



The Shopsteward

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2022

COSATU

MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS



Worker Issues (8)

- COSATU President zingiswa Losi - Keynote address at worker's day rally
- We need to build and strengthen maximum worker unity and power
- The workers have spoken and we must listen
- COSATU National May Day Rally
- Global federations celebrate international worker's day

Economy (22)

- COSATU public service unions table their wage demands for 2022/2023
- Remembering Chris Hani
- COSATU Central Executive Committee meeting outcomes

Young Workers (26)

- COSATU holds the 2nd National Young Workers Summit
- Newly elected national worker's forum leadership

International (30)

- Input by COSATU General Secretary at the 5th global conference
- Long live international proletarianism
- WFTU 18th world congress

Affiliates (34)

- POPCR members hugely affected by recent floods in KZN
- SADTU concludes 2nd Provincial Conferences
- Young workers pledge solidarity with shopstewards dismissed by UNISA

Commentary (36)

- Lingering suspicions on the assassination of Chris Hani



Bheki Ntshalintshali
Editor in Chief

editorial note

the year 2022 has started with a lot of developments at a political, economic, and organisational level. The federation has been at the forefront of trying to influence these issues and participate in shaping the future of our country. The latest World Bank report revealed that the rich are getting richer, while the poor are sinking further and further into the cesspool of poverty. South Africa is now the most unequal country in the world. The contents of this report are gloomy and depressing and confirm what we already know that the economic situation of the working class is not getting better. Statistics South Africa reported that about 46% of South Africans are unemployed and this is 77% when it comes to young people.

Women, children, and the elderly are the hardest hit by poverty. Unemployment has risen and wages remains depressed. Although often coated with relatively short-lived, anaemic, upward or recovery cycles, all major western economies are experiencing a long downward drag accompanied by rising inflation.

The South African workers need to recognise that this country is facing economic decline, and that for the country to get out of this economic decay there will be attempts to force the workers to sacrifice their rights.

We have seen the country's Constitutional Court agreeing with government that they were right to renege on implementing the third leg of resolution 1 of 2018 in 2020. During this year's round of wage negotiations, unions need to take up the fight for better wages and improved benefits to the employers in a disciplined and fearless way. Unions should go out there and fight strong and hard for decent wage increases that

should all build on this momentum and intensify the fight against increasingly hostile employers. We continue to feel the sting of an economic decline and resultant job losses.

We are now faced with a difficult situation where the country's public debt and corruption have resulted in the re-emergence of the voices of privatisation. We already are looking at the serious attempts by the government to unbundle and likely privatise the power utility. This is something that needs to be fought against by the workers and the working class. Many in the National Treasury who are actually responsible for the mess we are in because they allowed these SOE's to accumulate unsustainable debts are now pushing for privatisation of these entities. It is now obvious that they were creating a fertile ground for the failure of these SOE's like Eskom so that they can then champion their privatisation.

Unbundling is about laying a foundation for the privatisation of these SOE's and not really rescuing them and keeping them under government control. We can now, also, conclude that the international investment drive is more about looking for buyers of these SOE's and nothing else. The biggest battle for workers this year though is going to be the fight against the privatisation of the SOE's and any possible retrenchments of SOE workers. We need to be demanding that the issues of workers be better represented at Board level. The reality is that privatisation will detrimentally affect the socio-economic interests of the poor, which includes workers and the working class in general.

It will also adversely affect the state's capacity to provide basic services to the poor; provide for infrastructural development; intervene to restructure

will bring about meaningful change to the lives of the workers. We are inspired by the unity shown by the workers at Sibanye, where NUM and AMCU are working well together to demand a decent wage increase. We

the economy to ensure growth and employment creation; and play a developmental role in general.

There will be more job losses and it will foster the casualisation of labour, with more and more workers being hired on limited fixed-term contracts of employment. Privatisation also removes workers from the bargaining units established over many years in the public sector, generally leading to a reduction in incomes, benefits, and job security.

The Federation is also left with three months before the 14th National Congress to be convened in September 2022. The preparations for the upcoming meeting are proceeding well. In the build up to the Congress and during the congress, the federation needs to spend some considerable time reflecting on the overarching relations of political forces, the totality of which reflect the balance of class forces in our National Democratic Revolution (NDR). Our responsibility as workers is to make sure that we contest this decade and make it a decade of the workers. It will not be easy, but we need to realise that for us to fight back we need to be united as workers across union lines and adopt the idea of sympathy strikes and solidarity rallies embracing the widest sections of workers.

A failure by trade unions to unite and collectively work together to defend the interests of our members in the face of this widening social and economic crisis would be reckless and a form of cowardice that we would live to regret. We have also seen an increase in the number of accidents and fatalities in the workplace. Mine fatalities and police killings are a big problem, and the farm workers continue to be massacred and victimised mostly by their employers. We have a lot of work ahead of us, considering that this is also the year of congresses for us as the federation. We also have an ILO Child Labour Conference in Durban that is focused on the elimination of child labour.

This remains a problem that needs to be tackled by all relevant role-players, from government departments employer associations, trade unions and the human rights commission. In South Africa, the farming sector is the guiltiest when it comes to child labour. Farm workers are

some of the most oppressed workers in the country. There is still modern-day slavery thriving on our farms. They do not die because of poor working conditions, but they are killed by employers.

They do not enjoy paid sick, family, and annual leaves. They do not get UIF, because their employers do not pay the money, they deduct from them. They do not enjoy full maternity leave benefits and rights. They are dismissed arbitrary without the employers following proper disciplinary procedures. These workers are evicted with no regard to legal due processes.

We also have the challenge of rising inflation with the price of fuel pushing the cost of living. The escalation in the price of fuel has devastated the poor households and lower income earners the most. Poor families are struggling to afford necessities. We should demand that government consider increasing subsidies for public transport and work on investing in our public transport system. There is an urgent need to improve the quality and efficiency of our public transport, particularly in poorer communities and rural areas.

The fragmentation of transport services in the country continues to undermine access to affordable, safe, and reliable public transport. We also need to demand that our public transport system should be well coordinated and integrated. In our view, this is crucial for enhancing local economic development and eliminating the apartheid spatial challenges.

There should be an improvement in intergovernmental coordination of public transport provision so that it is linked with the provision of basic services. In addition to this, the transport infrastructure in rural areas needs to be expanded and improved. The battle continues and the real owners of the federation need to lead from the front. Let us strengthen our COSATU engines and unite with all workers across the board and get ready to fight back in defence of our rights. The rights we defend will survive but those we do not fight for will be taken away from us.

Aluta Continua!



2022



MAY DAY





2 COSATU CELEBRATIONS





COSATU President Zingiswa Losi

Keynote Address at National Workers' Day Rally

COSATU President, Zingiswa Losi, ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa and SACP General Secretary, Blade Nzimande

President Cyril Ramaphosa, Dr Blade Nzimande Premier Bushy Maape National, Provincial and Local leadership of COSATU, Leadership of our allies, the African National Congress and South African Communist Party, Leadership of government, other allied formations and traditional leaders present, Most importantly, the thousands of rank and file membership of COSATU present here in Rustenburg and workers across South Africa. Please accept warm and revolutionary greetings from your Federation, COSATU. We are honoured to be here with you today. The militant mood that we can feel here and that we have witnessed in the build up

to this event, in particular in our mining communities confirms that COSATU lives, COSATU leads! Let us first observe a moment of silence to honour our fallen comrades, including the former President of SACCWU, Cde. Duma Nkosi.

Let us remember the thousands of mine workers who have died in horrific accidents in a brutal industry over many decades. Let us mourn the hundreds of health workers who have died protecting this nation as we have battled Covid-19. Let us honour the Police and Correctional Service Officers who have laid down their lives whilst serving the nation.

Let us show solidarity with the over 400 persons who perished in the recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal and surrounding areas. Let us not forget

the over 100 000 South Africans who succumbed to Covid-19.

Their losses must not be in vain.

Let us honour their memories and rededicate ourselves to the cause of the working class, to ensuring that workers can go to work in safe conditions, that mines value the lives of mine workers, that we expose the criminals in our communities who target police officers, that we play our role and vaccinate to ease the unbearable burdens faced by health workers in hospitals.

COSATU was founded upon the principle of working-class solidarity, let us show it in all that we do.

We must intensify our efforts to save and create jobs and grow the economy. Workers have paid a heavy price for an economy on its knees. The economy is in its deepest recession

in living memory. Unemployment is at an all-time high of 46% with 2.2 million workers having lost their jobs in the last two years. Youth unemployment is at 75%. Millions are abandoning their homes in rural areas in search of any jobs they can find in our cities. Government and business must do more to save and create jobs.

Our unemployment rate is a ticking time bomb. We cannot sustain a society where one out of two persons is unemployed and has little hope of finding work. This must be the number one focus of government and the entire nation.

We must do more to accelerate the implementation of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan. This must include fixing Eskom; we must finalise the debt relief package to enable Eskom to slash its debt and

focus on ramping up maintenance and bringing on board new generation capacity. Those who have stolen from Eskom must go to prison. Without a fully functioning Eskom, there will be no economic recovery. Government must intervene to save Transnet and Metro Rail. They are systematically being destroyed by criminal syndicates. At this rate, we will have no rail network left. Government needs to deploy the SAPS and the SANDF to immediately secure our rail network. The exporting of scrap copper and steel must be banned.

Scrap metal dealers must provide proof of origin of their metals or be shut down. State of the art security technology must be installed. We need to invest in and modernise our ports. A modern and well-run Transnet will save and create thousands of mining, manufacturing and agricultural jobs. A modern and well-run Metro Rail will enable 10 million workers and commuters in our cities to arrive at work on time and enable companies to operate at full capacity. We need turn around plans for our embattled State-Owned Enterprises, all of whom were world class leaders until the decade of state capture and corruption. It is unacceptable for DENEL to fail to pay its workers for 18 months. We must condemn SABC for retrenching over 1000 permanent staff to replace them with 500 contract jobs.

We need a plan that will reposition the Post Office which intends to retrench 6000 staff over the next 3 years. Petro SA is preparing to follow suit. SA Express collapsed with 1500 jobs. We hope SAA can once again lead our airways. Key to growing the economy is to support locally produced goods. Our mining companies in Rustenburg, Welkom and beyond need to buy locally produced uniforms and machinery. Government needs to buy locally produced vehicles and furniture. We as workers buy locally produced shoes, clothes and food. Unions must meet their pension and investment funds and ask how they will ramp up their local investments. The Amendment of Regulation 28 must be finalised and implemented to allow pension funds to invest in infrastructure projects. Government has done well to require our infrastructure projects to buy locally produced cement. This needs to

be expanded to steel, machinery and uniforms. We need a frank discussion on what are the plans of our SETAs to invest in the skills mining, construction, energy, farm and manufacturing workers?

Billions of workers' monies are provided to these SETAs, yet we do not see value for money. Instead billions are lost to corruption and wasteful expenditure. They need to invest in training workers to ensure that they remain employed not only today but also tomorrow. Whilst we are rebuilding the economy, we must provide practical relief to workers and the poor.

We are proud as COSATU that we ensured over R63 billion was released from the Unemployment Insurance Fund during the lockdown to ensure that more than 5.5 million workers had money to buy food to feed their families. This benefited more than half of the private sector workers. We must commend the excellent work down by SACTWU to ensure thousands of clothing and textile workers received their UIF funds. It is time we ensure that all workers are registered with the UIF. In particular public servants, farm and domestic workers, construction, retail and hospitality workers are registered with the UIF. We need a model that ensures that musicians, artists, the self-employed and casual workers are also protected. Unions must wage campaigns to ensure that all members and workers are registered with the UIF and the Compensation Fund and employers have paid their dues.

COSATU welcomed the roll out of the R350 SRD Grant. It has provided badly needed relief to 10 million unemployed persons. The challenges people experience accessing it and the long queues to receive it at the Post Office must be solved. Government must increase its funding to R60 billion to ensure all eligible persons are provided for. The Presidential Employment Stimulus has provided badly needed work experience, salaries and skills for over 500 000 workers and in particular young people. It has helped ease the pressure in our classrooms. We are disappointed that government slashed the funding for this progressive jobs programme 25%. This must be reversed.

The funding must be increased to R30 billion so it can provide 1 million job opportunities. We cannot afford to skimp on such valuable programmes.

Government agreed to COSATU's proposal to allow financially struggling workers limited access to their pension funds in 2020. Two Ministers of Finance committed to Parliament to tabling legislation to allow this to happen. To date this has not happened. Treasury has now committed to tabling a Bill in Parliament by August 2022 so that it can come into effect by 1 April 2023. We will hold government accountable.

This relief must include public and private sector workers. Provisions must be put in place to ensure pension funds do not block such relief to workers who are drowning in debt or experiencing real financial hardships.

When this access is allowed, we must be responsible too. It should be used to pay off debts or for medical emergencies and not be squandered on luxuries. We cannot afford to deplete our pension funds either as most workers have not saved enough when they reach retirement. We must redouble our efforts to protect the hard-won constitutional rights of workers.

Workers remain under attack. It is only us as COSATU, as trade unions who can protect workers. We have seen employers look for any excuse to retrench and dismiss workers. We have seen employers fail to pay workers what is due to them. We have seen employers refuse to honour signed wage agreements. For many years this was a challenge that affected only workers in the private sector. In 2020 we saw government led by our own ally, the ANC, refuse to honour a signed collective agreement.

Countless municipalities have failed to pay their staff. UNISA abandoned an agreement a month after signing it. We have seen our own allies, the ANC and the SACP, fail to pay their staff for months at a time. If we are to deal with these attacks on workers, then we need to organise workers. We need to leave no stone unturned to protect the rights of workers and their families.

We need to defend our labour market institutions and to ensure that they are provided with enough

resources to fulfil their mandates. This includes the UIF and the Compensation Fund so workers can receive their monies on time, as well as the CCMA and the Labour Courts so that workers can have their cases heard timeously and not be delayed for months and even years at a time. The Department of Employment and Labour needs to employ more inspectors to visit workplaces to ensure they adhere to our labour laws, to ensure that employers provide a safe working environment, that no one is paid less than the minimum wage, that workers have paid time off and receive overtime as required. Employers who break the law must be dealt with.

Employers who hire undocumented migrant labour must be held accountable. We cannot afford to have an unemployment rate of 75% for young people and yet in large sectors of the economy, employers defy our labour laws and hire undocumented migrant labour to exploit their desperations and vulnerability. This must end before it explodes in xenophobic violence. Governments of neighbouring states, in particular Zimbabwe must address their economic and political crises that force millions to flee their homes in search of a better life. South Africa cannot remain an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty. If we are to grow the economy, then we must rebuild a capable developmental state. A well-functioning government is critical to growing the economy, creating jobs, providing badly needed public services and building a better life. A government that is riddled with corruption, under resourced and dysfunctional cannot do that.

This requires decisive political leadership from the President to Ministers, Premiers, Mayors and management. The days of mediocrity and state capture must end. The President has done well on many fronts to begin tackling corruption, remove incompetent Ministers and management and rebuild the rule of law. It will take time. But we are moving far too slowly. The Zondo Commission has confirmed what we knew. It is clear who stole. Can the National Prosecuting Authority and the Police now go and fetch those who have looted billions and put them on trial and in prison and confiscate

their assets? We have begun to see some of the small fish going to prison. Can we see the big fish, including those in government, join them? Government needs to invest more in the South African Revenue Service to tackle tax and customs evasion which denies the state billions of badly needed revenue. SARS must be empowered to conduct lifestyle audits of the wealthy, and especially Ministers, Premiers, Mayors and senior management of the state and SOEs. We need a single online and transparent public procurement system for the entire state. This will reduce corruption and wasteful expenditure and boost local procurement. Government needs to return to Nedlac and engage on extending the ban on political exposed persons and their immediate families from doing business with the state. We must be principled and ruthless when it comes to corruption. If the spouses of politicians want state tenders, then their partners must leave government and politics.

Countless municipalities are in serious trouble and government does not seem to have a plan fix them. Companies have closed in Lichtenburg in the North West and Frankfurt in the Free State because municipalities no longer pave roads, provide reliable electricity and water. Two shopstewards of SAMWU were assassinated for blowing the whistle on corruption in the VBS scandal in Vhembe. Municipal workers in Amahlathi Municipality were paid with Pick 'n Pay vouchers. Government needs to take the collapse of local government seriously. Competent mayors and qualified managers need to be appointed. Municipalities need to be consolidated and a shift made to District Municipalities begun. We must defend not weaken our progressive labour laws.

COSATU has won many victories on the legislative front at Nedlac and in Parliament. The Labour Relations, Basic Conditions of Employment, Occupational Health and Safety, Mine Health and Safety; as well as the Unemployment Insurance Act have all helped improve the lives of workers. The National Minimum Wage has improved the wages of 6

million workers, including cleaning, construction and retail workers. In 2020, 800 000 farm workers reached the minimum wage. In 2022, 900 000 domestic workers reached the minimum wage. This year saw a 6.9% increase in the minimum wage taking it to R23.19. We now need a road map to take EPWP and CWP workers to the minimum wage. We are making it clear to government and business, that we will not allow our labour laws to be weakened or undermined. We will not agree to roll back the minimum wage, nor exempt employers from collective bargaining agreements, or exempt SMMEs from the CCMA. We will not sacrifice workers' protections from exploitation, abuses, dismissals or retrenchments. Any attempt to do so by government and businesses will be dealt with. If we want to grow the economy, then pay workers a living not a slave wage. Treat workers like human beings not criminals. Who will buy the goods we produce if we pay workers peanuts? How will a worker be productive if she is abused and sexually harassed at the workplace?

As we approach the 2024 elections, we expect government and Parliament to move with speed in passing key progressive laws, in particular the COIDA Bill that will provide cover for domestic workers and increase protections for occupational diseases and PTSD. This will benefit mine workers from asbestos and other illnesses. It will benefit police and security and female workers exposed to violence. Government must move with speed to ensure that the Companies Amendment Bill is tabled at Parliament. It requires companies to disclose what the wage gap. We cannot accept that the CEO of Sibanye can be paid R300 million yet refuse to increase the salaries of mine workers by R1000. If we are to rebuild the state, then we need to cleanse the ANC.

Many of our victories were achieved through the Alliance and by an ANC biased towards workers. An ANC weakened by factionalism and corruption will struggle to deliver to workers. Coalitions and opposition parties will ignore the

needs of workers. We must cleanse the ANC. We must ensure that the ANC is returned to its members and that those who are implicated in criminal activities and factionalism are removed. We are running out of time. We have two years left in this administration. Let us ramp up our efforts to defeat the demons of corruption and state capture. We must help build the vanguard party of the SACP so its voice can be heard championing the causes of workers.

Let us intensify solidarity with workers across the world. Workers are under siege internationally. Workers in Cuba and Venezuela are reeling under US led sanctions, workers in Palestine and Western Sahara suffer from occupation, workers in Zimbabwe and eSwatini are abused by their governments, and workers in Ukraine and Russia are reeling from war.

We condemn all wars, be it in Palestine, Iraq, Ukraine or Sudan. Women and children, workers and civilians die when politicians embark on unnecessary wars. South African workers' wages are being depleted by inflation caused by the war in Ukraine. The most important task facing workers is to build unions.

The challenges facing workers are clear. We know what the solutions are. If we are to win these struggles, then we must build our unions.

If we are to ensure that mine workers are paid a living wage, then we must build NUM. If we are to ensure that health workers' vacancies are filled and that they are provided with the necessary resources, then we must build DENOSA, NEHAWU, SAEPU and SAMATU. If we are to fight crime, then we must build POPCRU. If we are to deliver municipal services, then we must build SAMWU. If we want to build the public service, then we must support NEHAWU and PAWUSA. If we are to improve the education of our learners, then we need a strong SADTU. If we are to protect cleaners and security guards, we need a well organised SATAWU.

If we are to ensure retail workers are paid a living wage, we need an active

SACCAWU. If we are to organise farm workers, we need to support AFADWU and SACTWU. To protect communication workers, we need a strong CWU. To create save jobs in the banking, we must support SASBO. To create jobs in the pharmaceutical industry, we need a vibrant CEPPWAWU.

Strong unions require active recruitment.

They require us to organise the unorganised.

Workers will join unions that service them. Workers and shopstewards require ongoing education and training to equip them to defend the rights of workers.

Unions need to lead their sectors and provide solutions to their challenges. What we cannot afford is to be complacent, to be silent, to be absent. We cannot afford to tolerate corruption, factionalism and even criminality in our midst.

Workers deserve and expect the best from us.

We cannot fail them.

We need to engage and convince all unions, including those who left COSATU, that their home is in the Federation of Elijah Barayi and JB Marks.

Let us make it our mission to honour the call of One country, One Federation, One Industry, One Union.

Let us work with unions and federations outside of COSATU and lay the foundations for them to join this Federation of Ray Alexander.

Conclusion

Allow me to conclude by thanking you for attending today. Thank you for your dedication to COSATU and your service to workers.

Let us leave here reenergised and recommitted the cause of the working class.

Let us march forward towards our National Congress in September and us ensure that we emerge more united and determined than ever before to defend workers and advance their struggles.

We wish comrades a safe journey home.

Thank you.

Matla!



We need to build

and strengthen maximum worker unity and power to defend our hard-won gains and progressive labour law advance

by Dr Blade Nzimande, SACP General Secretary, 1 May 2022

May 1 marks the 28th anniversary of the International Workers Day, also known as May Day, since the democratic breakthrough we achieved in April 1994 through decades of our struggle for liberation, democracy and universal social emancipation. The key question is: What are the conditions of the South African working-class, how much tangible progress have we made since 1994 towards the achievement of all the goals of the Freedom Charter, the basic programme of our national democratic revolution?

Put differently, how far are we towards successfully completing the national democratic revolution? Millions of our people, the majority of whom is the working-class, have realised massive social advances building on our April 1994 democratic breakthrough.

We have rolled back the apartheid workplace through post-1994 labour legislation, based on the recognition of human and workers' rights that we won through struggle. These rights are enshrined in our constitution, in the Bill of Rights, not as an accident of history but as the direct fruit of our own struggle. Through active mobilisation by COSATU, its affiliates and other supportive trade unions, and through our Alliance in key centres of power, such as the ANC-led government and majority in parliament, we secured labour law amendments to

improve the labour relations framework. These amendments did not occur without opposition by the capitalist bosses, who remain determined to roll back workers' hard-won rights and gains.

We need to build and strengthen maximum worker unity and power to defend our hard-won gains and progressive labour law advances and deepen the struggle to achieve more improvements, defend them and ultimately end the barbarity of capitalist exploitation.

In the same way, we need to stand together to defend the massive social advances that benefit millions of our people. To name but a few, we are referring here to the millions of homes allocated for free by the government to working-class and poor families that cannot afford, to the massive electrification and provision of water and education at all levels, and to the social grants without which many of their beneficiaries will sink deeper into abject poverty or destitute.

The commendable social advances we made since our April 1994 democratic breakthrough are facing the real threat of erosion because of the neoliberal policy regime and its failures, because of corporate and corrupt capture of the state, and because of the associated social decay. Because of this, instead of advancing decisively towards completing the

liberation of the formerly oppressed and achieving universal social emancipation, our democratic transition is being forced to go against the Freedom Charter. Most especially, it is the economic content of the Freedom Charter that is under siege because of neoliberalism, state capture, and social decay. Let us unite to tackle neoliberalism, corporate and corrupt capture of the state, and the associated social decay. Let us take what has happened unabatedly to public infrastructure as if our country is a stateless capitalist society, for example.

This includes railway and electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure, which has been vandalised, looted and destroyed. If truth be told, we inherited from our unpleasant past working most of the infrastructure that is deteriorating and has in many areas now been destroyed. If you look at the rail infrastructure and commuter rail transport across the country, for instance, there has been virtually no public investment in expanding it to areas that were excluded under apartheid and to the new human settlements that have massively expanded post-1994.

This shows a lack of proper national development planning. In all this, workers are the most affected.

For example, there are no more commuter rail transport services in all railway infrastructure corridors that have been destroyed through vandalism and

theft of rail tracks, cables, steel and other metals, train station building materials and other components.

As a result, workers spend more from their meagre wages on transport than before, because the affordable trains that they relied on are no longer available. Fares in other modes of transport cost workers higher than train tickets. Similarly, when there is no electricity because of the power failures caused by the theft of copper cables, other electric conductors and components, it is the workers who suffer the most. The food they can afford rots in refrigerators, while the rich and well off have uninterrupted power supply systems such as expensive generators and solar panels and can afford more food to grow their stomachs.

It is the workers under social coercion, under the yoke of capitalist inequality and exploitation, who are without lighting because of power cuts and have to walk in the dark on the streets, in townships, in informal settlements and in villages, in the early hours of the morning and the evening, and at night either going to or coming from work. During those hours of the day, the affected workers are more exposed to the acts of criminality that have infested many of our communities, with women the most vulnerable, while their capitalist bosses are still dreaming in their luxury beds, waiting to hear how much profits the workers produced for

them to heap up so that they can continue wallowing in privately accumulated social wealth. The experience of workers under rolling load-shedding is the same. In other workplaces, when there is no electricity, the capitalist bosses simply place workers in short-time or dismiss them without pay until electricity supply is restored. Let us call the state a spade. It is both the successive colonial and apartheid regimes and the post-apartheid government that caused the conditions for rolling load-shedding. The successive colonial and apartheid regimes excluded the formerly oppressed from electrification, building power generation capacity for the white community and the industries that they owned. After apartheid, while the democratically elected government commendably expanded electrification to cover the formerly excluded, because of the neoliberal economic policy called GEAR that the government imposed in 1996, it deprived Eskom of adequate recapitalisation and modernisation.

In pursuit of neoliberalism, the government took a decision at the end of the 1990s to not advance public investment in new power generation capacity but to convert power generation into a new field of profit-making by profit-driven interests. This decision went against warnings, recorded in the same decision, a White Paper on Energy, that South Africa was destined for electricity shortage within a decade without early, proper planning investment preparations to prevent poor performance by its aging power generation capacity. When the Medupi and Kusile power stations came forward, it was too late. Frequent rolling load-shedding took precedence, also hamstringing growth in the levels of national production and employment creation.

The Medupi and Kusile power stations were fatally flawed right from conception and design. During the construction phase, the two projects were compromised by poor work, substandard quality and, to this day, remain incomplete, with monumental cost escalations. Governance decay, mismanagement and industrial scale looting systematically entrenched under corporate and corrupt capture of the state, worsening what neoliberal economic policy orientation has started.

We need to build maximum worker unity and forge patriotic and popular left fronts to stop the decay bringing our country down. The destruction of public infrastructure must stop. This can only happen if decisive action is taken by the state and supported by popular mobilisation, with the working-class at the forefront. The destroyed public

infrastructure must be rebuilt, through public investment. Similarly, for this to happen, we need to build and intensify popular mobilisation and be the first to hold the government accountable. The democratically elected ANC-led government must build developmental state capacity, drive public investment in the economy and perform better than the successive oppressor regimes that we had to fight against and end in 1994.

In the past when we were oppressed, the successive oppressor regimes invested in the productive sector not only in power generation, transmission and distribution but also in steel manufacturing and network infrastructure areas, such as in railways and related commuter and freight transport equipment, in ports, in communication and telecommunication, and in water. The successive oppressor regimes drove this separate development agenda to serve the needs of the white community, excluding the oppressed majority except where it was necessary to facilitate their movement to super-exploitation. Let us tackle the oligarchs in all sectors of our economy and push national transformation towards a capable democratic and truly developmental state.

A capable democratic developmental state must advance decisively towards the goals of the Freedom Charter, through redress, transformation and inclusive development, to socially uplift the formerly oppressed and serve the needs of the people as a whole. Neoliberalism will have none of that. Instead, it will tell the people that the role of the government is to look after profit-driven interests, assuming that the needs of the masses will flow from a trickle-down of state support for private wealth accumulation interests to thrive.

We say, "No ways to that. A capable democratic developmental state must serve the needs of the people as a whole and put people before profits."

Putting profits before people has resulted in the emergence of a new oligarchy, over and above the oligarchs who commanded control in the economy of our country during the apartheid era.

The oligarchs have no interest in serving the needs of the people. Their agenda regarding the production and distribution of wealth is limited to endlessly increasing accumulation for no one but themselves. The neoliberal idea of trickle-down is false considering the reality in countries such as South Africa. A massive amount of wealth in our country is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a tiny minority of individuals, while the masses, who make up millions of the immense

majority, are ravaged by astronomical levels of mass inequality, poverty, unemployment, and are exploited in low-wage jobs and suffering under the yoke of the monumental problem of inability to support their lives—a crisis of social reproduction. Why this is not in the Guinness World Records is more probably a function of the capitalist system.

While heaping up millions and millions of rand in executive pay, the oligarchs intransigently deprive the workers, the downtrodden exploited in the economy, of any notable improvements in their employment conditions, including wage increases that would be reasonable for workers to consider accepting. Here we are referring to the likes of Sibanye-Stillwater CEO, Neal Froneman, who the company paid an astronomical R300 million in 2021 as its latest annual report reveals. Today, the SACP reiterates its unwavering solidarity for the National Union of Mineworkers, and for the co-operation it has forged in struggle with the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union, in pursuit of the common interests of the downtrodden at Sibanye-Stillwater.

The two unions are leading a strike declared on 9 March 2022 by the workers, which has today entered its 51st day. Under the stewardship of Froneman, who without doubt wants nothing but millions of rands for himself as clearly showed by his 2021 annual pay, Sibanye-Stillwater is offering the workers increases of merely 7.8 per cent to their peanut wages in year one, 7.2 per cent in year two and 6.8 per cent in year three of a three-year bargaining cycle starting in 2022. The workers have rejected the insult. Instead of the neoliberal trickle-down, which they have never seen, guided by their experience, they are continuing with their strike action. They are actively confronting social injustice and inequality in the distribution of production income.

Meanwhile, uncritical economists and commentators in the print media, on television screens, on radio, and on the internet, say the workers are unreasonable and Froneman is the reasonable man. This is obviously gibberish to any standard of social justice. The workers who have had to embark on the strike at Sibanye-Stillwater will not in their entire hard-working life receive the millions of rands that the oligarch and his counterparts in other sectors received in just one year, 2021. The SACP expresses its support for all the workers and their united effort. Compare the staggering personal acquisition of wealth by the oligarchs,

not only at Sibanye-Stillwater but also at other mining houses, and in other large enterprises in different sectors of our economy, with the emerging clamping of access to the miserable R350 Social Relief of Distress grant.

As if that were not enough, should the government not extend the Social Relief of Distress grant beyond the end of March 2023, its beneficiaries will fall deeper into the merciless conditions of inequality, unemployment, poverty and the crisis of social reproduction.

While the millions of the poor who have benefited from the meagre R350 Social Relief of Distress grant are facing an unpleasant situation, in the mobile ICT network sector, at MTN to be specific, the CEO Ralph Mupita was paid a whopping R84.2 million in just one year, 2021. Together with Vodacom, MTN is in the duopoly that dominates the mobile ICT network sector in our country. Like other behemoths in the sector in other parts of the world, the duopoly raked in huge amounts of profits during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many sectors were under lockdown and an increasing number of people worked from home.

The mobile ICT network behemoths drove up the cost of mobile communication data and other digital communication pathways, relying on their dominance in mobile communication and digital connectivity infrastructure. The recent auctioning off of the high frequency broadband spectrum will deepen the Vodacom and MTN duopoly, its top two beneficiaries or capturers of the lion's share of the national resource. The SACP calls on the working-class and other progressive sections of our society to deepen the struggle to achieve transformation and de-monopolisation of the mobile ICT network sector, and every other sector of our economy.

We must ensure countrywide digital connectivity, including in rural areas, and bring down the cost of mobile communication data, including through the rollout of free Wi-Fi hotspots for working-class and poor areas.

Just like water, the source of life, the high frequency broadband spectrum, which is a national resource, is a key means of production. Facilitating access to the broadband spectrum, mobile communication data is increasingly taking the centre stage in every economic activity and social life. The working-class and progressive sections of our society need to stand up to challenge neoliberalism and the fostering of private monopoly, which goes against the direction of the Freedom Charter. Let us strengthen

workplace and industrial organisation of workers to respond strategically to new advances in technological change and their impact on work.

The industrial revolution which began in the eighteenth century, with machine invention as its foundation, has deepened and widened since then.

Advances in new forms of energy, such as the discovery of electricity and its ubiquitous distribution, contributed by no small measure to the advance in the industrial revolution. Based on electric power, the intensification of digital electronics, digital systems, digital computers, digital applications and digital platforms—in two words digitisation and digitalisation, including more profound automation and robotisation of production—is deepening and expanding in scope. As a result, new questions have arisen about the impact on work and the future of work and workers. In industries such e-commerce and linked with it the delivery of the goods bought online or transport through the rides requested via online platforms, workers are managed not by team leaders, not by supervisors, not managers. New trends, such as algorithmic management, have come to the fore. There is a shift in employment relations, in terms of which workers are removed from labour rights under the pretext that they are independent contractors.

This had implications for trade unions. In these sectors, trade union organisation is virtually absent and there are serious violations of the basic conditions of employment and occupational health and safety. In other sectors, such as the banking sector, paid work that was performed by tellers before is performed by account holders themselves through digital banking applications but as unpaid work. Certain banks have even shutdown many Automated Teller Machines known in short as ATMs. Without expiations, all the banks have increased banking services inside the banks, repelling account holders to the remaining ATMs and most especially to the digital banking applications. Restaurants have also embarked on this shift, moving paid work from the tellers to unpaid work by the customers via touch screens and digital applications.

Examples of the changing social character of work based new advances in the electric powered digital technology are multiplying and we cannot cover each one of them or all sectors now.

These include online tasking, which is akin to digital labour brokering. All these require effective industrial trade unions and strategic trade union responses. We cannot overemphasise the crucial

importance of building such strategic unionism and the capacity to engage with the Digital Industrial Revolution, which is likely to deepen under Quantum Computing Development. Technology is a product of human labour and the social relations of production. While others want us to focus narrowly on efficiency and productivity, they turn a blind eye to the much-needed scrutiny of the class content of who is benefiting the most in economic terms.

As Karl Marx said a long time ago, capitalist bosses want new advances in production technology not to lighten the toil of the downtrodden who they exploit but to deepen the exploitation and maximise profits and endless capital accumulation for themselves. This is the context in which the capitalist bosses retrench the workers who find their jobs redundant because of advances in productivity, whose gains they monopolise. As the capitalist bosses retrench more and more workers and unemployment rises to crisis-high levels and persists like it is the case in South Africa, the number of people with the purchasing power to buy the goods and services produced falls. This leads to a crisis of overproduction or overcapacity because the goods and services are not produced to look after the needs of everyone but are produced as commodities for sale. The SACP says, let us build and strengthen strategic unionism and societal power to shape the direction of technical change in the interests of, and to look after, the needs of the people as a whole.

Let us study in full and produce a comprehensive response to the complete report of the commission of inquiry into state capture, to dismantle corporate, corrupt and criminal capture of the state. The SACP welcomes the release of the latest part of the report of the state capture inquiry commission, as we did with every single part previously released. We stand firm in cautioning against selective considerations of what every part of the report says or does not say and what has to happen based on that. What South Africa needs to ensure that corporate, corrupt and criminal capture of the state does not rear its ugly head again is rigour in both studying the entire report part by part from the front cover of the first part to the back cover of the final part and in producing a response in view of its findings and recommendations.

A selective and partial response with its eyes bent against certain individuals or entities and turning a blind eye to others will not help but cause more problems. For example, the commission admits to the weakness that because of time

constraints, and presumably this goes for resources as well, it could not follow through on the inquiry to reach definitive conclusions and make findings and recommendations on certain matters. We need a comprehensive response that covers the report in its entirety, including its strengths and weaknesses, to dismantle corporate, corrupt and criminal capture of the state. The SACP will itself produce its own comprehensive response, covering the commission's report in its entirety, and publish it at an appropriate time. The SACP has already called for the entire criminal justice system to conduct and complete its investigations and prosecutions based on evidence without being selective, without fear or favour.

The foreign-controlled multinational corporations from the United States, Germany, the Netherlands and elsewhere that aided, were complicit in, or benefited from the acts of state capture must not be left out. No stone must be left untouched. This includes the tender system, which was clearly manipulated and is probably still being manipulated, as COVID-19 procurement irregularities and corruption show. We must unite and together stop the tenderisation of the state and public entities. To emphasise, we need to build a capable democratic developmental state with its own capacity to serve the people and to do so diligently. We want to take this International Workers Day opportunity to emphasise our other crucial stance aimed at dismantling state capture networks.

As the SACP, we are calling on the state to leave no stone unturned, to go all out, to recover all the funds that were stolen from the state and seize all ill-gotten and unjustified wealth.

We do not need biased agendas driven through some sections of the media to read the commission's report for us.

For example, a certain story by one newspaper published today shoves false content down the throat of the report.

What one thing the story claims is said in the report is absolutely not in the report. It is nothing but the malicious content of whoever is in charge of the newspaper's editorial propaganda. As part of dealing with state capture, it is crucial to tackle such agendas.

While sections of the media played an important role in helping us to expose state capture, if truth be told some media houses, editors and journalists published misleading stories, of which a part was driven by factional interests, or was in defence of state capture networks and propagated their fabricated version against the truth. This is the category in which the story falls.

Let us unite to push the advance towards caring social policy, towards a comprehensive social security system.

As the SACP, we want to take this opportunity to reiterate our call, that the government should extend the Social Relief of Distress grant beyond the end of March 2023. Instead of clamping down on access to this miserable grant, amidst crisis-high unemployment affecting 12.5 million active and discouraged work-seekers, the government should gradually improve the grant and use it as a foundation to build a universal basic income grant. Advancing social protection towards a comprehensive social security system is not against, but it is, in contradiction, part and parcel of pursuing an inclusive economic growth path. There is something wrong with those who juxtapose the two. Let us build the unity of the socialist axis of our democratic movement.

Our message on this day will be incomplete if we do not emphasise one critical point. As the SACP, we want to caution against attempts by certain sections of individuals who are hellbent on trying to drive a wedge between the Communist Party and COSATU. If communist and progressive trade union movements allow themselves to drift apart from each other, they will both be defeated. This warning by Lenin remains as relevant as ever. Let us strengthen our joint efforts in closely safeguarding our alliance as the socialist axis.

We also have the duty to promote co-operations such as the one the NUM has forged with AMCU in the mining sector, to reach out to other organised workers towards greater unity in action, and to organise the unorganised workers into the trade unions. This might not assume a unitary organisational form at the beginning, but it can contribute positively to advances towards broader and greater worker unity of purpose.

In the working-class movement, there is perhaps nothing more important than unity in action, which results from unity in perspective.

The feasible organisational configuration this may take will vary from time to time based on the material conditions obtaining at every corresponding moment. We cannot overemphasise the great importance of building broader worker unity towards working-class power and hegemony in all key sites of the struggle. When we are united and strong, there will be no significant centre of power in our society that can exercise that power without the impact of the working-class.

The Workers Have Spoken and We Must Listen

by Cyril Ramphosa, African National Congress President

Dear Fellow South African,
Two days ago, South Africa's workers joined millions across the globe in marking Workers Day, also known as May Day. This is a day on which workers celebrate the victories they have achieved in the fight for their rights and reaffirm their commitment to struggle for the improvement of the conditions under which they work and live. At the advent of democracy, we decided that this should be a public holiday because the struggles of workers are fundamentally about the betterment of society. It is a day which all South Africans should honour.

This year, I was invited to address a Workers Day rally at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium in Rustenburg. I was, however, unable to address the gathering because workers there had grievances that they expressed loudly and clearly. While the main grievance appeared to be about wage negotiations at nearby mines, the workers' actions demonstrated a broader level of discontent. It reflects a weakening of trust in their union and Federation as well as political leadership, including public institutions. These workers wanted to be heard. They wanted their union leaders and government to appreciate their concerns and understand the challenges they face. In raising their voices, these workers were upholding a tradition of militance that has been part of the labour movement in this country for decades.

As political and union leaders, we have all heard the workers and understand their frustration. More than that, we are firmly committed to take the necessary action to improve their lives and their working conditions. This is not something that government can do on its own. It needs both labour and business, and indeed the whole of society, to work with government to implement an agreed set of measures to grow and transform the economy. South Africans have seen how such partnerships can bring about real change. The progressive labour laws that we have in place are the product of engagement among all social partners. Together, these social partners devised an effective response to the 2008 global financial crisis and laid the foundation for the Economic

Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which is guiding our response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was such a partnership that led to the introduction of a national minimum wage in 2019, a process that I was privileged to lead, giving effect to a demand that had been made more than 50 years before at the Congress of the People in Kliptown. And it is these partners that are, at this moment, once again engaged in deliberations on how to accelerate growth and create employment. The wage grievances of the workers in Rustenburg deserve the attention of all stakeholders, employers and labour so that a fair and sustainable settlement can be reached. As government, we are committed to play our part. But the workers at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium also made plain what nearly every South African knows: the working class and the poor of our country are suffering. They made the firm point that we must do more, and act with greater urgency, to address issues of unemployment, poverty, deprivation and hunger. At the same time, we must establish more efficient mechanisms to enable workers to participate more fully in the formulation and implementation of policy and programmes.

Since the advent of democracy, significant progress has been made in improving the social and economic position of the poor and working class through the improvement of conditions of employment, the general provision of basic services and access to education and health care. Yet, the growth of our economy and the creation of jobs that followed the advent of democracy has been undermined over the past decade and more by the combined effects of the 2008 financial crisis, the sharp decline in commodity prices, state capture, corruption and poor governance.

The COVID-19 pandemic struck just as the country was emerging from the era of state capture. In addition to the loss of more than 100,000 lives, the pandemic caused massive damage to people's lives and livelihoods. Our economy shrunk and more than 2 million jobs were lost in a period of 12 months. This was a massive blow to our country, from

which it will take many years to recover. While the pandemic has affected everyone in our society, it is the working class and the poor that have suffered most. They have also been the most affected by service delivery failures, corruption, crime and weaknesses in local government.

It is the working class and the poor who were affected most by the public violence and destruction in July last year, and who were most vulnerable when catastrophic flooding struck parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. As the tragedies have struck our nation, we have not been idle, either as government or the social partners. We have responded with all the means at our disposal. As the effects of the pandemic became evident, in April 2020 we introduced the largest social and economic relief package in our history. This provided cash directly to the poorest households, wage support to workers and various forms of relief to struggling businesses. As a result, many jobs were saved, many businesses were kept afloat and millions of households were kept out of dire poverty. Some measures, like the R350 Social Relief of Distress, remain in place. The grant now reaches more than 10 million recipients. With the end of the National State of Disaster last month, we are engaging with various stakeholders on how to ensure that the grant continues to reach those who most badly need it.

This is happening alongside measures to promote employment, like the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has provided work and livelihood opportunities to more than 860,000 since it was started. It includes the expansion of the Employment Tax Incentive to encourage small businesses to employ more people, a loan guarantee scheme that has been redesigned to provide finance to smaller businesses, and the reduction of the red tape that holds back the growth of businesses. We are undertaking fundamental economic reforms that will improve the competitiveness and economic contribution of the energy, water, telecommunications and transport industries. These reforms, together with increased investment in infrastructure, will enable faster economic growth and

employment creation. In the long term, these reforms will unlock much higher economic growth. And as businesses grow, they will create more jobs, helping workers and unions in a virtuous cycle.

However, the workers that gathered at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium and millions of other people across our country cannot wait for the impact of these reforms to be realised. That is why, as we implement these measures, we are seeking – within our constrained public finances – to provide a basic level of social protection to the most vulnerable. Almost all of those who were at the Rustenburg rally would know someone in their family and their immediate community who is receiving an SRD grant, who is in a Presidential Employment Stimulus programme, who has received a NSFAS grant, or who is another way benefiting from some of these programmes. While much is happening, there is still much more that needs to be done to unleash the potential of our economy and provide the employment opportunities that our people need.

That is why we need to all work together to ensure that it will not be long before the workers of Rustenburg – and indeed workers across the country – begin to experience the benefits of ports and rail infrastructure that can effectively carry our goods to export. So that we can all experience the benefits of a stable electricity supply that is cleaner and cheaper, of fewer restrictions on small and informal businesses, of better access for all to broadband technology, and of an exploration strategy that leads to an increase in mining investment.

The challenges that workers face this Workers Day are many and the hardships they endure are great. The road ahead will be difficult and there is much work to do. That is why we need to rebuild trust and confidence, and why we need to forge a social compact that not only has the support of workers, but also delivers meaningful benefits to them. The workers have spoken. We must listen. And, together, we must act.



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COSATU National May Day Rally

held in North West



Alliance leadership getting ready to sing Nkosi Sikelele iAfrika at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium

COSATU in the North West province celebrated the International Workers Day at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium in Phokeng around Rustenburg. Hundreds of workers and community members in attendance on a sunny Sunday, listened to the keynote address delivered by COSATU President, Zingiswa Losi.

President Losi said 'We are honoured to be here with you today. The militant mood that we can feel here and that we have witnessed in the build up to this event, in particular in our mining communities confirms that COSATU lives, COSATU leads. Let us first observe a moment of silence to honour our fallen comrades, including the former President of SACCWU, cde. Duma Nkosi. Let us remember the thousands of mine workers who have died in horrific accidents in a brutal industry over many decades. Let us mourn the hundreds of health workers who have died protecting this nation as we have battled Covid-19. Let us honour the Police and Correctional Service

Officers who have laid down their lives whilst serving the nation. Let us show solidarity with the over 400 persons who perished in the recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal and surrounding areas. Let us not forget the over 100 000 South Africans who succumbed to Covid-19'.

Losi argued that 'COSATU was founded upon the principle of working-class solidarity, let us show it in all that we do. We must intensify our efforts to save and create jobs and grow the economy. Workers have paid a heavy price for an economy on its knees. The economy is in its deepest recession in living memory. Unemployment is at an all-time high of 46% with 2.2 million workers having lost their jobs in the last two years. Youth unemployment is at 75%. Millions are abandoning their homes in rural areas in search of any jobs they can find in our cities. Government and business must do more to save and create jobs. Our unemployment rate is a ticking time bomb. We cannot sustain a society where one out of two persons is unemployed and has little hope of finding work.

This must be the number one focus of government and the entire nation. We must do more to accelerate the implementation of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan. This must include fixing Eskom; we must finalise the debt relief package to enable Eskom to slash its debt and focus on ramping up maintenance and bringing on board new generation capacity. Those who have stolen from Eskom must go to prison. Without a fully functioning Eskom, there will be no economic recovery'.

The South Africa Communist Party General Secretary, Dr Blade Nzimande and the African National Congress President, Cyril Ramaphosa were scheduled to address, however the program was discontinued as workers raised strong sentiments to curb such delivery of messages of support.

COSATU General Secretary, Bheki Ntshalintshali said 'The Federation has noted the regrettable disruptions that happened in our main rally at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium, Rustenburg in the

North-West Province. This was, without a doubt, a regrettable and an unacceptable incident that prevented our invited Alliance guests from addressing the rally. This matter will receive adequate attention in our upcoming Central Executive Committee meeting at this end of this month. It has to be noted, though, that some of what transpired in North-West, to a certain extent, reflects the growing frustration among workers in South Africa. Historically Workers' Day is day where workers reflect on their struggles and push for change. This is a message that the ANC cannot claim to misunderstand and that cannot be ignored anymore'. The Marxist revolutionary and political theorist Leon Trotsky once said; "The party that leans upon the workers but serves the bourgeoisie, in the period of the greatest sharpening of the class struggle, cannot but sense the smells wafted from the waiting grave". 'The ANC has been warned'.

'We hope that the Rustenburg disruptions will jolt the ANC and its government into action. This threatens

the coherence and the legitimacy of the Alliance in the eyes of the working class. There is an urgent need to address and revive the worker's confidence in the sixth administration. This administration needs to prove that it possesses the capacity to deliver on the 2019 ANC Elections Manifesto commitments', argued Ntshalintshali

Responding to the 'disruptions', the ANC President, Cyril Ramaphosa utilized the weekly publication to make an elaboration that, 'The workers at the [stadium]... made plain what nearly every South African knows: the working class and the poor of our country are suffering.

"They made the firm point that we must do more, and act with greater urgency to address issues of unemployment, poverty, deprivation and hunger. At the same time, we must establish more efficient mechanisms to enable workers to participate more fully in the formulation and implementation of policy and programmes.

"The wage grievances of the workers in Rustenburg deserve the attention of all stakeholders, employers and labour so that a fair and sustainable settlement can be reached. As government, we are committed to play our part," President Ramaphosa said.

Reactions by Affiliated Trade Unions on the 'disruptions'

Mugwena Maluleke, SADTU General Secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), an affiliate of COSATU in good standing, has strongly condemned and distanced herself from the anarchy that ensued at the rally to mark International Workers Day – May Day organised by our Federation in Rustenburg whereby President Cyril Ramaphosa was booed.

'This unruly behaviour sadly, led to the abandonment of the event which is celebrated not only in South Africa but worldwide. Such unruly behaviour is a foreign tendency which we strongly condemn. We cannot allow a few anarchists and populists to disrupt such an august occasion – a workers' event - and do so in the name of COSATU. SADTU finds it ironic that some workers among the crowd could behave in such an undignified manner in an event whose purpose is to seek, among others, to recommit the country to the constitutional principle of fair labour practices. This behaviour contradicts the constitutional provisions that guarantees freedom of speech and human dignity. SADTU is not oblivious to the challenges facing workers in our country today as we fight against the undermining of collective

bargaining, austerity measures, rising food and fuel prices, job losses and high unemployment figures. We believe our Federation has worked hard and some of our forebearers even died fighting for workers to have powers and platforms to engage the employer, including the right to strike. We believe these have enough teeth to ensure favourable outcomes for workers. We therefore have no cause to resort to demeaning ways to resolve challenges faced by workers. In the spirit of Workers' Day, let us use these to the fullest to gain favourable outcomes for workers'.

Ishmael Makgati, General Secretary of the South African Emergency Personnel Union [SAEPU] argued that 'As SAEPU we welcome the action which was taken by the workers. Members of the public may call it disruption but from SAEPU's perspective we are saying workers were in charge of the May Day. It's a clear sign that the workers are tired of empty promises by the government leadership because all the engagements between the leaders of trade unions and the government were pointless/fruitless. Leaders of the government rendered trade unions useless so it now frustrates trade union members and call their leaders sellouts so that's why they are taking upon themselves to portray the frustration they are having at their workplaces. We further applaud them by showing their anger and frustration that they are having as trade unions leaders were not taken seriously by government leaders'.

Zola Saphetha, General Secretary of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] said 'The occasion of Worker's Day presents an opportunity for the toiling masses to reflect on the gains and achievements made by workers. As NEHAWU, a fighting, militant and transformative union we are fully conscious of the challenges that are faced by workers which amongst others include; jobless, retrenchments, victimization at the workplace, budget cuts, wage freezes, unemployment, inequality and poverty. As such, this requires more than ever before that as workers, we stand united and wage a serious struggle.

Workers should use this year's celebration to demand and fight for the defence of collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is currently under

attack from employers and they have embarked on reversing the hard-won gains of workers and the rights of workers. Equally workers should use worker's day intensify the fight against job losses, casualization, agentification, privatization and retrenchments. Workers should relentlessly fight the job blood bath that is currently taking place across all sectors of the economy that has led to South Africa being ranked the most unequal society in the world with high levels of poverty, extreme inequalities and an unemployment rate of 35.3%. As workers, we should intensify our campaign for the creation of decent jobs, living wage in all sectors, implementation of National Health Insurance [NHI], End

the society and in the workplace'.

'The big task for workers on this May Day is not to repeat the nature of problems facing the workers and the working class but to begin to offer a serious answer to the most elementary and obvious question: 'Why have the trade unions failed so miserably to defend the living standards of the working class, let alone raise them?'

'Government and business can do more to create more decent jobs. We believe that the state should continue to play an active role in making sure that jobs are created as espoused in our belief of what a developmental state should immerse itself upon', concluded Thipe.



Workers and community members marching on May 1 at Trompsburg

to Austerity Measures, and demand improved service delivery for the working class'.

Free State

COSATU in the Free State commemorated the International Workers Day at Trompsburg in the Xhariep District. This coincided with the 19th Anniversary since the May Day Disaster which occurred when a bus carrying workers traveling to a Worker's Day celebrations near Bethlehem plunged into the Saulspoort dam and killing 51 Cosatu members in 2003. The African National Congress delegation was led by Comrade David Mahlobo who spoke on behalf of the ruling party.

The South African Communist Party delivered a message of support led by Comrade Frans Baleni. Addressing the workers, COSATU 2nd Deputy President, Louise Thipe said 'We would like our members to stand against gender-based violence and sexual harassment. We are encouraging our members to advocate for the LGBTQI+ rights and to stand against any form of discrimination both in

Limpopo

Hundreds of workers gathered at Makhuvha Stadium, Thulamela Municipality in the Vhembe District to celebrate the 2022 Provincial Workers Day, after being welcomed by His Excellency, Chief of Thohoyandou, Thovhele Gole Mphaphuli.

The Keynote speaker was COSATU 1st Deputy President, Cde Michael Shingange, who saluted workers who rendered essential services during most difficult times of Covid19 pandemic.

Shingange said 'we continue to pay special tribute to all our healthcare workers. The brave and dedicated doctors, nurses, community health carers, paramedics, allied health and social service practitioners, and cleaners who continue to take care of the nation under extreme situations. The performance of these overworked heroes and heroines in our under-resourced in our overloaded health facilities is inspiring.

Let us all vaccinate to help our health



Comrades singing the National Anthem at the Limpopo COSATU May Day Celebrations

professionals and relieve them of the burden of continuing to deal with the worst cases of COVID-19, even after the removal of the Disaster management Act. COVID-19 is still around comrades'.

'This May Day takes place during a very difficult period for the workers. We continue to see an increase in the cost of living. Unemployment is close to 50% and according to Oxfam and the World Bank, we are the most unequal country in the world. Half the country lives in poverty or a category called near poverty.

The working class and the working poor are priced out of the health care system. The schools do not educate their children, who live without adequate food and often clean water, are repeatedly evicted from their homes, have their utilities shut off, cannot find jobs, are crippled by punishing debt. Sadly, there is nothing new here comrades. COSATU and the Alliance have been talking about the triple crisis of poverty, unemployment, and inequality for two decades. This May Day, let us take time to reflect on what went wrong since 2012, when Mangaung Conference demanded radical economic transformation', argued Shingange.

Other speakers were the SACP 1st Deputy General Secretary, Cde Solly Mapaila and ANC National Executive Committee Member, Cde Thoko Didiza.

COSATU Young Workers Forum Provincial Convenor, Cde Jamel Mhlarihi was also given an opportunity to update young people about the coming National Young Workers Conference to draft a road

map to address issues affecting young people in South Africa.

As part and parcel of the build-up activities towards May Day, COSATU Limpopo led successful social responsibility activities by holding the Edwin Manwadu Memorial Lecture, laying wreaths at the graveside of the late Cde TT Musetsho and Cde Ronald Mani graveside, leading a donation of school shoes to needy learners at Tshififi Primary School, cleaning and painting of Mangodi Community Creche.

Mpumalanga

In the Nkangala Region at the Puma Stadium in Witbank, COSATU CEC Member and NUM Deputy President, Phillip Vilakazi delivered a keynote address on behalf of the federation at the May Day celebrations.

Vilakazi said 'Government needs to support Black Businesses in their fight to be included in government procurement and government business in general. Economic Transformation cannot be delayed or postponed any longer, and government cannot continue to do business with companies that are not complying with Employment Equity Laws. We need a response to this crisis that will eliminate the current monopolies and build an economy that will meet the basic needs of our people'.

The SACP was represented by the Member of the Central Committee, Alex Mashilo and the ANC was represented by Nomsa Maseko, NEC Member.

In Gert Sibande Region, at the Joseph Nhlane Hall at Bethal, COSATU CEC and SAMWU Deputy General Secretary, Dumisani Magagula delivered a keynote address.

Magagula said 'Collective Bargaining is under attack in both the public and the private sector. Health and Safety is deteriorating rate in both the public and private sector as exposed by COVID-19. Employers are not contributing to the UIF, despite some of them deducting money from workers. The big task for workers on this May Day is not to repeat the nature of problems facing the workers and the working class but to begin to offer a serious answer to the most elementary and obvious question: 'Why have the trade unions failed so miserably to defend the living standards of the working class, let alone raise them?'

The SACP Provincial PEC Member, Fidel Mlombo represented the Party and the ANC PEC Member, Dumisani Mokoka represented the ruling party.

In Ehlanzeni Region, at the Oewersag Hall next to Nelspruit Show Grounds, COSATU CEC Member and SASBO General Secretary, Joe Kokela delivered a keynote address on behalf of the federation.

Kokela said 'We have seen retrenchments in the State Owned Enterprises [SOEs] and the private sector. We have seen a VAT increase in the last five years. There is unilateral unbundling of State Owned Enterprises and outright privatisation like the South African

Airways. The CCMA which plays a key role in protecting workers from abusive employers has been crippled by budget cuts. Teachers, nurses, and police officers have been abandoned by a government that has reneged on a signed wage agreement in 2018. Government has unilaterally imposed a freeze on wages and vacancies'.

'We need to intensify and consolidate the recruitment. We need to defend Collective Bargaining including strengthening bargaining councils. Let us push for a retrenchment tool kit that will ensure that retrenchments are indeed the last resort for companies', concluded Kokela.

SACP Central Committee Member, Lechesa Tsenoli represented the vanguard of workers and ANC Mpumalanga Provincial Secretary, Muzi Chirwa delivered a message of support on behalf of the Party.

KwaZulu-Natal

KwaZulu-Natal suffered the most devastating floods in the recent years which left more than 400 people dead, more than 630 schools affected, with business centres damaged, infrastructure devastated and economic activities halted in the nation's biggest port in around Durban.

COSATU KwaZulu-Natal extended a hand of generosity by donating to the victims of these recent floods in the province. The Deputy Minister of Social Development, Hendrietta Ipeleng Bogopane-Zulu, accepting the



KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Zihle Zikalala receiving the social relief donations from the federation towards humanitarian assistance

donations, 'thanked COSATU for its contribution on relieving the stress from distraught family members'. ANC KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Chairperson, Cde Sihle Zikalala delivering a message of support at the COSATU Interfaith Solidarity Program said, 'while government had reprioritised R1 billion towards Disaster Relief interventions, they needed more than R1,9 billion to complete the work'. He thanked 'COSATU for the extending a good gesture towards humanizing our people'. COSATU General Secretary, Cde Bheki Ntshali delivered the keynote address.

Ntshali said 'The July Riots last year gave us highlights of what is possible a decade after the Marikana tragedy warned us about the anger of the workers and the working class. The emergence of populist movements in South Africa from Operation Dudula in Gauteng to Amadela Ngokubona in KZN poses a threat to social stability. The huge social divides, largely built around race, will be used by these populists' movements to divert a legitimate rage by a betrayed working class to set neighbour against neighbour.

These populists' movements need a crisis, manufactured or real, in order to insert themselves and set this country on a dark journey of internecine conflict. The only way to blunt the rise of these populists' is to reintegrate the exploited South Africans into mainstream economy, giving them jobs with stable, sustainable incomes, relieving their crushing personal debts, improving services to communities'.

Other speakers were COSATU CEC Member and NEHAWU General Secretary, Cde Zola Saphetha and

SACP Central Committee Member, Cde Nomarashiya Caluza

Northern Cape

COSATU Northern Cape embarked on the celebrations of the International Worker's Day at the Eiland Resort Sports Grounds in Upington.

The keynote message was delivered by COSATU CEC and DENOSA President, Simon Hlungwani.

Hlungwani argued that 'Let us build programmes of unity in action to resist exploitation of workers and attempts by capital to divide and mislead workers. We need to work to make sure that unions across the board work together to overcome non-antagonistic differences'.

SACP Northern Cape 2nd Deputy Provincial, Kabelo Mohibidu and the ANC Northern Cape Provincial Chairperson, Dr Zamani Saul delivered messages of support.

Western Cape

In Western Cape, Freda Oosthuysen, COSATU National Treasurer led a march by workers and the communities around Langa to the South African Police Service to demand efficient handling of cases of gender based violence and eradication of all form of drugs in the area. Addressing the workers at the Langa Stadium, Oosthuysen said 'the protest march to the Langa Police Station where we handed over a memorandum to the Provincial Commissioner of SAPS and the Station Commander was meant to register workers' concerns about the devastating effects of Gender Based Violence and crime in general in Langa and broader communities'.

'Workers remain under attack. It is only us as COSATU, as trade unions who can protect workers. We have seen employers look for any excuse to retrench and dismiss workers. We have seen employers fail to pay workers what is due to them. We have seen employers refuse to honour signed wage agreements', concluded Oosthuysen. ANC National Chairperson, Gwede Mantashe, SACP Central Committee Member, Khaya Magaxa and SANCO NEC Member, Thozana Bevu delivered messages of support.

Eastern Cape

COSATU Eastern Cape held four provincial activities at Komani (Queenstown), Sisa Dukashe Stadium in Mdantsane, Mthatha 2010 Stadium and at the Raymond Mhlaba Indoor Sports Centre in Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth).

Leading the march in Mthatha from the Tobi Kula Indoor Sports Centre, COSATU CEC Member and 2nd Deputy President of SACCAWU, Mike Tau said 'The challenge for our trade unions on this May Day is to decide whether they become revolutionary trade unions or lieutenants of capital incapable of defending the working class against the onslaught of capital. The time for honest reflection is now. The labour movement is in a terminal stage and cannot afford to embrace of collective self-delusion and to retreat inward, to celebrate non-existent virtues and strengths and wallow in sentimentality and a false optimism. We cannot fight a system when we only organise less than 30% of the workforce and labour'.

'Our May Day rally as preceded by a march was a resounding success. Our appreciation goes to the important role players who contributed immensely to the success of the festivities on the occasion of our International Worker's Day', said COSATU Mthatha Local leadership. Andile Mosha, YCLSA National Deputy Secretary delivered a message of support on behalf of the SACP at Mthatha and Zoleka Capa spoke on behalf of the African National Congress. In East London at the Sisa Dukashe Stadium, COSATU CEC Member and NEHAWU 1st Deputy President, Nyameka Macanda delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Central Executive Committee.

Macanda said 'Let us to build and strengthen our unions into sharper instrument of class war. Let us continue to ensure that COSATU remains a mass-

based organisation, which derives its perspectives from the masses'. The SACP Central Committee Member, Buti Manamela delivered a message of support on behalf of the Party. The ANC Deputy President, David Mabuza tendered an apology at the venue due to ill health and could not speak.

In Queenstown, (Komani) at the Indoor Sport Centre, COSATU CEC Member and Nolitha Mboniswa, SADTU Vice President Sports, Arts and Culture delivered the keynote address on behalf of the federation.

Mboniswa said 'We need a law that enshrines the right to refuse dangerous work and also that insert provisions related to pandemic and vaccine management. Let us campaign for and pursue a national policy to promote the adoption of the principle of the reduction of normal hours of work to the standard of the 40-hour week'. The SACP Central Committee Member, Koliswa Fihlani and ANC Regional Deputy Chairperson, Ntsaluba delivered messages of support.

In Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha) at the Raymond Mhlaba Sport Centre in Motherwell, COSATU CEC Member and SADTU Deputy General Secretary, Nkosana Dolopi addressed the massive number of workers of came to celebrate May Day.

Dolopi said 'Let us remain a fighting organisation that continues to enjoy respect and credibility by the working class by providing solutions to the challenges confronting society. Let's continue to be a forward-looking organisation that grapples with new developments like 4IR and Climate change and ensure that the workers are not left behind. It is up to us to abolish the South African kleptocracy. It is up to us to mount sustained acts of mass public rebellion to bring down the corrupt and exploitative system. Let us beat back the populist movements and crisis that are sowing divisions amongst the working class instead of fighting the system. Let us go back to our workplaces and mobilise ourselves for mass pickets, sympathy strikes and solidarity rallies to strike back against the exploitative system'.

The SACP Central Committee Member, Bulelwa Tunyiswa delivered a message of support on behalf of the vanguard of workers.

Global Federations celebrate International Worker's Day



Long live May Day, the day of the world working class-A day of internationalism and class struggle of workers from all over the world!

A South African delegation to Cuba joined the International Worker's Day celebration on the streets off Havana demanding social justice for the most downtrodden working class communities, suffering as a result of imperialism and capitalism.

Workers from around the world have organized mass strikes, demonstrations, and massive rallies for the 1st of May in every country of the world, celebrating the 136 years since the revolt of the workers in Chicago and also projected their internationalism and demanded to stop the imperialistic interventions, contemporary rights for the working class in each country, better wages, labor and trade union rights and liberties, social security, policies to

confront unemployment.

The World Trade Union Federation, on the occasion of May Day 2022, salutes workers on all continents – all those whose work continues to drive the gears of life even in difficult conditions and who continue to produce all essential goods.

'The migrant workers in Chicago, who fought and sacrificed their lives in May 1886 for the establishment of the 8-hour day, paved the way for the international working class to continue to demand its rights. The international class-oriented labor movement, through the ranks of the WFTU, honors the legacy of their struggle and continues under all circumstances, despite the difficulties, to fight for the fulfillment of the contemporary needs of workers and the abolition

of exploitation, for the emancipation of the working class and its liberation from the capitalist barbarity', WFTU reiterated that 'May Day 2022 coincides with the 18th World Trade Union Congress to be held in Rome on 6, 7 and 8 May 2022.

On May Day 2022, this important day for the international working class, trade union militants from all corners of the world will get ready to depart for Rome to take part in the most important event of our class: the 18th World Trade Union Congress, to unite their forces against capitalist barbarity and against imperialism'.

'In the past period, there was no corner of the globe that has not been marked by the working class action, with the WFTU members to be at the forefront of the struggle, whether on

the pandemic fronts or in social and class struggles. This experience will guide our collective discussions and resolutions during our Congress.

In the current conditions of the deep economic crisis of capitalism and the intense competition between the various imperialist centers for the control of the new markets, our most powerful weapons are INTERNATIONALISM and SOLIDARITY.

We stand with the heroic People of Cuba, the Palestinian people, we express our solidarity with the peoples of Venezuela, Syria, Lebanon, Ukraine and we call for the end of war. Every people has the right to decide freely and democratically on its present and future, without any imperialist interference. We condemn NATO's



"This May Day, peace, solidarity, democracy and jobs are at the heart of a secure future"
Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary

intervention which has also lit the fire of war in Ukraine. We call for the dismantling of NATO, which in the last 25 years has launched two wars in Europe: in Yugoslavia in 1999 and now in Ukraine, just as it did with the wars in Libya, Afghanistan and Iraq'.

'Today, while technology and scientific progress have helped to increase the social wealth produced, the living conditions of our class have deteriorated. In every capitalist country, the bosses are attacking our class achievements: they are sweeping away wages, pensions and social security, they privatize everything, they don't hesitate to attack even the sacred right to strike! The strike is the

most powerful weapon we have in our hands and we will not allow anyone to limit it, marginalize it or turn it into a dead letter!

WFTU General Secretary, George Mavrikos said 'In the face of this situation, the World Trade Union Federation calls on workers, the international class-oriented trade union movement to organize mass strikes, demonstrations, rallies on May Day in every country of the world, actions that will commemorate the workers' uprising in Chicago, to project their internationalism and will demand contemporary rights for the working class in every country, to project the

18th World Trade Union Congress'.

The WFTU is proud of its members and friends all over the world'.

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary Burrow said 'workers and workers demand peace and social justice of a strong social contract, necessary to ensure our common security. The world needs a new social contract that provides employment, rights, salaries, social protection, equality and inclusion. The cost of the war between Russia and Ukraine can be accounted for innocent lives and will affect workers and families across the globe. The humanitarian work of our affiliates in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries to welcome refugees and help meet their needs is tremendous, and we are doing all we can to support them. You can make a donation to the emergency fundraising appeal, and you can sign the petition for peace, dialogue and democracy'.

As workers are preparing for the Fifth Global Conference on The Elimination of Child Labour (16 – 20 May) in South Africa, ITUC said 'even before the economic and social

disaster of the pandemic, more than 150 million children were at work instead of in school. We will take to this conference the message that we need corporate accountability with a new social contract, which guarantees investment in jobs, social protection, and free, quality education for all children. This is the key to achieving the elimination of child labour and meeting UN Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 by 2025'. Meanwhile, around the world, IndustriALL affiliates took action on this year's May Day to call for improved workers' rights.

In Thailand, IndustriALL affiliate CILT joined other unions in a rally today to demand increased minimum wage, 180 days maternity leave, a reformed social security system and ratification on ILO Conventions 4, 87 and 98.

Unions in Sri Lanka called for immediate political solutions to address the country's dire economic situation. MEGM in Mongolia used the May Day rally to protest the new labour law that the unions say enables employers to steal the workers' salary. The IndustriALL affiliates also called for an eight-hour workday.

In a joint statement, the Confederation of Cambodian Worker-Movement (CCW), Collective Union of Movement of Workers (CUMW), Independent Labor Union Coalition (ILUC), Cambodia Development People's Life Association (CDPLA), Association of Domestic Workers (ADW), called on the government of Cambodia to ratify ILO Conventions 144, 183, 189 and 190, and to review the implementation of ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

In Korea, 75,000 workers rallied in 16 regions, with 14,000 on the streets of the capital Seoul, calling for labour rights for all workers, without discrimination and the right to a safe workplace, and an end to anti-labour policies. Unions in the Philippines addressed poverty wages, poor occupational health and safety and demanded an end to violence and harassment in the workplace, amid local and national elections and the corona virus crisis.

IndustriALL affiliates in Sub-Sahara Africa came out to commemorate May Day, campaigning for the restoration of dignity in world of work. On May Day, Lesotho union IDUL officially opened its office in Buthe Buthe, aimed at improving service delivery to mine workers. Belgian union ACV-CSC have supported the construction of the office.



IndustriALL affiliates marching on the streets of Thailand demanding safe workplaces for vulnerable groups

COSATU Public Service Unions table their wage demands for 2022/2023

Simon Hlungwani, Joint Mandating Committee [JMC] Convener, Mugwena Maluleke, SADTU General Secretary and Zola Saphetha, NEHAWU General Secretary

The Joint Mandating Committee (JMC) of the public sector trade unions organised under Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), who command the majority at the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) has together with other unions, who are parties in Council tabled our demands for this round of wage negotiations.

This tabling of demands comes in the backdrop of the Constitutional Court ruling against labour on the implementation of clause 3.3 of Resolution 1 of 2018.

Among many of the demands submitted is the call for a 10% increase across the board on the Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), the R2 500 on housing allowance, and the permanent employment of contract workers which includes the Community Health Workers, the Teacher Assistants, and the Police Reservists. The double digit increase demand is informed by the fact that the global and domestic volatility of inflation has left workers struggling to keep up with the cost of living. The escalating inflation which has been forecast at 5.9% by StatsSA and at 8.1% by the IMF warrants a justifiable higher than inflation demand especially on COLA. Considering this 5.9% inflation means that our demands will culminate into a real increase of 3.1% above inflation.

Workers are faced with multiple

increases in commodities with the fuel price rising to a record 33.2% year on year (April to March), while between February and March 2022 the increase was at 7.2%. This price hike has a direct bearing on workers who commute on public transport and private transport daily. NERSA has granted Eskom electricity tariffs increase of 9.61%, while food inflation is at 6.4% year on year. It is envisaged that the food inflation will increase nominally, especially in the wake of global geopolitical crisis in Europe, which will affect among others, the price of barley where Russia is the main producer.

In total, these three most important expenses for South African low-paid consumers makes up 23,34% of the total CPI basket. The tabling also comes at the time where labour has presented an economic outlook in which we rebutted the view of employer pleading poverty even against the budget overrun of R469bn.

This excess in revenue collection for the financial year 2021/22 has given the fiscus a lifeline to invest economic spending for the much-needed economic growth. In their economic outlook presentation last week at the PSCBC, the employer emphasised the servicing of high debt as a primary reason for unaffordability and placed the wage bill as one of the high-cost items on its balance sheet. Our belief is that the wage bill is not the cause

of the country's soaring levels of debt but economic stagnation that comes from misguided policy choices and lack of consequence management for entrenched corruption in the public service.

In their own presentation, the employer has shown that the wage bill has decreased from 35.7% in 2013/14 financial year to 32% in 2021/22. This decrease in budget on wage bill is evidence of either a decreasing headcount in which vacant post are not filled or a concerted effort to casualise the public service through contract employment.

We believe that public service is understaffed amid the growing demand for public service. Our call to increase staffing in the public service has never been this relevant as is common knowledge that the public service employed 1 269 141 people servicing a total population of about 40.6 million in 1994.

In 2021 the public service employed 1 235 768 against the population of about 60.1 million, and this proves that the public service employment has not kept up with the rising population numbers and this is translated into high crime and gender based violence, low education outcomes and a strain on the public health sector. We believe that public service needs an additional 592 689 to keep up with size of the population and creating contract employment is not an answer.

Our demands for provision of housing to ordinary public servants remain the sore point in our struggle for dignity as many public servants remain homeless even after signing a resolution on Government Employee Housing Scheme in 2015.

Most public servants continue to be denied decent housing by the banking system in South Africa, while at the same time they are not eligible for the RDP housing scheme. The cost of housing has escalated, and public servants are forced into rental options.

Our demand of R2 500 increase in allowance is mainly informed by affordability of housing in South Africa.

The other demands are envisioned at bettering the livelihoods of public servants who performed commendably during the recent national disaster periods. We want to reassure our members that we have heeded their call to demand a real increase. Everything submitted at the PSCBC is sensitive and reflect their submission during the mandatory process.

We strongly believe that our demands are reasonable, affordable, achievable and we are therefore committed to defend them at all costs. We are conscious of the reality of a new economic austerity policy trajectory, which is being advanced by the employer even against the legitimate demands of workers who continue to serve the public with all diligence.

REMEMBERING CHRIS HANI

by Sithembiso Bhengu



Lindiwe Hani, Chris Hani's daughter remembering fond moments about her father at Boksburg

This year marks 29 years since the callous assassination of Comrade Chris Hani, then General Secretary of the South African Communist Party and NEC member of the ANC. Chris Hani's assassination took place on the eve of the democratic breakthrough, becoming catalytic in the push for the first democratic elections on 27 April 1994. As we commemorate the life history of Chris Hani, on the eve of the 30-years of his death, signifying a full generation cycle since the assassination of Comrade Chris, and a full generation of the democratic dispensation. From this, we have to ask, 'how has the South African democratic transition advanced key struggles for which Chris Hani lived and for which he was killed?'

Chris Hani's tenure as the General Secretary from the 8th National Congress of the SACP, the Central Committee statement was framed around 'health, hunger and housing' (popularly known as triple H). While broad political campaigns proceeding from the 8th National Congress built popular struggles towards a resounding victory at 1994 elections, SACP branch and district campaigns and programs took struggles on healthcare, hunger and housing in communities.

There can be no denying that the democratic breakthrough has produced significant gains for the majority of South Africans. For instance, institutional exclusion of the majority of South Africans under apartheid ended with the democratic transition. Our democracy also removed institutional dehumanizing of black people (Africans in particular) and produced marked changes,

currently exemplified by the changing composition of the South African middle class in the past 25 years.

With that said, our transition continues the reproduce exclusion, poverty and inequality, witnessed in the very areas of campaign that Chris Hani spearheaded, viz., health, hunger and housing. The StatsSA Q4 2021 unemployment results show unemployment at 35,3%, with an expanded figure at a staggering 46,2%. What this means is that the South African economy is within 4% of producing joblessness for half of economically active population.

Youth unemployment figures point a catastrophic scenario, with youths between 15-24 years at 66,5% (with the expanded figure at 77%). This youth also recorded only 7,6% absorption rate in the labour market. South Africa's level of unemployment produces ideal scenario for a crisis of social reproduction, with direct implications for health, hunger and housing. The Covid-19 pandemic exposed these fault lines, as the NIDS/CRAM survey showed heightened levels of vulnerability and household hunger during the Covid-19 lockdown, before the promulgation of the social relief and distress grant (SRDG). NIDS/CRAM survey results from April – June 2020 showed that 47% of respondents ran short of money for food, resulting in heightened household hunger at 23% of the respondents. Household hunger remains a real challenge in poor communities, with childhood hunger accentuated by institutional paralysis in the state (Department of Basic Education), coupled with corruption in the rollout of school nutrition programme

regularly reported in the media.

While the SRD grant ameliorated acute levels of vulnerability and hunger, it remains too little for sustainable social protection. At the height of Covid-19 pandemic and regulatory lockdowns, the visible face of the crisis of social reproduction pushed to the fore the debate on the universal basic income grant (UBIG). While momentum has built over two years, perceived reduced risk of the impact of Covid-19 and the lifting of lockdown regulations has emboldened anti-UBIG lobby within the state and in society, seeking to remove UBIG in policy conversations for economic recovery and reconstruction.

The public healthcare system is also experiencing multiple crises, for instance, collapsing public health facilities, with reports of Charlotte Maxeke Hospital, cancer-care backlog in KZN, the recent Life Esidimeni debacle and poor to non-existent health infrastructure in rural communities.

Primary healthcare is facing acute resource constraints, especially in rural and poor communities. Even with the introduction of Community Healthcare Workers (CHW), the system continues to fail to optimize these towards structural transformation and service provision of primary healthcare. The Department of Housing renamed as Human Settlements since the 5th administration continue to preside over a state administration failing to provide decent housing, water and sanitation.

Majority of black townships and rural communities continue to live in subhuman conditions, viz., lack of

housing, no provision of water and sanitation. For instance, the Human Rights Commission recently released a report, showing that the community of Hammanskraal has for over ten years been provided water not suitable for human consumption. We witness on a regular basis accounts of community protests and unrest predicated on demands for provision of housing, water and sanitation in many black townships and informal settlements. In its analysis, the SACP has surmised these as a crisis of social reproduction, framing the revisit of the triple H campaign around the notion of putting people before profits.

Putting people before profits is a roll call to galvanize society to demand policy instruments and process application of programs anchored on restoring and affirming humanity of our communities on concrete programs, e.g., advancing a comprehensive national health system, viz., the National Health Insurance, infrastructure development investment for housing, road, sanitation infrastructure and developing productive capacity of the economy to stimulate employment.

In re-membering this stalwart, we must engage policy and programmatic positions that seek to build a truly capable democratic developmental state, anchored in re-invoking the humanity of our people by putting people before profits and state institutions that effectively prosecute profiteers – wolves in sheep skins of service delivery!

Dr Sithembiso Bhengu is the Executive Director at the Chris Hani Institute

COSATU Central Executive Committee Meeting Outcomes

Introduction

1. The Central Executive Committee met in its normal session from the 23rd -25th of May 2022. The meeting took note of the continuing job losses that have worsened our rate of unemployment and the twin problems of electricity cuts, and the fuel price hikes that are raising the cost of living for workers. The meeting is calling on government to take drastic steps to fix these problems and stop outsourcing its responsibility to the private sector. We also call on government to extend the temporary fuel levy reduction of R1.50 beyond the 31st of May, while exploring a more sustainable solution. The CEC expressed its shock and sadness over the ongoing femicide in South Africa. We send our message of condolences to the families of Namhla Mtwa, Bontle Mashiyane and Hillary Gardee and others, who were brutally murdered across the country.

Law enforcement agencies need to do everything to arrest the perpetrators, and government needs to step up the fight against this scourge of Gender Based Violence that is consuming the country. This is a societal issue that needs all social partners from churches, traditional leadership, civil society, and all communities to confront this problem. The meeting received a report on the preparations for the upcoming 14th National Congress to be held in September at Gallagher Estate, Midrand. The meeting welcomed the progress report, and expressed contentment with the advances made on both the logistical arrangements and the discussion documents for the congress. The CEC expressed its full support for the striking workers at Sibanye Stillwater, UNISA and SARS, led by both NEHAWU and NUM. We support all striking workers in all sectors of the economy and encourage them to defend their unity.

These workers are showing everyone what should be done. We are also calling for Orange Grove Farms to engage with workers and resolve their legitimate demands, and we support our affiliated union SACTWU for ensuring that workers' rights and needs are championed and defended. During this round of collective bargaining, workers need

to understand that nothing will be handed over in a platter by employers. Unions need to sharpen their research capacity and empower their negotiators with requisite tools to get the best outcomes possible on behalf of workers. Workers also need to realise that our only weapon and defense is our organisations, unity, and struggle as workers. COSATU and Affiliates will redouble their efforts and wage relentless battles in defence of collective bargaining, workers' hard won labour rights and their right to a living wage. The meeting instructed the COSATU Campaigns and Organizing Coordinating Committee [COCC] to coordinate solidarity actions in support of the workers currently on strike, including dignity packs for the workers at the Union Buildings in Tshwane. The CEC reiterated its call for South Africans to continue to vaccinate in the face declining levels of vaccination and increasing levels of infection. Vaccines have been scientifically proven to be highly effective in drastically lowering infection and death rates. We should not allow complacency to drag us into the difficult period of lockdowns. Vaccinating is not only about protecting the vaccinated individual, but it is also about showing solidarity with other workers and creating a safe working space for them. The economy cannot afford and will not sustain another economic lockdown, nor should it when vaccines are freely available. The Federation, though, remains opposed to mandatory vaccinations.

2. On Organisational Assessment

The CEC acknowledged the convening of nine (9) successful provincial congresses, nine Gender Conferences and a Young Workers Summit, and agreed that a lot of progress has been registered in strengthening our organisational machinery and placing our members at the centre of all that we do. However, it also recognised that alongside the solid advances that we are making, there are some shortcomings and challenges that still remain to be overcome. COSATU has made a lot of progress over the last four years in implementing the 13th National Congress mandate to unite workers across political and ideological divides. Our upcoming congress is faced with a critical task of developing strategies to respond, in

a sustainable way, to the current challenges. We appreciate that for our organisation to grow in strength and numbers, we need to deliver services effectively to members, and run solid campaigns. We intend to revitalise our organising drives and work with our unions to strengthen the framework for collective bargaining in order to improve service delivery to members and grow the unions. These shall constitute part and parcel of our new programme of action in 2023 which will be adopted by the 14th National Congress. The CEC will continue to work closely with some of our affiliated unions like SATAWU, CWU, AFADWU, CEPWAWU and PAWUSA to enhance internal democracy and organisational cohesion. The meeting appreciated the progress that has been made by SAMATU, and we look forward to their congress in August. May Day Assessment- The meeting reflected on the May Day celebrations and congratulated the thousands of workers, who participated in our nationwide May Day celebrations.

On the disruptions that happened in Rustenburg, the meeting expressed regret that both the President of the ANC Cde Cyril Ramaphosa and the General Secretary of the SACP Cde Blade Nzimande were unable to deliver their messages of support due to disturbances. In its analysis, the federation noted that this regrettable incident reflects the worker's dissatisfaction with the socioeconomic crisis engulfing the working class in general. Workers have legitimate anger over their stagnating wages and the reversal of their gains at a workplace level, and deteriorating services in our communities. The disruption exposed the chronic weak state of the ANC, its leagues, and the Alliance in general both in terms of organisational cohesion and strategic orientation. It is clear that our broad movement is facing immense challenges and has lost touch with its base. The federation has been consistent in pointing out that the national democratic revolution is poised at a crossroads and the balance of class forces remain overwhelmingly in favour of capital.

This dominance of monopoly capital means that many of the socio-economic

gains that we have achieved since 1994, are being eroded by the continuously declining share of the workers in the national income. The sixth ANC administration continues to preside over economic contraction and job-losses despite the fact that its mandate from both the Nasrec Conference and the 2019 national general elections called for urgency and determination in turning around this trajectory. This is a challenge for all key components of the Alliance who will be convening their national constitutional meetings in the next six (6) months. We all need to use these upcoming meetings to further develop and sharpen our overall strategies and tactics for the deepening of the national democratic revolution, and the struggle for socialism. We intend to convene urgent meetings with the SACP and the ANC to discuss issues affecting workers in South Africa. A Cosatu Special Campaigns and Organizing Committee would also be convened to beef up the analysis and enrich the recommendations towards the coming National Day of Action. The meeting commended all affiliates who contributed to the donation that was made by the federation to the KZN flood victims. This is the kind of practical solidarity that is needed going forward.

3. Socio-Economic

Social Relief - The CEC endorsed the extension of the R350 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Grant, especially because it has provided relief to more than 10 million unemployed recipients. We feel that it is affordable at a cost of R44 billion out of a budget of R1.8 trillion. What is not affordable is to leave 10 million unemployed persons with no source of income. The grant recipients must be linked to skills training programmes to help them find jobs. We cannot sustain a ratio of 14 million employed persons supporting 30 million social grant recipients and unemployed persons. The R350 SRD Grant must be extended beyond 2022, increased to the food poverty line, and used as a foundation for a basic income grant. Climate Change- Detailed reports were received on the positive work being done by the Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission.

It is critical that efforts to tackle climate change are accelerated and that just transition plans are put in place to ensure that affected workers and communities are not left behind. The Federation reiterated its support for those who lost loved ones and for efforts to rebuild communities affected by the recent floods in KwaZulu-Natal and neighbouring provinces.

The floods must be a wakeup call for government and municipalities to take the need to invest in infrastructure seriously. The government needs to resettle many of the vulnerable communities and spend money on the infrastructure rollout to rebuild the province. Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan-The Federation is calling upon government and business to speed up the implementation of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, in particular the implementation of the Eskom Social Compact and a debt relief package for Eskom, rebuilding Transnet and Metrorail so our goods and commuters can reach their destinations safely and on time, ramping up the fight against corruption, and supporting locally produced goods.

4. Politics

The CEC noted the release of the SACP, and ANC Policy Papers and the Federation shall engage and respond these documents in the build up to both the ANC Policy Conference and the SACP National Congress in July. As members of these formations of our movement and as part of the federation, we shall ensure that all the necessary preparations and interventions are made leading to these important gatherings, including ANC's National Conference in December. Amongst other main priorities to deal with is the inability of the ANC as a ruling party to formulate state policy and monitor its implementation, and the tendency to elevate and outsource its responsibility to its employees and bureaucrats on government. There is also an urgent need to close the gap between the masses and the ANC and confront the reality that the people on the ground are losing confidence in the capacity of the ANC to drive transformation. Another challenge is the deliberate hollowing out of the concept of a developmental state by the ANC government.

On one hand there is continuity with the Neoliberal agenda in the state, whilst at the same time there is talk of a move in the direction of the developmental state. The reality is that the South African state has been taken over by private interests and the statement that government does not create jobs by President Ramaphosa demonstrates this fact. There are also policy initiatives that have been introduced in the public service, including the drive to reduce the public service wage-bill in the fiscus. This underlines the fact that in practice there is little evidence of any commitment to building the developmental

state. A materialist analysis of the state demands that the economic beneficiaries over the past 24 years be specified. Those who benefited are the ones who wield state power and thus are responsible for the socio-economic trends that have emerged over the same period. The analysis of trends in income distribution, unemployment, poverty, health, education, housing, and access to basic utilities over the past 28 years points unambiguously to the capitalist character of the state.

The analysis also shows that this state, whilst it represents an advance over the apartheid capitalist one in the sense that it has reduced the brutality of exploitation, has nevertheless facilitated the deepening and escalation of exploitation under more humane conditions. A state that is developmental cannot be legislated, it depends on what the state does and how it does it. In our case, a state will be developmental if it develops its capacities to address the terrible legacy of apartheid and capitalism. Camouflaged privatisation -The CEC has noted the alarming and ongoing attempts by government to privatise most of the SOEs through backroom tactics like unbundling and the cutting off of funding to facilitate their collapse. The Post Office, Eskom, Denel, SAA, Transnet are some of the SOEs that are being dismantled and collapsed so as to prepare them for their privatisation. We intend to discuss this with the ANC because it's one of the issues that bother and alienate workers from the movement.

5. On Legislative work

Employment Equity Amendment Bill - The CEC welcomed Parliament's passing of the Employment Equity Amendment Bill. This will help transform workplaces so that they reflect South Africa's demographic diversity and compel companies applying for state tenders to follow the Employment Equity and National Minimum Wage Acts. We urge Parliament to pass the Compensation of Injury on Duty Amendment Bill which will see 800 000 domestic workers enjoy cover for the first time. Companies Amendment Bill- The meeting has denounced as scandalous the actions of Sibanye, who have paid their CEO Neal Froneman about R300 million per annum, whilst refusing to pay mine workers an additional R150 per month. This has shown the need for the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition to urgently table the Companies Amendment Bill at Parliament. This Bill will require listed companies to disclose their wage gap to their shareholders and the public in their annual reports. This will help to begin to address the apartheid wage gap still prevalent in many companies, in the mining, banking and retail sectors. The CEC wants the PIC and other investment funds who manage workers' pension and insurance funds need to play a more activist role in placing limits on what CEOs earn and

the wage gaps in companies where they are shareholders.

Pension Relief Bill - The Federation is pleased that Treasury has committed to tabling the long-promised Pension Relief Bill at Parliament to allow financially struggling workers limited access to their pension funds to pay off debts, cover medical and other financial and family emergencies. Treasury has committed to tabling this Bill at Parliament by August 2022 so that it can come into effect by April 2023. We expect them to honour this commitment because millions of workers are financially distressed and drowning in debt. **NHI** - COSATU is pleased with progress that Parliament is making processing the National Health Insurance Bill. We cannot sustain a public healthcare overwhelmed and starved of resources catering for 84% of society and increasingly unaffordable medicals that bleed the pockets of those workers fortunate enough to have them. Public Procurement Bill- The CEC is pleased that the Public Procurement Bill is now before Nedlac. It is critical for a single, transparent online public procurement system be established for the entire state, including SOEs and municipalities. This is key to reducing corruption and wasteful expenditure, and to boosting public procurement. Two tier labour system- The meeting expressed its total rejection of ongoing attempts, by both government and business, to introduce labour laws that are meant to create a two-tier labour market system. Some of these laws are trying to exempt SMMES from labour law provisions on protecting workers during probation. They are also pushing for extension of probations, weakening protections from dismissals; and weakening or exempting SMMES from retrenchments, bargaining council collective agreements, and dismissal payments. These egregious assaults on worker rights will not be entertained and will be aggressively contested by the federation and its unions. The proposed Social Compact must be based upon progressive principles. The Federation will not agree to any weakening of our progressive labour laws

6. Internationally

Russia-Ukraine -The CEC debated the Russia-Ukraine conflict with the assertion that war cannot be condoned. Human suffering cannot be excused, and violence in any form injures all of us. The CEC further committed to intensifying efforts to show practical solidarity to the workers of Ukraine, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Western Sahara, Cuba, Palestine, the Basque Country, and Venezuela. **CUBA** - The meeting reaffirmed its unwavering international support for the people of Cuba, who have relentlessly reaffirmed their commitment to socialism, despite a ceaseless onslaught from the US. For Cuba socialism is the bottom line and remains non-negotiable. The federation declared its intention to assist

where possible but also to continue to lobby on behalf of CUBA in all international platforms. We shall continue to push and encourage the South African government to strengthen trade and overall commercial relations with CUBA. The case by Afriforum against South Africa's co-operation and assistance of the people of CUBA is informed by their historical grudge they have against Cuba for assisting in the project of liberating black people in Southern Africa.

CUBAN people sacrificed blood and Treasure at the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, where white supremacy championed by Afriforum was dislodged in the region. Africa-Reflecting on Africa Day on the 25th of May 2022, the meeting also committed itself to fostering the unity of the African trade union movement and enhancing solidarity with all workers, in all sectors on the continent. In light of this, COSATU is working tirelessly to influence the formalisation of realistic labour migration policies in the countries of origin and countries of destination in the SADC region through our participation in SATUCC. On our end, the federation has finalised a Draft Policy Position Paper on Labour Migration, which will be used as a framework for engagement on the Department of Labour's Draft Labour Migration Policy at NEDLAC. The Federation has noted with alarm the growing xenophobia directed at foreign nationals, in particular those of African origin. COSATU has repeatedly condemned these attacks as barbaric and a source of untold embarrassment to one of our founding principles - the principle of international worker solidarity.

The government needs to deal with the growing number of undocumented immigrants, who continue to flood into the country. They include people claiming to be asylum seekers, though in reality hardly any of them qualify as such but are economic refugees seeking work in South Africa. There is also an urgent need to solve the problem of exploitation of undocumented immigrants by unscrupulous employers, particularly in the farm, construction, and hospitality sectors, where employers cut wages and worsen working conditions. If this is not properly handled, it can lead to more violent conflicts with local workers who are competing for the same jobs. We reiterate our call for the labour migration policy to be accelerated. WFTU-The federation congratulated the new leadership of WFTU, welcoming the newly elected General Secretary Comrade Pambis Kyritsis, and supporting the re-election of Comrade Mzwandile Makwayiba as the President of working class orientated organisation, as we fight against neoliberalism, fascism, and racism. The CEC also congratulated COSATU GS Bheki Ntshalintshali for his election as one of the Vice-Presidents in the newly elected WFTU Presidential Council. ■



COSATU holds the

2nd National Young Worker's Summit

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) has convened the 2nd National Young Worker's Summit at The Lakes Conference Centre in Benoni from the 5th- 7th May 2022, attended by all affiliated trade unions to find ways to changing the lives of young workers in particular at the workplace and mobilize unemployed youth in general. South Africa is having the worst youth unemployment rate in the region, with many young people either not getting a job, either as unskilled, skilled or with tertiary education as other socio-economic issues.

The Federation has advocated to influence processing for an over-arching youth development policy and legislation in South Africa. The Young Worker's Summit was addressed by South African Student Congress [SASCO], African National Congress Youth League [ANCYL] National Task Team member and also the Young Communist League of South Africa [YCLSA]. National Secretary, Tinyiko Tini said, 'We are highly honoured to be addressing the parliament of young workers where, without doubt, there will be robust engagements. We must congratulate the COSATU for convening successful rallies over the weekend across the country. It is important for the advanced detachment of the working class, to make objective analysis of the concrete situation and respond accordingly when workers are under-siege. We remember the cautious message from Thomas Sankara when he said "A soldier without political or ideological training is a potential criminal".

Indeed this theme seek to sharpen young people's ideological orientation in order to avoid the misfortunes of being on the wrong side of the revolution. Not everyone who wears revolutionary regalia or can sing must be characterised as a revolutionary or cadre. Political

education or ideological training is the only antidote for the persisting political decay in the congress movement. The theme of this conference is "Deepen the back to basics campaign, consolidate the struggle for NDR and advance the struggle for socialism". He further advises us that "Our revolution is not a public speaking tournament. Our revolution is not a battle of fine phrases. Our revolution is not simply for spouting slogans that are no more than signals used by manipulators trying to use them as catchwords, as codewords, as a foil for their own display. Our revolution is and should continue to be, the collective effort of revolutionaries to transform reality, to improve the concrete situation of the masses of our country". We need to understand that being young does not necessarily mean, you are inherently progressive or revolutionary.

It is only when we dedicate ourselves to the teachings of Lenin, to learn, Learn and Learn however it matters what to we learn and how do we learn it. The aims of the young workers include advocacy on youth issues, health awareness, improving access to education and training, ideological development and recruiting and conscioutising new members. Furthermore, it is refreshing to see many faces familiar within the ranks of the YCLSA, it was going to be a shock not see any YCLER however we still lobby all young workers to be found within structures of the YCLSA. This summit has a great task of reviewing policy positions that have indeed being at the centre of entrancing the ruling class. We hope your declaration will outline a clear programme to confront neo-liberal and austerity measures that have placed the workers as victims of their own revolution'.

Tini argued that 'We convene here whilst the abuse and brutal murders meted against women and children continue unabated. We need to unite

against this barbaric tendency mostly perpetuated by the beneficiaries of the patriarchal system. The question is that are we ready to live to the ideals of these greats and defend our National Democratic Revolution. We are convinced that the revolution is on a cross road and it is only the unity of the working class that can save us. The only way to change a political posture and advance our struggle towards a socialist state, will require more than just a youth or revolutionary. An ideological trained, committed to the people's struggle and conscious cadre will have to be developed.

This means being militant and radical in raising sharp issues to build and strengthen the young workers and the federation is itself. Militancy should never be confused with misguided vulgarisation of radicalism to show-off. The generational mission is to develop theoretic hypothesis to address the challenges facing the workers in particular young workers who are victims of the system. We need to stand up against the Last-In First-Out (LIFO) principle which is a systematic tool to eliminate young people mostly in the industrial sector to participate meaningfully in the mainstream economy. We must continue to reject this YES programme and poverty alleviation programmes which are masqueraded as decent jobs'.

What are the immediate threat to the National Democratic Revolution?

Where there is lack of political education or ideological training, there will never be a revolutionary movement.

- The deliberate destruction of state capacity to collect and disburse resources to address issues facing our communities. e.g. the collapse of local government sphere and our state owned companies.
- Corruption and institutionalized factionalism in our movement.

- Business unionism which liquidate the moral standing of unions.
- The rise of two extremes that both pose a threat to the NDR. (neo-liberal detachment and RET Jingoism detachment)
- The challenges in the energy sector. Working class on the receiving end just towards winter, biggest question is where is the leadership?

'The objective of the NDR is to address the needs of the workers and the poor, however all these stand to undermine the achievement made so far in advancing the national Democratic Revolution. Therefore, the most immediate task facing our revolution is to unite all the components of our movement and the mass of our people to defeat any form of counter-revolution no matter how it manifest itself. We must not think counter-revolution is from external factors only but the most dangerous factor is within the movement. We are committed to deepen, defend and advance the NDR and in doing so, we will confront any negative tendency that seeks to derail our NDR because if not deterred it shall be a direct route to Socialism. This will happen if we raise the level consciousness of our members and young people to fight against patronage.

Young people must desist from fighting over patronage, who must be better patronized. The vanguard of the working class must rise to the occasion and provide the historical responsibility of advancing and defending the revolution. As we gear towards the SACP 15th National Congress and our centenary celebrations, we owe it to Moses Kotane, Joe Slovo, and Chris Hani, etc. to build a strong and vibrant Party of the workers that will represent their aspirations and change the political direction of our revolution. There is no revolution which will be won in the boardroom, we need a clear vanguard that will not be afraid to

take decisions and delegating it to the workers. Workers are yearning for the vanguard Party that will always be on their side'.

What are the immediate tasks of the Youth?

Focus our energies on what unites us that what divides us. We cannot accomplish a generational mission with a disjointed youth voice. The differences in leadership preferences should not supersede the policies and resolutions you must collectively resolve on and implement together.

- Young people must desist from fighting over who to be better patronized and being in political pockets of the highest bidders.
- It is time for young people to push for a transformed education system that appreciate the political economy of a particular community.
- We must unite against high level of unemployment and unabated retrenchments mostly to the youth. Defend the worker's rights in the mining, construction, energy sector, retail, shop floor, and every workplace.
- What you propose as COSATU YW or as young people generally may be rejected solemnly because of what John Locke correctly captured when he said "New opinions are always suspected, and usually opposed, without any other reason but because they are not already common". There will always be generational confrontations simply because the old in most cases refuse to die and the new refuse to be born and when born subject themselves to the old.

Tini concluded that 'It is the responsibility of the YCLSA to fight for unity and cohesion of all progressive youth formations however not at the expense of handing ourselves as sacrificial lamps for those who are obsessed with conspicuous consumption of the state resources and the neo-liberal detachment expecting everyone to bow to them'.

COSATU Provincial Structures of Young Workers in the current conjuncture!

Mpumalanga

COSATU in Mpumalanga reaffirmed its commitment to honour the National Congress Resolution by convening a Provincial Young Worker's Summit at Belfast Community Hall under the Theme; "Re-Building and Shaping the Future of the Federation through Young Workers".

Congratulations to the following COSATU Mpumalanga Provincial Young Worker's Forum elected;

- Provincial Chairperson: Enock Mokgale
- Deputy Chairperson: Sizwe Mthethwa
- Provincial Secretary: Thabang Gama
- Deputy Secretary: Bongi Masango

Additional:

- Selina Masombuka
- Sonto Mlotshwa
- Thokozani Ncongwane

Eastern Cape

7th April 2022 at the Cambridge Hall in East London.

COSATU Eastern Cape Provincial Young Worker's Summit held its elective Summit at the Cambridge Hall in East London under the Theme; "Working towards Recruitment and Radicalism of the Young Workers in Advancing Worker Control".

The following young workers were duly elected;

- Provincial Chairperson: Pampila
- Deputy Chairperson: Ntaka Asamza
- Provincial Secretary : Mosuli Cwele
- Deputy Secretary: Babalwa Mahlathi

Additional

- Elam Feni
- Nolwando Matomela
- Philomzi Khahla
- Sandiswa Mgxashe

Western Cape

Western Cape held its Young Worker's Summit at the Ashley Kriel Hall around the 12th April 2022 and engaged on how to improve the working conditions of workers in the province.

The following young workers were duly elected;

- Provincial Chairperson: Sibusiso Thwala
- Deputy Chairperson: Songeso Nompunga
- Provincial Secretary: Fadwa Rinquest
- Deputy Secretary: Nasiphi Mngweni

Additional

- Sasibabalo Magiditi
- Thembi Qqumza
- Mkubu Keli
- Nomaphezo Xaba

Congratulations to the newly elected leadership of COSATU Young Workers Forum in the Province of Western Cape.

North West

Young workers in the North West assembled at the Rustenburg Civic

Centre few days before the National May Day hosting in the province. And they resolved to mobilize young people and youth formations to participate in the International Day celebrations at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium at Phokeng on May 1.

North West Young Worker's Summit deliberated on how to improve the working conditions of workers in the province.

The following Provincial Young Worker's were duly elected to lead youth campaigns in the province;

- Provincial Chairperson: Thabo Mosiane
- Deputy Chairperson: Mimi Dikobe
- Provincial Secretary: Mlungisi Radebe
- Deputy Secretary: Katlego Seokoane

Additional

- Ezra Maruping
- Sello Hlatshwayo
- Kealeboga Mogamisi
- Semakaleng Mojaki

Free State

Young Workers assembled at the Kroonstad Municipal Auditorium to elect, amongst others, elect young people to lead the campaigns of the federation.

The following comrades were elected;

- Provincial Chairperson: Zakhele Kotsane
- Deputy Chairperson: Tsiane Kagiso
- Provincial Secretary: Mati Mawethu
- Deputy Secretary: Leandra Deblaar

Additional

- Mokone Tshepo
- Matebesi Tshepiso

Congratulations to the newly elected leadership of COSATU Young Workers in the Free State.

KwaZulu-Natal

In KwaZulu-Natal Young Workers gathered at the Coastline Hotel in Durban to deliberate on issues affecting young people and also elected the following comrades to lead campaigns;

- Provincial Chairperson: Lunga Zikhali
- Deputy Chairperson: Noluthando Mzobe
- Provincial Secretary: Nonkululeko Mdadane
- Deputy Secretary: Siyanda Mthimkhulu

Additional:

- Mpho Mphahlele

- Ntandoyenkosi Nene
- Thandeka Ngobese

Northern Cape

In Northern Cape, Young workers assembled at the Horse Shoe Inn in Kimberley to elect a Provincial structure to mobilize for the youth campaigns in the province.

The following comrades drawn from affiliated trade unions were duly elected;

- Chairperson: Thabisang Mosia
- Deputy Chairperson: Kagiso Leitshedi
- Provincial Secretary: Goitseone Berend
- Deputy Secretary: Letlhogonolo Mosala

Additional:

- Thato Matsididi
- Kelvin Moss

In Limpopo and Gauteng, COSATU Young Worker's structure were still in good standing when the national program was unleashed to renew the mandate of Young Workers' Forums.

The following comrades were elected;

- Provincial Chairperson: Jamela Mhlarihi
- Deputy Chairperson: Titus Madamalala
- Provincial Secretary: Norman Mashegoane
- Deputy Secretary: Madida Malatji

Limpopo Young Workers met at Polokwane Royal Hotel in April to reaffirm their commitments to champion for the interests of working people in the province.

In Gauteng, COSATU Young Worker's Forum continued to unleash various programmes to promote the voice of workers around issues such as the National Health Insurance, Exclusion in the sphere of Higher Education and also on the Fees Must Fall campaigns.

The following comrades were duly elected in Gauteng;

- Provincial Chairperson: Ivan Ramogale
- Deputy Chairperson: Mmapaseka Mahlangu
- Provincial Secretary: Tsakane Thobelo
- Deputy Secretary: Thato Mkhwanazi

Additional

- Lyndsay Hughes
- Bongane Mkhize
- Dieketseng Masoabi
- Cecilia Ngomani

NEWLY ELECTED

National Worker's Forum leadership



COSATU Newly elected National Young Worker's Forum at The Lakes Conference Centre, Benoni

Young workers across nine provinces gathered at The Lakes Conference Centre in Benoni around Ekurhuleni Municipality to, amongst others, mandate new leaders to lead youth programmes and campaigns within the federation.

Opening the National Summit on behalf of the federation, Moses Lekota, COSATU CEC Member and SASBO President said, 'Please accept the revolutionary greetings and best wishes from the Central Executive Committee of your Federation, COSATU. We wish you all the best for this important Summit of COSATU Young Workers. COSATU

has high expectations that over this Summit, you will not only engage on what needs to be done, but to develop and agree on a clear plan of action to build the COSATU's Young Workers' Forum. We must all collectively commit to this programme and to ensure its successful implementation. We must not gather for the sake of gathering. We must not come here to socialise, let alone to misbehave. We are spending workers' hard-earned wages for this Summit. We must not disappoint them and fail to deliver upon their mandate. Those who do otherwise must be held accountable by the collective. We must emerge with a clear programme that speaks to building structures. It must include clear timeframes,

tasks and indicate who is responsible for what. We must not leave here with slogans or vague promises. We must not defer deadlines nor can we outsource our responsibilities to others. We need to move from talk to action. When we elect leaders, it must be on the basis of capacity, discipline, political maturity, commitment. It must not be on the basis of friendship, factions, money or favours'.

COSATU Deputy General Secretary, Solly Phetoe congratulated young workers for participating in the mobilization for the May Day celebrations across eight provinces on May 1.

Phetoe said 'We are thrilled by COSATU for mobilising for a successful 2022 May Day

Celebrations amidst stringent COVID-19 regulations. Our ability to provide to provide practical solutions to the challenges confronting the working class in general and our members in particular is derived from our ability to align and strike a balance between the our political responsibility to the transformation of our country and service of our members at the work place. The day we stopped to strike this balance, we will cease to be COSATU.

We must never bow to the pressures of changing from what we are and must never stop to unleash activities which are in line with the character of COSATU, the day we change those activities, we will automatically change our

character as Lenin put it " the activities of any organization determines its character, we are an organization born at the peak and heat of struggle for liberation, in our blood streams is the militancy and uncompromising spirit of our forebears who chose to hold the knife from its sharp edge in the 1973 Durban strike. Comrades, the labour movement is faced with many challenges caused by our class enemies, and these challenges among others are; collapse of the economy, mismanagement of state resources and corruption from both public and private sectors'.

'Our struggles are based on the concrete realities of our country, and we should

always remember Amílcar Cabral when he said “Always remember that the people are not fighting for ideas, nor for what is in men’s minds. The people fight and accept the sacrifices demanded by the struggle in order to gain material advantages, to live better and in peace, to benefit from progress, and for the better future of their children’.

Comrades, let me be open and frank on Trade Union density

direction of the union and how their own resources drawn from subscriptions should benefit them’.

It is a reality that:

- Unions lose members to rival unions in the same workplace, sector, or industry.
- Unions fish in the same pond and do little to organise the unorganised workers; and
- Service to union members

this is the case is also well documented within trade unions with investment companies. The instability this has caused is also well recorded in the past 26 years of democracy.

- “We also know that former militant unions that were growing and stable are now under administration and have literally been taken over by the bureaucrats of the department of labour.

- “We know that unions that enjoyed stability from the inception are now engulfed in destructive factional wars that have defocused the leadership from top to bottom leading to the weakening of the commitment to serve workers.

- “This is capture of our internal trade union principles, not terribly different from how, externally, unions have been muted by capital and the state.”

After three intensive days on engagement, presenting the 2nd COSATU Young Workers National Summit Declaration, the newly elected National Secretary, Cde Msiyoyo Singela declared that ‘We, the delegates of the 2nd COSATU Young Workers Forum National Summit gathered in Johannesburg Benoni, in the lakes hotel from the 5th to the 7th of May 2022, representing a sizeable proportion in more than 1.6 million members of the federation across the length and breadth of this country drawn from all our affiliated trade unions. We converge under the theme “Deepen the Back to Basic Campaign, Consolidate the Struggle for the NDR and Advance the Struggle for Socialism”

‘We have assembled in this place in the past three days, to assess the work done by CYWF, renew the mandate and determine the direction it should take in advancing the National Democratic Revolution’.

Singela alluded that ‘It is important to note that we received and adopted credentials, the welcoming address by the CEC member, who is also the president of SASBO Comrade, Moses Lekota. Messages of support from SASCO, ANCYL, COSAS and YCLSA, the political report, which dealt with the political outlook both at the international level and in our country which included the assessment of the state of the NDR as well as the organizational report which in the main dealt with the life, shape and the entire state of the organization including the assessment of the implementation of both the POA and the mandate that was given by the last summit in the form of resolutions that were adopted.

It is for this reason that we boastfully declare that the summit received and adopted all constitutional reports that guided the CYWF Programme of Action on Political, Socio-Economic, Organisational, Fourth Industrial Revolution and Battle of Ideas, and International issues and we emerge from this summit more united and purposeful in the pursuit of our strategic objectives of Advancing the Unity and Cohesion of the PYA, outside our movement and Advancing Working-Class Struggle for Socialism. The summit deliberated on motion on the steps towards the constitutionalization of our structure which in the main was predicated from the following basis:

That, COSATU recognizes that the labour movement is becoming younger and It is therefore our considered view that the future of this country belongs to the youth and therefore, it is this generation that has to lead society with ideas. Of critical importance is the calculated pragmatic three steps which were advanced as follows:

This motion must find joy and expression in this summit to empower leaders to advance the view of following strict calculated steps towards constitutionalization by;

a) Firstly, transitioning from guidelines to policy that should be defining the relationship between

COSATU and COSATU Young Workers Forum;

- b) Secondly, Persuading the COSATU CEC that when they agree to the first step to allow this motion to find expression in the COSATU Congress in September; After this step to allow the CEC to lead the process of moving towards transitioning the Policy into the constitution.
- c) Thirdly, presenting a motion in the next congress in 2027 for constitutionalization.

‘We will prioritize unity of the working –class youth and use this as the basis to drive our campaign and to rally the youth behind the campaigns of COSATU’.

Key tasks ahead on the Programme of Action are;

- Deepen political and ideological training through participating in Chris Hani Brigades and Progressive Youth Alliance joint political programme which will be centred on the National Democratic Revolution and the struggle for socialism.
- Recruiting of young workers for COSATU affiliates to achieve the Medium-Term Vision of 4 million membership.
- Implementing campaigns on socio-economic issues including negating the unabated rise in unemployment and skills development and resolving challenges faced by young workers on internship programmes
- Deepen our international solidarity campaigns with the working-class youth.
- The newly elected National Young Worker’s Forum are;
- National Chairperson: Jamela Mhlarihi
- Deputy National Chairperson: Manosh Maphatsoe
- National Secretary: Cde Msiyoyo Singela
- Deputy National Secretary: Tsakane Zitha
- National Treasurer: Cde Semakaleng Mojaki
- Additional
- Sello Hlatswayo
- Tshetiso Matebesi
- Zandile Sizane
- Rebecca Mahla
- Ziyanda None



COSATU National Secretary, Louisa Nxumalo congratulating newly elected Young Worker’s Forum

Phetoe argued that ‘Research has shown that workers employed in the South African economy and in the public service have a union density of 23%, meaning that about 77% of workers employed do not belong to a union and thus employers can determine the conditions of employment and wages as they see fit. All trade unions must be extremely worried that workers are either not interested in joining a trade union or are comfortable to take employment as they receive it, irrespective of bad working conditions. This of course is not a South African phenomenon. Trade union membership is on the decline globally.

It is not very useful or helpful that unions are no longer making members of the union their centre of gravity. Worker control of unions appears to be a mere slogan that leaders recite when they want to sound relevant — but they do not practise worker control of unions so that the real owners of unions may determine the

has taken a back seat and union organisers are occupying most of their working hours at the CCMA and the dispute resolution centres.

- “The spectre of business trade unionism may be one of the reasons why workers in the private sector have also begun to lose trust in unions. If union leaders appear to be preoccupied with building up personal assets and forgetting about workers’ day-to-day concerns, then workers will withdraw their support.
- “As soon as the union is awash with resources from investment companies, for example, allegations fly over whether the leadership is using these resources to amass wealth for itself, getting benefits that tend to weaken internal democracy.
- “The interests of the service providers in who becomes the leader of the union have become legendary. The reason why

By COSATU General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali

at the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour

Your excellencies.
The Premier of KwaZulu Natal Province Mr Zikalala
The Mayor of EThekweni
Ministers present here.
Vice President of Malawi His Excellency Mr Chilima. The Executive Director and Executive Officer of the Federation of the Kenya Employers and the International Organisation of Employers Vice President Ms Jacqueline Mugo. The Deputy Secretary General in the Office of the Secretary General Ma Amina Mohammed.

The Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Saryarhi. The young activist representative of the young generation whose future we are destroying and today we are trying to rebuild (save the Children Activist Ms Thato Mhlungu. Former Swedish Prime Minister Mr Lofven. The ILO Director General Mr Guy Ryder. The South African President his Excellency President Ramaphosa. Friends and Delegates and our international guests.

On behalf of the Workers Group it is an honour and privilege to stand before you and say few words of welcoming you all to this conference. Like the environmental or climate change campaign the child Labour is not an act God, but a human made problem, which culprits in a differentiated way are here, and only we can eliminate the child Labour.

Personally, I am delighted that in this panel there so many General Secretaries or Secretaries General. Mr Zikalala is a former Secretary General of Youth League, Ms Amina Mohammed's Deputy Secretary General in the UN family, Mr Thulas Nxesi is a former General Secretary of Teachers Union, Mr Guy Ryder is former General Secretary and President Ramaphosa is both a former General Secretary and former Secretary General of Governing ruling party and of Mineworkers, at your own time you would connect the dots why Workers delegates a General

Secretary not a President to deliver this welcoming message.

Let me not forget to recognise my President and the President of SATUCC President Zingiswa Losi. The panelists in the different segments are well positioned to share experience but more importantly to share ideas how to speed up the process to eliminate child labour, particularly in the increment of child support grant, access to education, etc more needs to be done. The situation in South Africa is no different from the rest of the world.

The impact of economic crisis, increasing unemployment and poverty and inequalities, the impact of the Covid pandemic, soaring food and energy prices and War in Ukraine are likely to reverse and make the global target to end child Labour harder to achieve.

The world is 3 times richer today than 20 years ago, yet 79% of people are denied universal social protection, 84% of people say the minimum wage is not enough to live on and 81% of countries have allowed violations of the right to collective bargaining.

The recent increase in the child Labour shows that

bargaining, social protection is universal, due diligence and accountability are driving business operations, and that social dialogue ensures just transition measures for climate and technology.

We need to rebalance our societies to become more resilient against future crises, be Environmental, health or conflict related or child labour. The latest estimates show there are more children in the Sub-Saharan Africa (86.6 m) than the rest of the world combined, and the vast majority, 4 out of every 5 children, are engaged in child labour within the agricultural sector. This is where we need focus our urgent attention.

We must act to prevent a human catastrophe. We owe it to these 86.6 million children in Africa and the 160 million children worldwide that are being deprived of their childhood and their future undermined. We must use these few days to commit to concrete action before it is too late.

We all know what works to fight child labour, but we seem to have dropped the ball. We have a toolbox filled with cash transfers, public employment programmes, social protection initiatives, social insurance, rural and agricultural development programmes, committed teachers and schools, mandatory due diligence laws, collective bargaining for living wages all of which have proven their effectiveness. The eradication of child Labour.

Mr. President and all excellencies we have wisdom, power, and resources to deliver the urgent needed interventions. An interactive and action-oriented approach is a must if we hope to succeed. What we do not have is a luxury of time. Yes, we are sitting on a ticking time bomb. The time for Action is Now!! We wish this conference all the best and we should not fail our children.

Thank you so much.



While we have seen significant strides forward on reducing the number of working children due to social protection schemes such as bolds familiar in Brasil, free education, no fee schools, and school feeding schemes in South Africa. In the last decade, we have seen 94 million fewer children in child Labour, and now this progress is at risk.

poverty and the inability to absorb economic shocks render households vulnerable to child labour.

The only way to prevent it is to establish a new social contract between workers, governments, and business, that ensures that rights are respected, jobs are decent with minimum living wages and collective

'LONG LIVE International Proletarianism', declares COSATU at the 18th World Congress in Rome, Italy

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) led a delegation of Trade Unionists from South Africa to participate in the 18th World Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions at Rome in Italy from the 6th May until the 8th May 2022. The World was held under the Theme "United, We Continue; For the Satisfaction of our Contemporary Needs Against Imperialist-Capitalist Barbarity". More than four hundred and nineteen [419] delegates from ninety [93] countries of the five continents participated in the World Congress, with more than one hundred and eighty-five participants on virtual platforms. Presenting the address in plenary, The General Secretary of WFTU, George Mavrikos said 'We greet the 105 million members of the WFTU who live and struggle in 133 countries of the five continents. We greet all those who are on strike and mobilizations these days, we greet all the delegates who take part virtually because of the pandemic, we greet and thank all of you who, despite the many difficulties, are here present and participating in the works of the 18th World Trade Union Congress'.

Mavrikos said 'Allow me also to express my appreciation and thanks to USB for playing a leading role in the organization of the Congress in Rome, Italy, and for making it happen in very good conditions. We remind you that in Italy, in Milan, the 2nd Historic Congress of the WFTU took place in 1949, where the leading role of the dedicated WFTU militant Giuseppe Di Vittorio, President of the WFTU from 1949 until his death in 1957, emerged. The USB is today for the Italian working class their class consciousness, the militant vanguard, the one who expresses and carries on the most glorious traditions. The USB is the hope for all the suffering workers of Italy and we call on the workers of the country to follow and support it. We send from this podium a message of peace and peaceful dialogue to the peoples of the Russian Federation and Ukraine and we ask the end of the war. We demand that the US government and its allies finally stop adding fuel to the fire. We know that the root causes of this war lie in NATO's expansionist strategy. We call on all trade unions and all trade unionists not to relax. The dangers of a general conflagration and a worldwide military conflict are real. Governments like those of Britain, United States and Australia are constantly adding fuel to the fire. With the global propaganda of the capitalist-owned media, they distort reality, propagating that NATO is sending weapons for democracy... Dear colleagues, In the pre-congress period we tried to inform the

workers broadly. We published everywhere the central document with the title: "Theses and Priorities". We utilized as much as possible live communication within the sectors and inside the workplaces. We gathered comments, suggestions and criticism. Now, here in Rome, for three days we will discuss all the issues of concern to the World Working Class and the Trade Union Movement. We have managed to establish open, democratic and vivid discussions, with confidence in supporting our opinion.

This is the kind of congresses that the WFTU holds. This is the kind of congresses that the class-oriented, militant Trade Union Movement must hold. And we are sure that we will have such a congress, worthy of the seventy-seven-year history of the WFTU. Because here we are gathered manual and intellectual workers and employees, workers of art and culture, working women and youth, farmers and workers of the countryside, migrants, refugees, landless farmers and indigenous people. In the ranks of the WFTU, in the ranks of the militant trade unions, is gathered the most active and the most honest part of the trade union movement. Cadres who have been fired from their jobs for their trade union and political action, militants who have been persecuted by employers and governments, pioneers workers who give their lives every day for the universal interests of the ordinary people. These are the basic characteristics of our vanguard, the basic characteristics of the members and cadres of the WFTU'.

Participants observed a moment of silence to commemorate all militant and comrades who perished away in the period under review since the previous World Congress in Durban. COSATU President, Zingiswa Losi addressing the plenary session said, 'On behalf of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, we salute the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) for convening the 18th World Trade Union Congress. With every Congress, we are given an opportunity to take stock and reflect upon the work we have done collectively for the emancipation of the working class since the last Congress, to gauge ourselves against the commitments made, and also bring awareness to the areas where more could have been done better. This Congress allows us to re-strategize against the prevailing material conditions under which workers and the working class broadly find themselves during this period of crisis. Comrades, the history and bond between the WFTU and the progressive

trade union movement in South Africa goes back a long way. When COSATU, the successor to SACTU was formed, it was only natural that WFTU will hail it as representing the most class-oriented elements of the South African labour movement. This assessment was based on the founding principles of COSATU that rejected the divisive anti-working class policies of the apartheid regime and called for worker unity across the racial divide and international solidarity in the struggle against apartheid South Africa. Ours is a relationship based on the convergence of principles shaped by concrete facts of the ground i.e. the condition of the South African working class and the struggle against imperialism. So, the opportunity to address this Congress today holds serious political significance to us and comes at an opportune time when the world and the labour movement are faced with significant challenges that call for the intensification of working-class struggles and worker solidarity'.

Losi said 'Brothers and sisters, this Congress is taking place at a time when workers all over the world have been left exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its consequences by a system that neither wants nor is capable to provide the necessary means for dignified livelihoods, healthcare, educations, and the right to sustainable work. We really want to thank and appreciate our frontline workers for remaining resilient and continuing to put their lives at risk – to save other people's lives, in most countries working under difficult conditions. It cannot be ignored that the economic crisis, which thrived before the pandemic and has been accelerated, marking a new systematic attack on collective bargaining globally.

Since the 2008 economic crisis, we have witnessed the rise of right-wing movements and governments across the world that have manifested themselves in different ways. In the US we saw the American policies of Trump, and strong right wing elements in Europe. Almost everywhere countries are resorting back to narrow nationalism, blaming immigrants, other countries, workers and unions for their declining economic prospects'. As we reflect on the work we need to pay particular attention to, we must look into issues such as:

- Increasing vaccination coverage worldwide, and the call for allowing countries to
- produce their vaccines,
- Challenges of climate change and just a transition,
- The fourth industrial revolution and

future of work, and

- The impact of war on the working class – Comrades, war is an enemy of the working

class, as we bear the brunt of its effects.

'It is for this reason that unified as workers, we need to stand for peace and social dialogue to resolve conflicts. As a federation, COSATU calls for more active steps to be taken, for the promotion of a gender balance in both the structural representation, as well as the leadership of the WFTU. As Cde Makwayiba [WFTU President] rightfully said, it is also important to discuss the financial sustainability of our gallant working class-oriented, so that we can carry out the programmes and the mandate which will be given in this gathering'.

In light of noting the commendable work achieved during the period under review:

- We want to congratulate the workers in Brazil for fighting for the release of former President Lula Da Silva. This is a victory for Brazil's people who have been under attack by a right-wing administration that wants to erode the rights and dignity of workers.
- We want it to be noted that for the first time, the ILO has elected an African to be its
- Director-General, and congratulate Gilbert F. Houngbo whom we believe has the interests of workers at heart.
- We also want to applaud countries that have adopted and further ratified ILO Convention 190 on Violence and Harassment in the workplace.

'We also look forward to the Global Conference on the elimination of Child Labour, which is to be held in the second week of May in Durban, South Africa. 'The best tribute for a militant fighting organisation like WFTU is for us, as its affiliates in the different parts of the world to continue radical action inside and outside the workplaces, and unite to advance the struggle of workers and celebrate our historic gains. It is at times like these that we need men and women of wisdom to rise to the challenge, and we have no doubt that this gathering will meet those expectations'. Losi concluded by saying, 'With these few words, I wish the 18th World Trade Union Congress successful deliberations'. The plenary sessions were utilized by participating delegates to engage in constructive discussions, analyzing the challenges faced by the working class globally, exchanging experiences and putting heads together for resolves to end exploitation of the class by another. ■

WFTU 18th World Congress

elects General Secretary, Pambis Kyritsi

WFTU President, Cde Mzwandile Makwayiba
delivering closing remarks at the 18th World Congress

The World Federation of Trade Unions held its 18th World Congress at Rome in Italy from the 6th May until the 8th May 2022 under the Theme “United, We Continue; For the Satisfaction of our Contemporary Needs Against Imperialist-Capitalist Barbarity”.

The World Federation of Trade Unions has been always on the side of the struggling peoples all over the world and intensifies its militant and class-oriented fight for the satisfaction of the contemporary needs of the ordinary people until the final victory of the liberation of the working class.

Opening the 18th World Congress on the 6th May at the Holiday Inn Rome-Eur Parco Dei Medici, President Mzwandile Makwayiba said, ‘Everything is ready for an open, democratic, internationalist, and class-oriented congress for the satisfaction of our contemporary needs. Against imperialist-capitalist barbarity’. ‘This 18th World Congress is a congress that is a celebration for the workers, for the simple and authentic fighters. Congratulations to USB Italy for the excellent preparation of the Congress’. ‘Allow me also to express my appreciation and thanks to USB for playing a leading role in the organization of the Congress in Rome, Italy, and for making it happen in very good conditions. We remind you that in Italy, in Milan, the 2nd Historic Congress of the WFTU

took place in 1949, where the leading role of the dedicated WFTU militant Giuseppe Di Vittorio, President of the WFTU from 1949 until his death in 1957, emerged. The USB is today for the Italian working class their class consciousness, the militant vanguard, the one who expresses and carries on the most glorious traditions.

The USB is the hope for all the suffering workers of Italy and we call on the workers of the country to follow and support it. We send from this podium a message of peace and peaceful dialogue to the peoples of the Russian Federation and Ukraine and we ask the end of the war. We demand that the US government and its allies finally stop adding fuel to the fire.

We know that the root causes of this war lie in NATO's expansionist strategy. We call on all trade unions and all trade unionists not to relax. The dangers of a general conflagration and a worldwide military conflict are real. Governments like those of Britain, United States and Australia are constantly adding fuel to the fire. With the global propaganda of the capitalist-owned media, they distort reality, propagating that NATO is sending weapons for democracy’.

‘In this two-decade course, we have walked by utilizing our rich history. With its positive and negative points, with its forward and backward steps; with its

dignified compromises and its unacceptable concessions; with its great successes and its few but existing mistakes.

For us today, historical experience, both positive and negative, is a positive asset and a positive weapon for the present and the future. And to build tomorrow you need to utilize the experience of yesterday. The usefulness of the history of the trade union movement at sectoral, local, national and international level is great today. And at the same time defending ourselves and counterattacking against the dirty attempt to rewrite history is a key task. We were defending and we defend the historical truth. So we did with special courses on the history of the trade union movement, so we did with special seminars, with book and poster competitions, with publications, articles and speeches.

In 17 years we estimate that over three thousand of our cadres, mostly young people, have attended relevant seminars. We took over the WFTU in a state of paralysis, so the immediate task was action. That is why we launched the slogan “Action - Action - Action” at the 15th World Trade Union Congress in Havana, Cuba. We could not waste time with introversion, inaction and endless discussions. We stressed that we will bring the WFTU back to life “in action”. It was through action that we would prove



NEHAWU delegation handing over a banner to the hosting union of the WFTU 18th World Congress-Unione Sindacale di Base [USB Italy]

whether and what we could achieve. And we developed all this rich action that you all know, that is described in the texts and main documents of our Congress and is available in our "Statistics 2005 - 2022" Handbook, in our videos and publications'. Makwayiba declared the 18th World Congress opened and 'wished delegates successful deliberations'. The newly elected World Federation of Trade Unions General Secretary, Pambis Kyritsis, whose role is to implement the positions and priorities for the class-oriented trade union movement for the

next five years said ' , thanks for the election. I am aware of the responsibility I take on. WFTU carries a long and glorious history of struggle and in the current conditions it has a very important role to play in coordinating and guiding the class-oriented labor movement throughout the world. I feel this responsibility even greater having in mind that I replace George Mavrikos, a comrade who has sealed with his 17-year presence at the helm of WFTU, a course of great organizational development and substantial expansion of its prestige and influence. A comrade

with morals and political weight who with his personal example managed to inspire again the respect in the leadership and the procedures of our Federation, after a difficult period of regressions and uncertainty.

When we agreed that WFTU should continue to exist and that after Havana a new beginning should be made with new leadership and modern, democratic and transparent processes, I know very well how heavy the burden was lifted by the leadership and the Secretary General of the WFTU and how big progress and improvement has been made. Obviously I undertake in better conditions. The operation of our Federation today is not characterized neither by bureaucracy, neither by inaction and nor by fatalism.

Today it is an active organization, operating in a spirit of collectivity and democratic participation, having positions and proposals and having active members whose presence and role in all continents and in all sectors is essential and very distinct. Nevertheless, in order to fulfill my role, I will definitely need everyone's support and cooperation. And I'm sure I will have it. Especially of comrade George Mavrikos, whom of course we do not demobilize but we will certainly use him in every possible way. The same goes for other comrades with a great offer who after this congress will be included in the honored category of WFTU veterans. Our 18th Congress has highlighted with clarity the fields in which the Global Class Trade Union Movement is called to give its battles and to realize its goals. It has set priorities for more productive and effective intervention, a stronger and more united front in workers' struggles. We have no illusions.

The battles that await us will be hard and difficult. In the war between labor and capital imposed on us by the barbaric, exploitative nature of the capitalist system, the balance of power at the moment is not such as to ensure us everywhere and always victorious results. There is no doubt that this balance of power at the global level would be very different, if an important part of the Trade Union movement were not under the dependence and political and ideological influence of the dominant circles of capitalism. If this part would set its priorities in line with the class interests of the workers and not the interest anyone else.

In such a case, the ability of workers to resist attacks and impose policies that respect their achievements and rights would certainly be much greater. The situation regarding living and working conditions would also be very different. The class consistency certainly does not characterize the whole Trade Union movement, but it does characterize the forces that unite in the WFTU. That is why the mechanisms of the system have tried and are still trying with blackmail and exclusion, to erase if possible the class pole in the world trade union movement. They tried to proclaim the universal alignment of the Trade Union

movement with the logic of integration and assimilation into the imperialist new world order. But they did not manage to dissolve us, nor to silence us, nor to assimilate us'.

Kyritsis reiterated that 'We are here armed with the decisions of our Congress, full of determination to change the balances, to resist fatalism and capitulation, to defend the rights of workers, to defend collective bargaining and collective agreement, to oppose the privatization and destruction of the welfare state. We are here:

- United with collective decisions, with thesis and priorities that unite us, we develop actions, we strengthen solidarity, we lead struggles, we intervene where the decisions concerning the workers are made.
- Organized with a presence in all corners of the earth, with Trade Unions representing over 110 million Members
- Structured with collective leadership and guidance, with regional offices on all continents, with TUI'S covering almost all areas of economic activity.

'And most important we are here to inspire workers with the vision of a world without imperialist interventions and wars, without human-to-human exploitation'. Meanwhile, on May 7th, 2022, the delegates of the 18th World Trade Union Congress visited and paid tribute to the memorial of the "Fosse Ardeatine Massacre", commemorating the 335 civilians and political prisoners who were executed by the Nazis troops during the Second World War on 24th March 1944 in Rome.

The new leadership of the WFTU President: Mzwandile Michael Makwayiba (South Africa)

- Secretary General: Pambis Kyritsis (Cyprus)
- Deputy General Secretary: C. Srikumar (India)
- Deputy General Secretary: Swadesh Dev Roye (India)
- Deputy General Secretary: George Perros (Greece)
- Deputy General Secretary: Divanilton Pereira (Brazil)
- Deputy General Secretary: Alberto Reyes (Panama)

Secretariat Members:

- Ernesto "Quiqui" Trigo (Argentina)
- Cinzia Della Porta (Italy)
- Matthieu Bolle Reddat (France)
- Vincent Kapenga (DR Congo)
- Adnan Azzouz (Syria)
- Abdelmalik El Naneem (Sudan)
- Artur Sequeira (Observer)

President of the Financial Control Committee : C. H. Venkatachalam (India)

The 18th World Trade Union Congress unanimously proclaimed - expressing the sentiments of the congressmen - George Mavrikos Honorary President of the WFTU. ■



'United we Continue', declares WFTU 18th World Congress

POPCRU members hugely affected by recent floods in KZN



POPCRU Provincial Congress delegates engaged in plenary activities in Western Cape

POPCRU General Secretary, Cde Jeff Dladla, expressed shock at the devastating floods which affected families of its members in KwaZulu-Natal.

Dladla said 'The Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) has noted with sadness the devastating

impact of the floods that ravaged parts of the province of Kwa Zulu-Natal, leaving thousands destitute. As a result, there has been loss of life, damage to infrastructure, property and loss of livelihoods. It was reported that up to 443 people have lost their lives thus far, while 63 more are still missing'.

'We wish to convey our message of condolences to all the affected families, including those of Sergeant Busisiwe Mjwara, a female police diver who was attached to the Pietermaritzburg Search and Rescue (SAR) police diving unit, whom at the time of her passing was conducting a search in the Msunduzi river for three victims that had drowned earlier last week, when she got into difficulty and

drowned. During the same operation, K9 Leah from the Durban Central Search and Rescue (SAR) unit also drowned. According to reports, Leah was attempting to assist Sergeant Mjwara when she also experienced difficulties, demonstrating the extreme nature of the floods encountered. The other member, Constable Thandazile Sithole who was attached to the Durban Central Police Station, died when her home collapsed on her earlier this week.

Our men and women in blue continue to pay the ultimate sacrifice while protecting and serving the people of South Africa, leaving behind orphaned kids and widowed husbands and wives. The bravery and selfless efforts they continue to display should never go unnoticed. At least thirty police officers have been adversely affected by these floods,

with some injured, while a majority, as part of communities, are displaced after their homes were washed away. POPCRU wishes all those affected a speedy recovery, and calls for prompt efforts for the rehabilitation of homes and the concerned infrastructure. We also wish members from the SAPS Search and Rescue (SAR), the SAPS Airwing, the K9 units as well as frontline officers who are being deployed to these disaster-stricken areas in reinforcing the search and rescue operations all the best in their thankless efforts'.

Meanwhile, POPCRU held Provincial Congresses in eight provinces, with one in North West still to be completed. COSATU has congratulated all elected worker leaders as part and parcel of promoting the founding principles of worker control and internal democracy.■

SADTU concludes 2nd Provincial Conferences

South Africa's biggest education worker union with more than 270 000 members has held successful 2nd Quadrennial Provincial Conferences in provinces. The conferences were convened under the Theme 'Claiming Our Right to have Our Human Dignity and Safety Protected and Respected in Pursuit of A Decolonised Quality Public Education'.

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa on a virtual platform highlighted that Covid-19 has had huge impact on the education sector and also thanked teachers, lecturers and education officials, for support and dedication they have shown to their learners and students. 'We pay tribute to educators who lost their to covid-19 and remember their courage and selflessness in working to keep the doors of learning and teaching open during the most challenging period of our country has gone through over 100 years'.

'As we strive to recover and rebuild in the aftermath of the pandemic, we have

much to do to address problems of lost learning and teaching hours, we were faced with dropout of learners and gaps in the curriculum, he said. He emphasised that government relied on the union for the smooth running of education sector 'We have always counted on SADTU to work with government to improve effectiveness of our education'.

Delivering keynote address at the Northern Cape Provincial Conference held in De Stijl hotel near Gariep. Vice President (Sports, Arts & Culture) Nolutha Mboniswa said 'teachers ability to respond with agility to the social and work challenges they face remains paramount to their future success in building a progressive nation'.

Polokwane: COSATU Limpopo Provincial Chairperson and SADTU Limpopo Provincial Chairperson Esther Mokoale delivering her chairperson's address before 312 delegates, highlighted that 'the province poor performance in the recent matric results happened not because teachers were not doing their work but because of infrastructural challenges and lack of

support personnel in 90% of the schools across the province. She also called on government to make sure that it improves the school infrastructure'.



East London: The newly elected SADTU Eastern Cape Provincial Working Committee (Back row left)

Deputy Chairperson: Luvo Mvulana, Deputy Secretary: Ntombizodumo Maqashalala, Provincial Secretary: Malibongwe Ntame and Treasurer: Mabheqa Vuyolwethu
Front row (Right): Sports, Arts and Culture Convener: Mpangalala Nkululeko, Education Convener: Lungisa Jamela, Chairperson: Mazotsho Dukhwe and Gender: Mjo Noxolo.



The newly elected Provincial Working Committee of SADTU Limpopo. (Standing from left) Vonani Mathonsi (Education Convener), Alukhwathifhedzi Nenzhelele (Treasurer), Sowell Tjebane (Provincial Secretary) and Esther Mokoale (Provincial Chairperson).

Front row (Right): Thando Ndaba-Makitla (Gender Convener), Mulalo Nevani (Deputy Provincial Secretary), Refiloe Kekae (Sports, Arts and Culture Convener) and Harvey Nkondo (Deputy Chairperson).



The elected leadership of SADTU North West (Back row left): Mkhusele Mafunda (Education Convener), Ntlatfiso Kegakilwe (SACCOM Convener) Mainganya Michael (Chairperson), and Maria Ndlovu (Gender Convener)

Front row (Right) Maropeng Mothata (Deputy Chairperson), Masaele Cindi (Deputy Secretary) George Els Themba (Secretary) and Nancy Thiye (Treasurer)

AFFILIATES



SADTU Northern Cape newly elected Provincial Working Committee (Back row left) Chairperson: Senzo Mpalala, Deputy Chairperson: James Mabotsa, Deputy Provincial Secretary: Pule Mogopodi, and Education: Fadel Farao. Front row (From right) SACCOM: Keitumetse Kwenampe, Gender: Norma Waterboer, Provincial Secretary: Palesa Nqumashe, and Treasurer: Estelle Beukes



Pine Lake Inn: SADTU Mpumalanga newly elected leadership
Back row from left: Gender Convener Mildred Masilela, Provincial Secretary Walter Hlaise, Makhosi Buthelezi (Sports, Arts & Culture) and Chairperson: Oupa Bodibe
Front row from right: Deputy Secretary: Kabelo Lekitlane, Education Convener: Zodwa Makhanye, Deputy Chairperson: Charles Masilela and Treasurer: Phumzile Themba.



The newly elected Provincial Working Committee of SADTU Western Cape: Vusumzi Zweni (Chairperson), Neville Jones (Deputy chairperson), Jonavon Rustin (Provincial Secretary) and Sibongile Kwazi (Deputy Secretary)
Front row: Jonita Philander (Treasurer), Ingrid Leukes (Education), Sheryl Hendricks (Gender) and Mcebisi Mnconywa (Saccom)



Congratulations to the newly elected SADTU KZN Provincial Office Bearers from left: Chairperson: Phumlani Duma, Deputy Chairperson: Zodwa Zwane Mangeh, Provincial Secretary: Nomarashiya Caluza, Deputy Secretary: Mjay KaMagenu Nxumalo, Gender Convener: Nobuhle Lekoma, Sports, Arts & Culture Convener: Noligwa Magwaza, Education Convener: Martin Dhlamini and Treasurer: Wonder Mpisi

Young workers pledge solidarity with shopstewards dismissed by UNISA



COSATU Young Workers Forum 2nd National Summit 2022 Leadership have mandated us to support the UNISA Branch of NEHAWU in Tshwane where the workers are under siege

Lwazi Nkolonzi, NEHAWU National Spokesperson has declared that the national union is 'angered and highly disappointed by the decision of the Vice-Chancellor and Management of University of South Africa (UNISA) to terminate unlawfully the employment contract of our shop stewards'.

Nkolonzi said 'It is clear to us that the dismissal of our shop stewards was

predetermined by the Vice-Chancellor because from the onset when letters of precautionary suspension and intention to institute disciplinary action were issued, the Vice-Chancellor didn't follow the legal requirement in terms of Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 as amended which states that "Discipline against a trade union representative or an employee who is an office bearer of a trade union shouldn't be instituted

without first informing and consulting the union".

Indeed, the university management contravened this provision of the law hence we (union) raised the matter in our responses to the precautionary suspension but the VC elected to ignore the matter. We further wish to record our disappointment to the fact the VC only wrote a letter addressed to the leadership of NEHAWU three (3) days after having served notices of precautionary suspension to our office bearers at the UNISA branch.

Despite the concerns about how the matter of our branch leadership has been handled, the union responded and implored upon the VC to engage in a meaningful consultation with ourselves as a matter of urgency before embarking on the intended disciplinary action against the office bearers and further implored upon the VC to uplift the suspensions in the interim'.

'NEHAWU is vehemently opposed to all forms of intimidation and victimization including union bashing. Certainly, the union shall not stand idle while its shop stewards and members are victimized. In this regard, the national union shall be consulting its lawyers to secure a legal opinion on the matter whilst on the other hand will consider mobilizing its members on a cause of action towards the real fight in defence for its members and workers. Further, the national union will do everything in its power to defend its members while on the other hand it will remain open for any engagement with the employer as previously communicated'.

Tshwane Regional Chairperson, Cde Ivan Ramogale, opening and welcoming comrades to the UNISA Membership Meeting on the 9th May 2022 reiterated that 'We therefore expected the VC on her return from her overseas trip to immediately avail herself to meet with us as we have formally confirmed our availability for an engagement only to be surprised by the abrupt decision to terminate the employment contracts of our shop stewards.

This step taken by the UNISA management confirms our assertion that the action was predetermined. Indeed the action of the UNISA management is abhorrent, very highhanded and tantamount to union bashing.

Lingering Suspicions on the Assassination of Chris Hani

while Janusz Walus Seeks Parole

by Samukele Hadebe



Wreath laying at Chris Hani's tombstone in Boksburg

On 10 April 2022 the South African nation and progressive people worldwide, commemorated the 29th anniversary of the death of Comrade Chris Hani, then general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP), who was murdered in cold blood. On that fateful morning of 10 April 1993, at 10h20, the right-wing assassin Janusz Jacob Walus, parked his vehicle at the driveway of the Hani house in Hakea Crescent, Dawn Park, Boksburg; and on alighting he called, "Mr Hani"; to which Comrade Chris Hani turned, only to be fired with a bullet from a 9mm pistol.

Mr Walus advanced to his fallen victim and fired three more shots directly into Comrade Hani's head before speeding off towards Boksburg city centre. Almost three decades later, Hani's memory lives on. Yet, many questions remain unanswered. Countless conspiracies abound and compound already murky waters. The pain and sense of loss to the Hani family; particularly Limpho Hani and daughters, remains deep and untuned

— whereas Janusz Walus feels he has done his time behind bars, has offered an apology and, therefore, deserves parole.

Off course, it is his democratic right to seek parole. Indeed, he has made several attempts to regain his freedom. Sentenced to death on 16 October 1993 later commuted to a life sentence, by 1996 Mr Walus had applied for amnesty; and although denied, he never gave up. Ironically, those supporting Walus unashamedly portray him as a victim of the justice system.

His dastardly act and evil intentions are sanitized as he is touted as South Africa's longest serving inmate. It is often argued that it is unconstitutional to keep him jailed without an option of parole; considering that other murderers of great infamy like Eugene de Kock and Ferdi Barnard were released in 2015 and 2019 respectively, having served lesser time than him. In his argument for Walus' parole, lawyer Du Plessis said: "I submit if one applied ubuntu in this matter, the outcome should be in favour of [Walus]." Indeed, duplicity knows no bounds. One

cannot evoke the humane spirit of ubuntu to defend evil deeds, especially murder. But this was more than just a murder of a man but 'that of a country' — as Advocate Muzi Sikhakhane's imagery goes. It was an attempt to provoke a racial war that would obliterate the prospects of democracy and stability in South Africa; and with far reaching consequences to the continent and the world at large. The assassin's bullets were meant to extend the lifespan of the heinous system of apartheid that had caused untold harm to black South Africans in particular. What is disturbing about the prospects of the release of Janusz Walus is that he remains unrepentant, despite his apology — unrepentant in that he has not told the whole truth.

From the beginning it was obvious that it could not have been just two conspirators, Clive-Derby Lewis and Janusz Walus who plotted the Hani assassination. Pieces of information are slowly emerging and confirming that the then state security apparatus orchestrated the hit.

But Janusz Walus would not say

this obvious fact by naming all those involved and who gave the instruction. By protecting the actual plotters and sacrificing truth in the alter of expediency, Mr Walus is still in pursuit of his right-wing supremacist agenda in the country. Is the country safe with such a character?

While the murder of Chris Hani did not derail the democratisation process but fast-tracked it, the yearning for the truth lingers on. Why are the plotters remaining in the shadows, and how much damage have they since caused by remaining scot-free and unpunished?

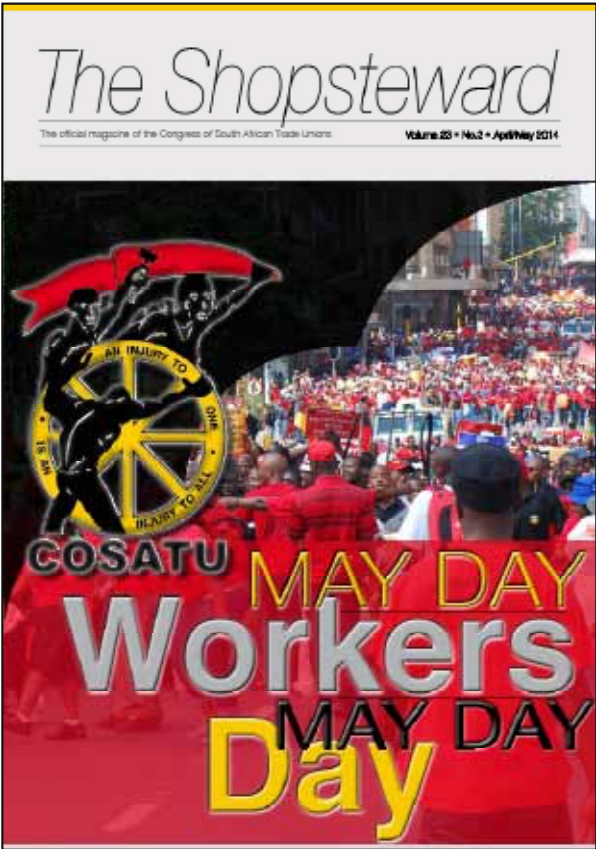
What else are they planning; and who have they recruited in their destructive path? Only Janusz Walus has the answers that could help unravel the mystery and meaning behind the killing of Martin Thembisile "Chris" Hani, the communist revolutionary, MK Chief of Staff and a doyen of the liberation struggle.

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