



NUMSA stands in solidarity with the Ghana Mineworkers Union in its battle to have three union leaders who were unfairly dismissed reinstated

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Press statement

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) stands in solidarity with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in Ghana, and its affiliate, the Ghana Mineworkers Union (GMWU), supported by organised labour who are demanding that three union leaders be immediately re-instated, after they were unfairly dismissed for exercising their democratic right to join a union. The union leaders were fired by Sunon Asogoli Power Ghana Limited. TUC is a trade union federation with 23 unions affiliated to it. Sunon Asogli is an independent power producer which produces electricity from a natural gas-powered thermal power station, which it supplies to the state-owned Ghana Electricity Company.

The National Labour Commission (NLC), is a statutory body which regulates employment relations in Ghana, and part of its mandate is to investigate and settle labour disputes. The parties appeared before it on the 4th of July and in that meeting, the company offered to reinstate the three union leaders, but it subsequently reneged on this promise.

The NLC has taken the matter to the High Court to get an order compelling Sunon Asogoli Power Ghana Limited, to implement the directive it issued for workers to be reinstated. The NLC agrees with the unions that the dismissals were not justified according to the law. The TUC and its affiliates were preparing for a nationwide strike on the 10th of July to protest over this issue. But it has decided to suspend the strike temporarily in order to allow for further engagement especially at the highest echelons of power.

The NUMSA General Secretary, comrade Irvin Jim says the union stands with the TUC and the GMWU,

“NUMSA condemns Sunon Asogoli Power Ghana Limited for union bashing and for violating workers’ rights. We support the demand that these workers must be re-instated immediately. By dismissing union leaders, the company is showing that it is intolerant to organized labour, and also to the principle of democratization of the workplace. Unions play an important role in ensuring workplace democracy and the removal of these leaders, undermines this.”

The TUC has temporarily suspended the strike action for now. However, if the dispute is not settled and these workers are not reinstated, it may resort to strike action in the near future.

A decision on the way forward will be communicated following a meeting with the all the unions in organised labour after meeting the Ghanaian government and Council of State. The TUC said in its statement that it had agreed to meet with all organised labour on the 17th of July *“to review feedback from the Government and Council of State to guide its next steps including the immediate enforcement of its original nationwide strike action”*.

Aluta continua!

The struggle continues!

Issued by Irvin Jim

NUMSA General Secretary

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