

Mantashe unhappy with Gold Fields planned retrenchments

Mineral Resources Minister Gwede Mantashe has met with Gold Fields executives as part of efforts to resolve the current impasse, where the company wants to retrench over a thousand workers at its South Deep mine.



Mining Minister Gwede Mantashe

At the meeting held on Monday evening, Mantashe expressed his dissatisfaction with the mining company's August announcement to retrench 1,100 employees and 400 contractors.

"We don't believe the company is acting in good faith. They have merely engaged in a tick-box exercise for compliance purposes. This is a disturbing approach, and we remain unhappy with the way the process has unfolded thus far," the Minister said.

The Department of Mineral Resources began engagements with Gold Fields in August 2018 to find alternatives to the company's proposed retrenchment plan.

"We continue to urge employers in the sector to be responsible, as we are dealing with people's lives when we talk of possible retrenchments, and not mere numbers," the Minister said.

The department also expressed concern at the strike currently underway at the mine located in Gauteng. Workers linked to

National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) downed tools on 2 November in protest of the retrenchments.

“It is also a matter of great concern when a strike in the sector is prolonged, as this has an adverse impact on the economy. Employees at the mine have been on strike since the 2nd of November 2018,” said the department.

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