



Orion Minerals

**For immediate release**

**Orion Minerals comments on recent reports of community unrest in Prieska**

*Recent disruptions to orderly community life in the Prieska community, instigated by the self-serving interests of unscrupulous contractors using coercion to support their bids for contracts, is unacceptable.*

**Johannesburg (7 May 2021)** – Orion Minerals notes recent media interest in ongoing community protest action at Prieska. This protest action has mostly been directed at local authorities by a minority of community members, in a misguided attempt to force them to enforce specific local procurement and employment requirements on any business operating in the area.

In Orion's case, this has mostly focussed on the demand that Orion appoint a specific contractor which failed to win a competitive bid for a construction management contract adjudicated by Orion in a fair and commercial manner.

The protests in Prieska have been disruptive for residents who have experienced widespread intimidation - from groups whose members include heavily armed individuals.

Orion today obtained an urgent interdict in the Northern Cape High Court in Kimberley, to prevent any disruption to our business at the Prieska Copper-Zinc Mine (68km from the town of Prieska) involving violence and intimidation. While Orion respects the constitutional right to protest, this does not extend to armed threats and the possibility of behaviour that will put lives as well as livelihoods at risk. We welcome the Court's decision, which demonstrates that South Africa's judiciary is committed to safeguarding public order as well as the right to protest.

Orion CEO Errol Smart notes *"These protests are ill-conceived and self-defeating: they will not create more local jobs or opportunities, rather the protestors will discourage investment in the area and the wider Province. The local and provincial economy simply cannot risk such investment being lost due to the actions of self-interested parties.*



## Orion Minerals

*Orion remains absolutely committed to our high ESG standards – including an approved social and labour plan, local economic development, skills development and local employment in the Siyathemba (Prieska) area, and to developing Prieska as a flourishing and important South African mining hub.*

*It is very disappointing that the current instability in the community, is delaying a number of positive initiatives planned for roll-out in the area during May and beyond. We are hopeful that the Prieska COVID-19 Vaccination Centre (funded by Orion and facilitated in conjunction with other Siyathemba businesses and the District Department of Health), will be rolled out as soon a conducive environment is restored. Orion's partnership with Bicycles for Humanity will also shortly see the handing over of 420 bicycles in a range of initiatives, to support school children travelling long distances to school and to select essential services workers who face transport challenges.*

*Finally, the rollout of Orion's training and development program, commencing with the interviews and occupational assessments of up to 350 local job applicants who have submitted CVs and who have already participated in our Introduction to Mining course, can only be conducted in a safe and calmer environment."*

Orion remains committed to constructively engage on all issues that require mutual cooperation with all our stakeholders. We implore all legitimate stakeholders to engage meaningfully and constructively.

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