



PRESS RELEASE

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RELEASE DATE:

24 APRIL 2019

STOP THE BANTUSTAN BILL STOP GWEDE MANTASHE VISIT TO XOLOBENI

Dateline: JOHANNESBURG, April, 24 — The Alliance for Rural Democracy, cross section of civil society organisations and of rural communities fighting against unjust laws (Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill, Traditional and Governance Framework Amendment Bill and the Traditional Courts Bill) and practices in the former homelands is gravely concerned about the uninvited visit of the national minister of mining Gwede Mantashe to Xolobeni. Rural communities from across South Africa are concerned about the disrespect for the rule of law evident in the minister's contemptuous intent in visiting Xolobeni despite the ruling of the Constitutional Court in the Bakgatla ba Kgafela case in which Acting Judge Xola Petse, noted that it is a case that strikes at the heart of the land question, Petse began by quoting Franz Fanon's *The wretched of the Earth* "For a colonised people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread, and above all, dignity." Petse added: "Thus, strip someone of their source of livelihood, and you strip them of their dignity too," and the Xolobeni case versus the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) in the High Court in Pretoria, in November 2019, in which the right of communities to SAY NO to mining, and for the global principle to free prior and informed consent was affirmed by Judge AC Basson.

Clearly Minister Mantashe has no respect for the law or for democracy, as he seeks to impose the will of foreign corporate mining interests on rural communities. His actions cannot be divorced from the Bantustan Bill (The Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill) in which his government seeks to enact under the pretext of empowering the Khoisan people, yet will

trap the majority of South Africans back into tribal Apartheid Bantustans as cheap labour for the mining industry for which Minister Mantashe seems to have an unhealthy affection. Rural communities stand with the people of Xolobeni against this latest provocation from Minister Mantashe. "We will not vote for any political party that supports the Bantustan Bill" says the ARD national coordination committee. Rural communities will not support any party that supports 19th Century style land grabs by foreign mining corporations. Rural communities, being farmers, are adept at identifying a wolf in sheepskin, a capitalist posing as a communist.

We call on the South African Communist Party to expel Mantashe who is identifying himself, through his actions as an enemy of the working class and or rural people. We call on the President of South Africa to dismiss Minister Mantashe as Minister of Mineral Resources, because of his disrespect for the rule of law, and his contempt for our struggle for land. We call on President Ramaphosa to tell the Minister of Mining to stay away from Xolobeni and to respect the rule of law.

Alliance for Rural Democracy and its partners stand united in support of the people of Xolobeni in their struggle to retain control of their land. Rural communities stand united in opposing the Bantustan Bill and call on all South Africans to join them in participatory mass action to affirm rural democracy. We are citizens and refuse to be subjects of a Bantustan system

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