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### **MACUA Will Today Apply for the Minister of Police to be Found in Contempt of a Court Order Granted in Favour of the Trapped Miners in Stilfontein**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 03 December 2024**

The Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA) will be in court today on an urgent basis to apply for an order of contempt of court against the Minister of Police, in particular.

On Sunday, 01 December 2024, the High Court of South Africa Gauteng Division granted an interim order in our favour. Honourable judge Janse van Nieuwenhuizen, ordered the police and other government departments that “...within two (2) hours of the court order being handed down, allow community members, charitable organisations and interested persons to, in an orderly manner, provide humanitarian aid including water, food, and medication to the artisanal miners trapped underground at Shaft 10 and 11 of the Buffelsfontein Gold Mine.”

However, the South African Police Service (SAPS) members stationed in Stilfontein, have placed arbitrary limitations on the quantity of food that community members intended to lower down to the artisanal miners trapped underground as well as the number of times food may be sent down. Furthermore, SAPS refused certain essential food items, including maize meal, canned fish and soup, to be lowered down at all without any explanation.

In addition to restricting certain food items, SAPS also refused to permit the delivery paracetamol and for the batteries of the miners' headlamps. And this is despite them, in the main application, detailing how dangerous conditions are underground, and thus the need for medication and batteries is justified.

As MACUA, we will not allow the law enforcement to break the law wilfully. They are supposed to enforce the law, especially the interim court order granted in our favour—not to violate the constitutional right and right to life of the trapped miners. It is unacceptable that the police can be allowed to use starvation and depriving food and other necessities as tools to bring about law enforcement.

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