



NUM mulls protest action to highlight 'plight of disadvantaged'

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Published: 25th July 2008

The National Union of Mineworkers would embark on protest action later in 2008 to "highlight the plight of the disadvantaged", given the "continuous reluctance of the mining industry to transform".

The union said on Friday that the industry's senior management, professionals and artisans did not reflect the demographics of the country.

Interestingly, a recent Landelahni research survey into the mining sector showed that black representation in the mining industry at top management level more than doubled from 12,5% in 2001, to 30,6% in 2006 – ahead of the all industry average of 22,2%. It did, however, add that the single biggest shift took place at nonexecutive level, while in management, professional, skilled and semi-skilled categories, mining lagged behind the industry average.

The NUM's national executive committee (NEC) also reconfirmed that the NUM would fully participate in the August 6 national stay away, organised by Cosatu, unless there was a solution reached by the parties before that date.

In addition, the NUM reaffirmed its commitment towards 2010 World Cup and lauded the engagement facilitated by the Commission for Conciliation Mediation Arbitration between the NUM, Department of Labour, Department of Sports and Culture and construction companies to find a sustainable solution on the labour challenges at various 2010 construction sites in the country.

The union said it had readied itself for the Tripartite Safety Summit late in 2008, which would involve the mining industry, government and trade unions and has urged parties to ensure that the summit does not become yet another talk-show.

"The summit should produce concrete steps based on the outcome of the Presidential safety audit report."

The union would continue to take a day of mourning as a sign of respect and ubuntu, should a miner die at any operation.

"We caution employers who threaten to either dismiss or discipline our members for partaking in mourning their beloved colleagues," said NUM General Secretary **Frans Baleni**.

The NEC further noted the appointment of **Bobby Godsell** as chairperson of the Eskom board, and said that his appointment as chair was a welcome development.

"Bobby is capable in engaging stakeholders even in a very challenging environment," said Baleni.
