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MACUA Will be Protesting at Sephaku Cement Mine After Betrayal and Refusal to Address Community Demands in North West Province

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The Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA) is launching a four-day occupation protest at Sephaku Cement Mine's Aganang Plant in the North West province. This follows the display of gross arrogance and refusal by the mine to engage with the grievances submitted last month by the Springbokpan and Bodibe branches alongside with the Itsoseng, Matile, Verdwaal and other affected communities.

The decision to occupy the mine gate is an attempt by marginalised and excluded communities to address the concerns raised by the communities and their dissatisfaction with the mine's failure to respond to the memorandum handed over on the 13th of June. The mine has remained arrogant in its engagements with the community, and insists on only dealing with people that it chooses to deal with even though the law requires the mine to engage "all interested and affected parties, including communities and individuals whose rights may be impacted by mining activities."

We have emphasised that the interests and issues of the entire community are not being adequately addressed, and yet the mine continues to disregard the concerns of the wider community. In our correspondence with the mine, we have advised them to respond to the issues raised in the memorandum in the form of a mass meeting. However, they seem to be reluctant to fully engage with all the issues raised by the communities and prefer to deal with those who are directly or indirectly benefiting from the mine while the majority of the community are excluded.

The protest will raise awareness about the community's concerns and demand a clear and committed action plan from the mine. MACUA aims to protest the mine's operations and to ensure that the community is heard and until they acknowledge MACUA-WAMUA as stakeholders and provide a comprehensive response to the memorandum that we submitted last month.

Additionally, we are also calling for a public meeting that includes all the communities affected by the mine's activities. This meeting will serve as a platform for the community to voice their grievances and engage directly with the mine management.

The community's grievances have not changed. We will not be submitting another memorandum, but we will be putting pressure on the mine for better communication and engagement. We believe that it is crucial to bring attention to these issues and to hold the mine accountable for their actions.

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