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Mass murder through agonizing starvation, imprisonment and deportation of the "Zama-Zama" miners:

The ANC regime in South Africa once again shows its reactionary face

For six months, several thousand so-called "illegal" miners were cut off from food, water and electricity underground in a disused gold mine in South Africa. Under the eyes of the public. They were either to starve to death in agony or surrender. "We will smoke them out!" was the message from the ANC government. More than a hundred people have died of starvation so far. Many people are now rightly recalling the ANC police massacre of striking miners in Marikana in 2012.

A closer look reveals several things: firstly, it is a planned crime by the reactionary regime in power in South Africa. Secondly, it once again becomes particularly clear that today's ANC has nothing in common with the ANC that led the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa for decades, apart from the name. Thirdly, it is clear that it is nothing but a demagogic diversionary maneuver when the ANC government takes the lead in international campaigns against alleged "apartheid" in Israel. The aim is to divert attention from the conditions of exploitation and oppression that prevail in South Africa today and which are particularly blatant for the vast majority of the black population. Few also remember that the ANC regime is firmly on the side of the enemies of the Jews in Hamas, Iran and Turkey and what this has to do with the South African government's lawsuit before the ICJ in The Hague for alleged "genocide by Israel".

Starvation, imprisonment and deportation of the "Zama-Zama" miners

In South Africa (as in other countries dependent on imperialism) there are numerous mines that are no longer being exploited by the capitalists and have been closed down due to unprofitability. In such abandoned mines (there are over 6000 in South Africa alone), thousands of so-called "illegal" or "zama-zama" miners (which means "try your luck" in Zulu), estimated at 36,000, are trying to

get the last crumbs of metal out of the ground on their own, at great risk to their lives and equipped with their own makeshift tools and homemade explosives. Often enough, these are former miners who once worked for the mining companies and have since been made redundant. The official unemployment rate in South Africa currently stands at 33% and the cost of living is rising at the same time.

They are often members of the lowest strata of South Africa's proletarian class, migrant workers who come from

neighboring countries such as Mozambique or Zimbabwe. They are also subject to particular persecution as "paperless" and nationalist agitation as "criminal immigrants".

One of these abandoned mines is the gold mine near Stilfontein (around 140 km from Johannesburg). In August 2024, the ANC government began sealing off the mine with around 3,000 military and police personnel and imprisoning the "Zama-Zama" miners underground, cutting them off from food and water supplies. They were to be starved and "worn down" and taken out of the mines. Around 4,500 were underground at the time.

This state terror was accompanied by agitation from bourgeois politicians and the media: they were "illegal foreigners" who were "illegally mining our gold", it was said. "We will smoke them out", ANC Presidential Minister Ntshavheni incited in November 2024, when water and electricity lines were cut and elevator shafts and stairs were deliberately demolished. There was no "humanitarian solution" for "criminals", wrote ANC man and Mining Minister Mantashe during a site visit in January 2025. It was "an attack on our economy, mainly by foreigners." (JW, 16.01.2025)

The imprisoned miners have the "choice" between an agonizing death by starvation or imprisonment and deportation. Over 1900 have been taken out of the mines since August, arrested immediately and sentenced in summary proceedings, some of them deported straight to their countries of origin. A court-enforced "rescue operation" only began on January 13, 2025, after six months underground, without electricity, daylight or food.

According to estimates by the human rights organization MACUA (Mining Affected Communities United in Action), around 400 people are still in the mine shaft, 109 of whom (as of 14.01.25) are said to have been murdered by starvation. (taz, 15.01.2025)

The police massacre against strikers at the Marikana platinum mine in 2012

The terror against the "Zama-Zama" miners brings to mind how the ANC regime carried out a police massacre of

striking miners at the local platinum mine in Marikana in August 2012. At the time, 28,000 miners had gone on strike for higher wages and better working conditions.

On August 12, the police opened fire on around 3000 strikers. 34 strikers were murdered, some at close range, some shot from behind.

A further 78 were injured, some of them seriously. The report of the Farlam Commission of Inquiry later revealed that the massacre had been staged according to plan; the hearses had been ordered in advance.

The massacre of the strikers at the Marikana mine is regarded as a caesura in the public image of the ANC regime. It was the most murderous police operation since the suppression of the protests in Soweto in 1976 during apartheid.

ANC functionary Cyril Ramaphosa, the current President of South Africa, was also on the mine's supervisory board at the time. Days before the massacre, he demanded that the government take "tough measures against the strikers" (Cape Town News, 24.10.2024)

To this day, the murdering police officers and their direct employers have not been held accountable. Instead, surviving strikers have been accused of murder and portrayed as scapegoats.

At the time, the Marikana mine was owned by the multinational corporation Lonmin, the third largest platinum producer in the world.

The main customer for the platinum from Marikana is - it should also be said here - BASF, which uses it to produce catalytic converters for VW, Daimler and BMW. The involvement of BASF and other imperialist corporations in the massacre was also not investigated.

ANC on the side of the Hamas' enemies of the Jews, Iran and Turkey

The ANC has been in power continuously since 1994 (in 2024 the ANC fell short of an absolute majority for the first time with 40%). In the massacre of the Marikana mine strikers in 2012 and now again in the murder by starvation of the "Zama-Zama" miners of Stilfontein, the ANC has shown its counter-revolutionary and nationalist face. And the South African government is also firmly on the side of murdering enemies of the Jews.

At the UN World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in August 2002, Israeli and Jewish delegates were subjected to anti-Jewish abuse. The equation of Israel as an "apartheid state" took its course there and became the central argumentation pattern of BDS, the founding of which was co-initiated by the anti-Jewish Hamas.

Since the rise of Hamas in the early 2000s, the ANC has been on a dual track (with Hamas in Gaza and the PLA in the West Bank). Not only are there documented links to the PLO, but also highly official visits by Hamas leaders to representatives of both BDS South Africa and the ANC, such as in December 2018, when Hamas leaders signed a memorandum of understanding with the ANC parliamentary committee to "put pressure on Israel to end the occupation of Palestine". (audiathur-online.ch, 10.09.2019).

After the anti-Jewish pogrom and attack by Hamas on Israel on October 7, 2023, it is documented that ANC Foreign Minister Pandor received a phone call from Hamas murderer Haniyya on October 17, 2023. Hamas subsequently boasted on its website about the content of the conversation, stating that "South Africa supports Hamas' military operation", which ANC Pandor did not want to have formulated so publicly.

Against this background, it is not surprising that it was the government of

South Africa that in December 2023 filed an application with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague to initiate a lawsuit against the government of Israel. The ICJ declared the allegation to be implausible and asked the South African government to provide evidence. A 5,000-page document was then submitted in October 2024. According to Cyril Pamaphosa, ANC man, President of South Africa and complicit in the murder of the striking miners of Marikana, Israel had "the intention to commit genocide". The Israeli government now has until the middle of the year to respond. Meanwhile, the South African government's complaint is supported by the reactionary regime in Turkey and the reactionary regime in Iran. The ANC regime's good relations with the murderous police state of Iran are documented. Foreign Minister Lamola traveled to Tehran at the end of July 2024 for the inauguration of President Peseshkian and was praised by his Iranian counterpart for his "outstanding role as an intrepid and innovative diplomat in prosecuting the crimes of the Zionist regime before the ICJ." Iran, Bagheri said, "fully supports South Africa's decisive role in this regard". (Mena Watch, 18.11.2024)

There are protests in South Africa against nationalist incitement and also solidarity with the persecuted Zama-Zama miners and migrant workers. Relatives and friends have provided the Zama-Zama miners with food and aid over the last few months and supported those without paperwork. Such positive approaches do exist. South Africa has a wealth of experience of a joint struggle of Jewish immigrants and people of color against the British colonial regime and later the apartheid regime. Nationalism and hostility towards Jews are two essential reactionary ideologies. This insight will fight the nascent democratic and revolutionary movement in South Africa against the ANC, the revisionist-reactionary CP South Africa and the trade union bureaucrats.