

International solidarity and action will bring our struggle to victory

Anders Stendalen, President of the Miners' International Federation (MIF) addressed Congress on international solidarity and other issues. This is an edited version of his speech.

I address you on behalf of all the MIF affiliates around the world, in Africa, Asia, North and South America and Europe.

Let me first tell you: we are proud to have you with us as members in the MIF. The Miners International Federation, being an International for mine workers all over the world, is one of the oldest international trade union federations in the world.

In 1989 we celebrated our 100th anniversary in Harare. During this whole period, during all these years, the MIF has been the centre for the mine workers through which we have channelled and shown our international solidarity.

We have fought together at the international level to safeguard, to secure and improve wages and working conditions, working environment, social security, trade union rights, human rights and equal status for miners.

We have done this not only in the mining industry but also together with other fellow workers, in our societies as a whole.

We form a traditional and strong part of the international labour movement and let me repeat: We are proud to have you in our lines, to have the NUM with us in the forefront in our joint struggle!

The struggle fought by the mine workers and the MIF through the history of the trade union movement, have been hard and bitter.

Miners all over the world have experience of unbelievable exploitation, unacceptable working conditions and working environment and of starvation wages.

The close contact between you and the MIF,



Anders Stendalen of the MIF at Congress.

especially since the formal foundation of the NUM has made it possible for us to follow your rapid progress, expansion and triumphant development in a short time to become the biggest union in South Africa, the biggest union in Africa and one of the biggest mineworkers unions in the world.

Our employers are more often than not giant multi-national corporations that show respect for nothing but fast profits. They do not coil from exploiting the workers to the extreme, without consideration for neither their welfare nor their human dignity.

They do not know of national borders, they act and move their money between countries as it suits them. They can only be met by strong united, international actions by strong

independent and free workers unions, working jointly through their own international, the MIF.

By way of the MIF, we can initiate joint international actions against multinational corporations and thereby support a national union for the moment subject to oppression by their employer. We can call for actions and support from other international bodies.

By way of the MIF, we can organise joint international support for unions in trouble - financial aid, technical and advisory aid, and so on.

Through international solidarity and co-operation, we can all become stronger and bring our struggle to victory.



A vote for safety: Delegates at Congress showing their agreement about an issue close to their hearts.