

Solidarity seeks court order against Sibanye-Stillwater lock-out

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Solidarity said it would lodge a legal challenge to a move by Sibanye-Stillwater to lock out its members as other unions began a strike over wages at the company's gold mines on Wednesday, 9 March.



Source: Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) called for a strike to commence on Wednesday evening, after Solidarity broke ranks last week and accepted Sibanye's final offer of a 5% annual pay increase.

Solidarity said its members had on Wednesday been informed they would be barred from the workplace, despite the union having accepted Sibanye's wage offer.

"Solidarity will approach the Labour Court on an urgent basis to obtain an interdict against the lock-out that will be applied to its members at Sibanye-Stillwater," the union said in a statement.



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Sibanye said it issued lock-out notices to all union members as the company had been negotiating with a coalition of unions.

"We are taking this action to bring a resolution to the dispute which will require a majority decision from the coalition members," a Sibanye spokesperson said, adding that the company would defend itself against Solidarity's court action.

Solidarity deputy general secretary Riaan Visser said Sibanye's lock-out order meant the union's members could go without pay.

On Tuesday, Sibanye said it would not increase its wage offer but would take steps to protect employees and company assets in the event of a strike.

The strike is likely to disrupt operations at Sibanye's gold mines at a time when the metal's price is surging.

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