

IN THE MARIKANA COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

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WITNESS STATEMENT OF:  
SIPHETHE PHATSHA

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1. I am 48 years old and I was born in Ngqeleni, in the Eastern Cape.
2. I have worked at various mines in South Africa, mainly as a rock drill operator. I started working for Lonmin in 2007. I earn just over R4,000.00 in monthly salary plus a "sleep-out" allowance of more than R1,000.00. ✓
3. I heard about the strike and joined it on 10 August 2012. ✓
4. I was present during the march to the NUM offices on 11 August 2012, but was at the back and could not see what happened. I just heard that two of our fellow strikers had been shot dead. Thereafter I went home.
5. I did not observe anything of significance in the following three days, since I was only coming to the mountain occasionally to check on any progress without spending much time there.
6. On 15 August 2012, I spent the day at the koppie. At the end of the day before we dispersed, Mr Mathunjwa promised to return with a report-back from management on the following day, ie 16 August, at 09h00.

7. I was present when Mr Zokwana from NUM had earlier tried to address us from a police vehicle, which was unacceptable to the workers. He later gave up and turned away.
8. On 16 August 2012, I only returned to the koppie at about 14h00. I learnt that Mr Mathunjwa had already been there. I only witnessed his second address when he was pleading for us to leave the koppie and return to work. He went on his knees. His request was not accepted.
9. Shortly after he left, I noticed that one of the nyalas was dragging barbed wire and attempting to close us in.
10. Together with many other workers, we ran towards the path next to the kraal with the intention of escaping into Nkaneng. There were a number of people ahead of me but I was, generally speaking, part of the front group.
11. After the two or three nyalas had successfully outpaced us and closed the gap against the kraal, we ran behind the kraal to access the road from the other side.
12. All this time we were being fired on with teargas and the water canon spray.
13. When we emerged from behind the kraal, we were fired on with live ammunition by another group of policemen whom I had not noticed.

14. I jumped over the bodies of the injured or dead colleagues and ran into the kraal. I think I lost my shoes in the kraal. I then noticed that my left toe was severely injured. I thought I must have been shot from one of the helicopters.
15. I jumped through a small gap at the back of the kraal and ran in the direction of the big koppie.
16. The injured toe was impeding my movements and also getting caught by stones and plants on the ground. I decided to cut off the loose toe in order to be in a better position to run. I used a bush knife which I was carrying to cut off my ruptured and loose toe.
17. I then ran faster towards the small koppie to find a place to hide.
18. There I found a piece of cloth which looked like a piece of a pinafore, and I used it to grip and tighten my foot so as to lessen the bleeding.
19. I noticed how some people were being shot while coming out of their hiding places with their hands raised up as a sign of surrendering.
20. I was later apprehended and told to lie down facing the ground. I showed one of the policemen my bleeding toe and then I was taken in an ambulance to the mine hospital for treatment.
21. My children later told me that they were traumatised when they saw me among the injured people in a news bulletin during President Zuma's visit to the hospital.

22. I was later transferred to another hospital. My toe is still amputated and has not healed.

23. My intention was always to avoid being trapped inside the police barbed wire and to escape to the residential area. I never attacked any person.

DATED at NKANENG, WONDERKOP on this the <sup>6<sup>th</sup></sup> day of December 2012

X S phatsha

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