



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 26, 2025

Jagersfontein Lerumo Justice Forum and CSOs Tailings Working Group Joint Statement

3rd Anniversary of the Jagersfontein Tailings Dam Disaster: A Call for Truth, Justice, and Accountability

The [SAPS news alert](#) that five men, aged 34 to 80, have been charged in connection with the 2022 Jagersfontein dam collapse is noted. The suspects, who are employees of an engineering company (including a compliance officer and an operations manager), will face charges of murder, malicious damage to property, and contravention of the Health and Safety Act. They are scheduled to appear in the Jagersfontein Magistrate's Court on September 10, 2025, following an investigation by the Hawks and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

We note the statement says 3 people have died, a statement of fact we will address below. The Jagersfontein Lerumo Justice Forum, and the CSOs Tailings Working Group regard this as a "welcomed beginning" but fear that it may be a long drawn out process.

We will attend the hearings on the 10th September to bear witness and urge greater urgency to this festering sore.

Almost three years ago, at approximately 6:00 AM on September 11, 2022, the tailings dam at a diamond processing operation in Jagersfontein suffered a catastrophic collapse. The full scale of the impacts on the directly affected community and society at large continues to unravel. In response, the community will gather for the 3rd Anniversary Commemoration Event in Jagersfontein on 11 September 2025, starting at noon at a local school hall.

The disaster exposed a dangerous legal loophole regarding the regulation of the site, which was operated by Jagersfontein Developments. This is a gap that proposed new legislation seeks to correct.

Scientists reported that the collapse released over 6 million cubic metres of toxic liquid sludge, devastating approximately 1,600 hectares of agricultural and grazing land and impacting nearly

160 homes. Contrary to initial corporate statements, our research confirms the disaster resulted in the deaths of at least five people, alongside countless injuries and widespread trauma. The environmental toll was immense, with an estimated 900 livestock killed and ecosystems destroyed.

For three years, the victims' families and the broader community have been denied truth and justice. Despite warnings from local activists to the Department of Water Affairs about the facility's safety, these concerns were seemingly ignored.

We are mindful what the political leadership said at that time. Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy Gwede Mantashe said, "Compensation for fatalities, compensation in terms of damage to property will be taken as a responsibility of the company that [owns the slimes dam.](#)" In addition, President Ramaphosa said on a visit on 12 September 2022, "Yes we will make sure your homes are rebuilt. Nothing will stop us from making sure that those who lost their homes will be assisted. Those who have lost a knife or your underwear we will make sure you get your underwear back. If you've lost your dress, we will make sure you get your dress back."

Whilst the community is still studying the human rights impacts of the tailings waste disaster, it is clear deep poverty and marginalisation from decision making remains a concern. Many of the concerns the president raised appear not to have been met.

Therefore, we issue the following three key demands:

1. An Urgent Joint Inquest into the Unnatural Deaths.

We demand that the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) immediately convene a formal inquest in terms of the Inquests Act 58 of 1959. It is a criminal offence to fail to report a death from non-natural causes. This inquest is crucial to formally establish the facts surrounding the deaths of:

- Aaron Ralehana Moseou (Jagersfontein Town)
- Mantele Mokgadi (Charlesville) – still missing, presumed dead
- Msokoli Petrus Khuthu (Itumeleng township)
- Katleho Solly Olifant (Charlesville township)
- Shadrack Williams (Itumeleng township)

This process is integral to our democracy, will provide closure to families, and counter rumours and suspicions. The failure to hold an inquest undermines public trust and accountability.

2. Immediate Public Release of the DWS Investigation Report.

We demand the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) make public its investigation report, initiated under Section 151 of the National Water Act. This report, which is apparently with the NPA, must be released immediately to ensure transparency and facilitate the prosecution of the corporation and all implicated parties.

3. A Truly Inclusive Reparations and Restitution Programme.

The promised rebuilding of homes and compensation for losses has been inadequate. Many households complain about the poor quality of rebuilt housing. We demand a comprehensive reparations programme that includes:

- Quality housing infrastructure.
- Land reform.
- Job creation.
- Social security support for struggling households.
- Full environmental rehabilitation.

The community continues to suffer widespread trauma. While we acknowledge the support from organisations like the South African Human Rights Commission, Gift of the Givers, and the Red Cross, corporate and state accountability remains absent.

We are willing to work with all partners to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective redress for the community of Jagersfontein.

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Note to Editors: This statement is issued jointly by the community-based Jagersfontein Lerumo Justice Forum and the national coalition of civil society organisations, the CSOs Tailings Working Group