



## Speech – Minerals Council event

<b>Purpose of the event</b>	Launch of the Minerals Council's Ex Mineworkers Occupational Lung Disease Guide
<b>Time and date</b>	Monday 24 March, 08:30-11:00
<b>Venue</b>	Johannesburg Country Club, 1 Napier Road, Auckland Park

The Director of the National Institute for Occupational Health, Prof Spo Kgalamono,  
 The Director of the Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases, Dr Nhlanhla Mtshali,  
 The Acting Secretary General of the NUM, Mr Mpho Phakedi and representatives of organised labour,  
 South African Miners Association, President, Mr Jabu Xaba,  
 The representatives from the Ministries of Labour and Consulate offices of Botswana, eSwatini, Mozambique and Lesotho  
 Senior Executives and officials from the Minerals Council and representatives from mining companies,  
 Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

It is an honour to welcome you all to the launch of the Ex-Mineworkers with Occupational Lung Disease booklet, which forms part of our ongoing efforts to support former mineworkers who are at risk of or have contracted occupational lung diseases. This booklet is designed to provide valuable guidance to ex-mineworkers on how to recognise occupational lung diseases, their rights as enshrined in the Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act, and how to access services related to their illness.

It also includes information on compensation for occupational lung diseases, other occupational diseases and pension payments. This is the first tangible output in the Minerals Council's Post Employment Care Framework which I will talk to later.



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Before we get into the details, I want to take a moment to reflect on World TB Day, which we are commemorating today. As the Chair of the Masoyise Health Programme, I am acutely aware of the challenge that TB presents to our industry and the very commendable strides we have made. At the Mine Health and Safety Council Summit in 2014, we committed to reducing TB incidence rates in the mining industry to below the South African average, a target we achieved as an industry in 2017.

However, much work remains to be done to address TB incidence rates in the gold sector, where it remains above target, and the urgent need for the industry to eliminate fatalities from TB. We regard any death from TB as preventable and will continue to improve our TB and HIV programmes to prevent these fatalities.

Globally, TB remains the world's leading infectious disease, with an estimated 10.8 million infections every year. In 2024, a record 8.16 million people were diagnosed with TB, in part due to private sector efforts globally to increase workplace screening and treatment efforts.

Please allow me to wear my Sibanye-Stillwater hat here for a moment. Today, we are one of five companies recognised by the World Economic Forum for our efforts to enhance TB care and prevention in the workplace. This is not only a testament to the work of Dr Jameson Malemela and his team but also speaks to the significant strides we have made as an industry to address this preventable and curable disease.

Despite our efforts, TB is still the major cause of death from occupational diseases and remains a very significant cause of death in former mineworkers, making the launch of this booklet on World TB Day very poignant.

By providing clear and accessible information, we aim to empower ex-mineworkers to claim their rightful compensation and benefits. This initiative would not have been possible without the collaboration of various stakeholders, including the Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Diseases, the Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases, and the National Institute for Occupational Health from the Department of Health, Organised Labour, Rand Mutual Assurance, Tshiamiso Trust, and mining houses. We are committed to working together



to address the challenges faced by ex-mineworkers and ensure they receive the support they deserve.

To date, the Tshiamiso Trust has disbursed over R2 billion to compensate former gold mineworkers and their families who meet the criteria for silicosis and work-related TB. Ensuring that all eligible ex-mineworkers can access the compensation they deserve would not have been possible without the continued collaboration of the stakeholders I've mentioned, as well as the labour-sending embassies from Mozambique, Lesotho, Botswana, eSwatini and others. We are committed to working together to address the challenges faced by ex-mineworkers and ensure they receive the support they deserve.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Minerals Council South Africa for their unwavering commitment to this cause. I also want to take this opportunity to extend a special thank you to Niks Lesufi, who will be retiring at the end of the month. Niks, you have been a tireless champion of the mining industry, and we will certainly miss your strategic thinking and immense contributions. I have no doubt that your next chapter will be very fulfilling and that you will continue to make a positive impact on South Africa.

The booklet is a small part of Niks's legacy, and is a testament to the industry's dedication to improving the lives of former mineworkers.

As we move forward, we are committed to the implementation of the Post-Employment Care Framework, which was approved by the Minerals Council's CEO Zero Harm Forum and has several key initiatives aimed at further supporting ex-mineworkers.

I will mention a few of these initiatives:

1. The development of a Health Surveillance database, which aims to give us comprehensive data on our employees as they leave the industry. This will address previous challenges where employees had no record or information on having worked in the industry and the occupational risks they faced. With a functional database, surveillance and compensation will be improved. This initiative will augment the current system of benefit medical



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examinations that are provided to ex-mineworkers, and lead to early detection and treatment of occupational diseases.

2. The Noise Repository, which is being established in collaboration with Rand Mutual Assurance. Its aim is to improve surveillance and the storage of audiograms used to monitor noise-induced hearing loss. These audiograms are essential for diagnosing impairment due to noise and consequently critical for compensation of employees for noise-induced hearing loss.

We also look forward to the review of the Occupational Diseases in Mines and Works Act, as this will provide a solid base for the establishment of a fair, equitable and sustainable legal platform for the provision of comprehensive services and compensation related to occupational lung diseases. This is long overdue.

I urge all stakeholders to continue their support and collaboration in this important endeavour. Let us work together to create a better future for our ex-mineworkers and their families.

Thank you once again for your presence and support. I look forward to a successful launch and the positive impact this booklet will have on the lives of ex-mineworkers.



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