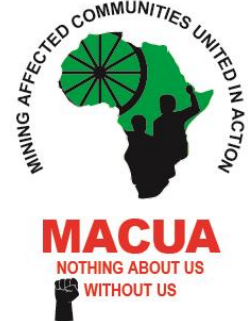


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## MACUA to Submit Landmark Report to the South African Human Rights Commission on the Stilfontein Massacre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 01 April 2025

### *Justice for Stilfontein is Justice for All Mining-Affected Communities*

Mining Affected Communities United in Action (MACUA) will formally submit a detailed and damning report to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) as part of the Commission's National Inquiry into Artisanal Mining and its impact on surrounding communities and the scope and tactics employed in Operation Vala Umgodi.

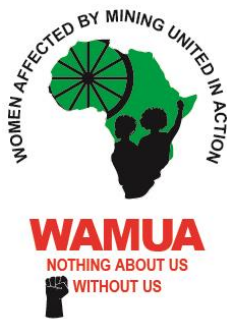
The submission documents the events of the Stilfontein Massacre and lays bare the broader constitutional crises of exclusion, state violence, and systemic failure that impacts on mining communities across South Africa.

The report focuses on the events at Shaft 11 of the Buffelsfontein Mine, and how the state engineered a crisis where hundreds of artisanal miners were trapped underground, denied humanitarian aid, and left to die from starvation and dehydration.

The submission draws from legal affidavits, forensic reports, court documents, survivor testimonies, and ministerial statements. It provides overwhelming evidence that state security forces, under political instruction to "smoke them out," systematically sealed off mine shafts, blocked food and medical aid, and sabotaged rescue efforts, despite knowing that the trapped miners had no alternative means of escape.

### **Among the key elements of our submission are:**

- 1. MACUA's Role in the Stilfontein Crisis:** Documenting MACUA's humanitarian and legal interventions to rescue miners and our long-suffering efforts to advocate for reform in the mining sector while faced with an indifferent, intransigent and at times arrogant legislature and government.

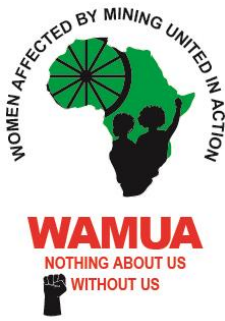


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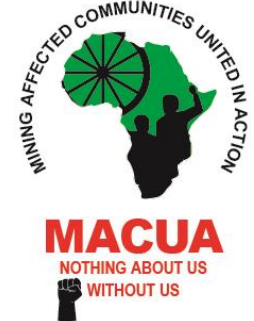


- 2. A Detailed Chronicle of the Massacre:** Drawing from legal affidavits, independent forensic evidence, and survivor testimonies, the report details how hundreds of miners were trapped underground and systematically denied life-saving aid, resulting in mass death by starvation.
- 3. Gross Human Rights Violations:** The deliberate decision taken by the state to use starvation as a law enforcement tool in violation of South Africa's Constitution, as well as in violation of a range of international conventions and International Human Rights standards, together with the intentional obstruction of humanitarian aid, the destruction of community rescue systems, and the arrest and intimidation of volunteers represent gross violations of rights protected under the South African Constitution, international human rights law, and anti-genocide conventions.
- 4. Media Complicity and Xenophobic Framing:** An analysis of how key South African media outlets undermined critical media principles and uncritically adopted state narratives, portraying miners as "illegal foreigners" and "criminals" and fueling public hostility. This discourse erased the reality that many were economic migrants and local workers seeking survival, and helped normalise state violence against the poor.
- 5. Institutional Failure of the SAHRC:** Despite receiving early warning signs, credible evidence, and repeated appeals from MACUA and other civil society organisations, the SAHRC failed to act decisively or in line with its constitutional mandate to secure redress. This pattern of inaction raises serious concerns about the institution's independence and effectiveness.
- 6. Systemic Policy and Governance Failures:** Drawing from our vast network of branches located across the country and from discussions at the 2025 Marginalised and Affected Community's (MAC) Summit, where over 200 delegates from various civil society organisations met to discuss the mining sector, this report highlights how the current mining regime entrenches corporate control while systematically excluding and oppressing affected communities. The continued failure to amend the MPRDA has left vulnerable survivalist artisanal miners criminalised and vulnerable.

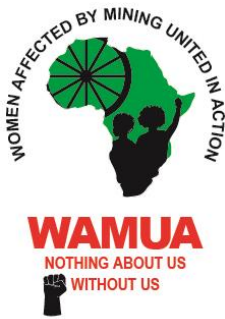


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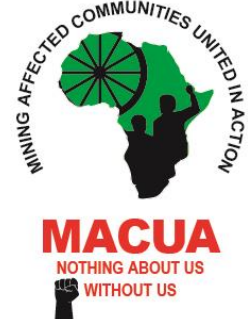


7. **Parliamentary Inaction:** the report highlights how despite mounting evidence and public outcry, Parliament has failed to address executive inaction and regulatory failures and have instead actively applauded the killing of more than 93 poor working-class men in Stilfontein, while completely ignoring the constitutional implications of a state which celebrates the extra judicial killings and murder of marginalised and excluded communities and while ignoring illicit mining linked to politically connected elites.
8. **State-Sanctioned Xenophobia:** The report also highlights how public statements by senior government officials advocating starvation as a tool of law enforcement amount to unconstitutional hate speech. These remarks not only violate constitutional protections but also encourage vigilante violence and scapegoating.
9. **Collusion Between the State and Mining Corporates:** This report documents how the SAPS, the National Prosecuting Authority, and mining corporations have colluded to protect elite interests while criminalising the poor and marginalised and showing how corporate offenders are rarely prosecuted, and police abuses against communities go unpunished.
10. **Survivor Testimonies:** First-hand accounts reveal the brutal conditions underground—starvation, illness, trauma—and the inhumane treatment of survivors, many of whom were shackled to hospital beds and some denied adequate medical care.
11. **Historical Parallels:** Drawing parallels to the Marikana Massacre (2012) and Apartheid-era crackdowns, this section situates Stilfontein within a longer history of violent suppression of Black mine workers and economic exclusion.



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## A Collective Call for Justice and Structural Change

This submission is more than a report—it is a collective act of resistance.

On Wednesday, 02 April 2025, a national delegation of mining-affected communities from MACUA branches across South Africa will converge on the SAHRC offices in Johannesburg to personally deliver the submission. This is not a protest, but a coordinated and dignified action—a unified call for justice and accountability.

The delegation acts under the theme: "**Justice for Stilfontein is Justice for All Mining-Affected Communities.**" It is rooted in the recognition that the crisis in Stilfontein is not an isolated incident—it is a reflection of what community's face across the country: decades of exclusion, economic marginalisation, criminalisation, and state neglect.

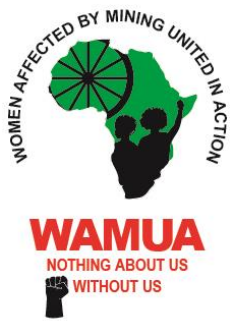
### As MACUA, we assert that:

“We need bold, structural changes in law and policy, and a radical shift in how communities are treated and included in decisions that directly impact their lives and lands.”

This submission is made with the hope that the SAHRC’s inquiry will serve as a catalyst—unlocking not only redress for those lost in Stilfontein, but setting in motion a process that reclaims dignity, voice, and justice for all mining-affected communities.

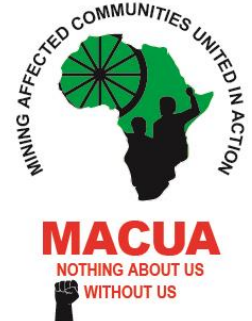
### Submission Delivery Details:

- **Date:** Wednesday, 02 April 2025
- **Time:** 12:00 PM
- **Location:** Sentinel House, Sunnyside Office Park, 32 Princess of Wales Terrace, Parktown, Johannesburg



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**The time for accountability is now.**

The South African state, its law enforcement agencies, and mining elites must be held responsible.

**Justice for Stilfontein is justice for all.**

For media enquiries and more information contact: MACUA National Administrator Sabelo Mnguni on 083 563 8985.