

Amadiba Crisis Committee 2015-07-22:

ACC asked DMR visitors to Xolobeni: "Does a man have the right to rape a woman if she continues to say No to marry him?"

On Tuesday 21 July, the executive of the Amadiba Crisis Committee met with three representatives of the DMR at the Komkhulu (Great Place) of the Amadiba coastal communities. The DMR had requested to meet the leaders of ACC. However, the news of the meeting had spread. More than 200 community members met up outside the hall in black T-shirts "Amadiba Crisis Committee - No Mining on Our Land!" and waiting for the report from the two hour engagement.

Our guests were Mr Bonga Qina, Director of Mineral Regulation of the DMR, Mr Azwi Mulaudzi, Regional Manager of DMR in EC, and Ms Deidre Thomson, the provincial DMR officer responsible for environment.

The delegation said they wanted to know "why you are against mining". Mr Samson Gampe (85), a veteran from the Pondo rebellion, asked if DMR always burn all papers they get and not read them. Mr Qina was informed that he was recognised. He was here 12 Sept 2008 when Mining Minister Buyelwa Sonjica came to apologise for the mining license granted two months earlier.

Mr Qina explained that mining must occur where there are minerals. He concluded his opening by stating "That is why I am here: that we must mine."

This is DMR. However, we made clear to the guests: There will be no mining on the Wild Coast. We are prepared to die protecting our land. If the government wants to kill us like they did at Marikana, let it be.

A memorable exchange

We asked repeatedly why the DMR keeps returning despite the community says no to mining.

Mr Qina stated that if a man asks a woman to marry her and she says no, he can and will keep asking her until she says yes.

Mr Qina then got the question: "If the man has the right to rape the woman if she continues to say no?"

Mr Qina answered "No". He was then again asked "But why are you then coming back?"

At the end Mr Qina announced that the Honourable Deputy Minister of Mining will visit the community. He is very welcome.

However, we told Buyelwa Sonjica everything in 2008. We have nothing new. We are prepared to go to court to defend our rights. SECTION 24 of the constitution says: "Right to safe environment and sustainable development". Eco-Tourism was destroyed by "Xolco" in 2005. Its revival today is blocked by the mining project. DMR and SANRAL both support **driving land rights holders from their land with mining and the coastal N2 Toll Road.**

WHO ARE STAKEHOLDERS?

Today, 22 July, DMR held another meeting at Estuary Hotel in Port Edward for "all stakeholders". DMR tried its best to keep us uninformed.

The land rights holders in the mining area are obviously not stakeholders.

DMR invited the Xolco Directors, the SAPS, the SA Council of Churches and the Municipality of Mbizana and its Mayor. Why did DMR hold two

separate meetings? Why one meeting with the community leaders and one for all others? We thought that SAPS, the Mbizana municipality and the Church were for us all.

We can see how all known state institutions in the area, both the municipality and the police, are used to push the mining agenda.

The police and the court in Mbizana have done nothing about the 3 May shooting in Xolobeni. Gunman and MRC employee Zamile Qunya stands above the law. Instead, the police have started to visit homes in the night and arrest community members. Last week they even took three 12 year boys from the soccer field in Mtentu to the Mpisi police station for interrogation.

We dare the DMR to make the mistake of granting a mining license for the Wild Coast. Do that. Come with whatever paper you want. We are ready. The responsibility will be yours. Ten years of allowing new applications have achieved only one thing in our communities: the beginning of bloodshed and the fall of our Chief Lunga Baleni into disgrace and ridicule, now a Director of "Xolco". Your continued efforts in this regard will only make things worse.

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*The Tribal Authority, Amadiba Administrative Area, Section 24 (coastal) and the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) are represented by **LRC** in Grahamstown and **Richard Spoor's office** in Johannesburg.*