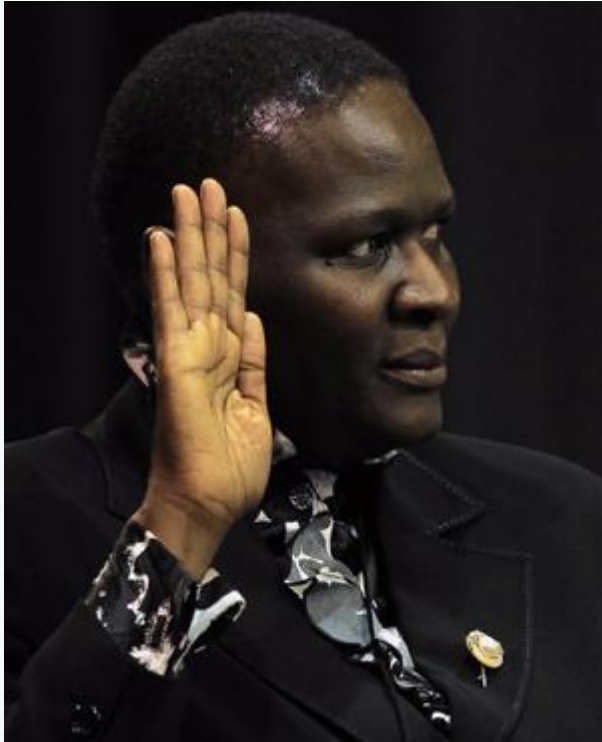


Phiyega questioned over statement Irresponsible

2013-03-26 12:35



Rustenburg - National police chief **Riah Phiyega** was irresponsible in her statement a day after the shooting of 34 mineworkers in Marikana, the Farlam commission heard on Tuesday.

Evidence leader Mbuyiseli Madlanga, SC, quizzed Phiyega over an extract from her contentious 17 August statement issued at Lonmin mine.

The extract reads: "Whatever happened represents the best of responsible policing."

Madlanga said: "National commissioner, when you say 'whatever happened', what do you mean?"

Prescripts

Phiyega responded: "I mean the work we had done, that is what I was talking about. The policing and the prescripts of policing."

Madlanga continued: "Commissioner, prescripts do not do anything. Prescripts tell you what you may do. The people who actually do anything are operational people. If you were not referring to that which the police did, what were you referring to?"

Ishmael Semenya, SC, for the police, interjected, saying the commissioner had answered Madlanga's question. Retired judge **Ian Farlam**, chairperson of the three-member commission, overruled Semenya's objection.

Madlanga asked: "I want to get to the bottom of what she was talking about. She is not answering the question. She keeps referring to prescripts and so on. I want that 'work' she was talking about?"

Phiyega said the police's work at the Lonmin platinum mine in Marikana had been well articulated at the commission of inquiry.

Farlam asked Phiyega to explain if that "work" included killing civilians.

"Judge, I did not celebrate the death of the people. In my (17 August) statement I said 'mourning as we are' when I started," Phiyega replied.

Farlam said: "What I want to know is that did that 'work' include the shooting of the people?"

The national police commissioner said no.

Madlanga said the 34 mineworkers were killed in the execution of the police's crowd management process.

"We will submit to the commission that it was actually irresponsible of you, and more so that you said that you stand by your statement during cross-examination.

"In the face of an acceptance by the SA Police Service (SAPS) itself that some protesters may have been killed when some members may have been firing in response to 'friendly fire' by their colleagues, it was irresponsible of you, and it continues to be."

Contradictions

On Monday, Madlanga asked Phiyega about contradictions between her 17 August statement and the opening statement submitted to the Farlam commission by the SAPS.

Phiyega was asked to explain why her version of events was different from that of the police regarding the miners' actions at a site referred to at the commission as scene two.

After reading an extract of the SAPS statement Madlanga said: "Do you see that in this part of the statement there is no reference to the protesters who were firing and also charging at the police?"

"Show me, national commissioner, where that paragraph refers to protesters that stormed at the police and fired shots at them. Show me where that paragraph said so."

Phiyega said in her statement she had focused on highlighting that the protesters, wielding dangerous weapons, had charged at police officers.

On 16 August last year, 34 striking mineworkers were shot dead and 78 were injured when the police opened fire near Lonmin's platinum mine in Marikana. Ten people, including two police officers and two security guards, were killed near the mine in the preceding week.



HerpDerp - March 26, 2013 at 12:48

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Id tap that.

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NKAISANA - March 26, 2013 at 12:51

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Mosadi-Monna yo barego ke Phiega ga a tsebe gore otla fetola areng mohlomongwe o be thabetse moshomo wa gagwe.

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HerpDerp - March 26, 2013 at 13:12

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emshachem aza eny anat'he lashem murshalyaim per uznitiet utta mecham nYET!

Thats hebrew.

Have fun translating that.

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Ygivadamn - March 26, 2013 at 13:04

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shaaame i feel really bad for the 'social worker' now. she should've just refused this top position especially when it has the history of leading its candidates into prison.

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Kobus Hattingh - March 26, 2013 at 13:09

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Ag shame, her head must be spinning by now...

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Lucastra Khezla - March 26, 2013 at 13:12

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kwaaaah, this man(sorry, woman) is in dire strait, more money more problems.

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