ON THE EVENTS AT LONMIN MINE

Pietermaritzburg, 23 August 2012: KwaZulu-Natal Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize has expressed his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the provincial government to the bereaved families following the tragic incidents at the Lonmin Platinum Mine at Marikana, in the North West Province.

"While we acknowledge the constitutional right to freedom of speech, we appeal for restraint during this difficult period. The inflammatory commentary and vitriolic rhetoric that we have seen over the past few days are like setting wood on fire."

"The mining industry and the economy of the country as a whole have been hit hard by this disaster. Coupled with this is the potential loss of much needed foreign direct investments."

"Any posturing and venomous debate must be discouraged as it will distract us from dealing with the real challenges we are facing as a country."

"We commend the President of the Republic, His Excellency President J.G Zuma, for deploying an inter-ministerial team to assist the families during this difficult period."

"We also welcome the announcement by the President of the establishment of a commission of inquiry to look into this disaster."

"We believe that this is the only genuine process that will establish the truth and provide answers specifically to the families, and the people of South Africa in general. The commission must be allowed to do its work independently without any political interference or cheap point scoring."

"We invite religious leaders to pray for peace and stability during this week of mourning. This is the time to emphasize human values of respect, affection and caring for our fellow human beings."

"We appeal for the support of traditional leaders as well as elected and non-elected leadership. We must unite and rally together and raise a strong voice of disapproval of any inflammatory statement or violent actions."

Issued by the Office of the Premier.

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