

Three NUMSA shop steward leaders killed in South Africa

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The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) outrightly condemns what looks like a well-calculated and dastardly killing of its three shopsteward leaders late on Wednesday 06 August 2014 in Isithebe in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

The secretary of Isithebe Numsa Local Njabulo Ndebele, his deputy Sibonelo “John-John” Ntuli and Ntobeko Maphumulo, were killed in the family home of one of the slain shopstewards. A Numsa member Comrade Ntshebentshebe who works at Metso Minerals (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd and who was with the three at the time is critical in hospital as a result of the bullet shots he received.

Ndebele, Ntuli and Maphumulo were killed after they travelled back to Isithebe from a union meeting that took place earlier in Durban. The union has been reliably informed by witnesses that an unidentified car arrived where the four Numsa members were and opened fire, mainly targeting the three. All three died on the scene.

As Numsa, we are extremely concerned by the killing of these three local leaders. Their untimely and senseless death robs the union three of its best and promising worker and trade union leaders in our province. It removes three breadwinners from three families.

As a union while asserting our right to defend our members, we call on our members in Isithebe to remain calm and allow the police to investigate the circumstances that led to the killing of these three leaders. Furthermore, we appeal to anyone that might have information around this barbaric deed to approach the police and provide necessary information.

We call on the law enforcement agencies, particularly the police, to apprehend the culprits so that they can face the full might of the law. As Numsa, we extend our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the families of the three slain Numsa shopstewards. Numsa’s regional leadership will visit the families of three comrades to convey the union’s condolences.

We also promise to keep our fallen comrades in our memories by continuing to work for the ideals that they believed in and stood for. We know that working class people and Numsa activists will face similar incidents as we implement our December 2013 Special National Congress resolution to explore the establishment of an alternative Movement for Socialism.

We are saddened that the assassination of the three comrades takes place on the eve of the International Symposium of Left Parties and Movements that starts on 07 August and concludes on 10 August 2014. Both Ndebele and Ntuli, as members of the union’s Mbuyiselo Ngwenda Brigade were coming to the symposium. Their contributions at the symposium will be sorely missed.

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