

News from Namibia

We are pleased to publish the combined newsletter of TCL miners and United Fishermen.

[United Fishers and Tsumeb Workers news](#)

Issue 5 of Die Werker out now.

Out now! The latest issue of Namibia's Proletarian Newsletter.

In [this edition](#):

1. Fishermen
 2. Miners
 3. Reparations
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Urgent International Appeal

Help fund our work in Southern Africa

Dear Comrades,

WE are launching an ambitious [Appeal](#) to members and supporters to raise funds for our work in Southern Africa.

It is there that the global re-awakening of the workers' socialist movement is most concentrated and advanced, and where material resources are most needed if the movement is to make the progress which it can and should make.

The Workers Revolutionary Party in Namibia has won a position where all oppressed and exploited groups in the country turn to it for help in their struggles.

This is possible because of the party's thoroughgoing understanding of the role the South-West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) government plays as a caretaker for imperialism, based on corrupt rule by a narrow tribal leadership imposed in a deal between the Soviet Union and various imperialist powers in the early 1990s. This regime is both a mockery of democracy and a copy-book example of milking public assets in collusion with imperialist financial interests.

The heart of the WRP(N)'s work is among the country's miners. The Party's leadership has worked closely over many years with the TCL miners in their campaign to get back the pensions stolen from them when the company which employed them was liquidated. It has united with the most advanced leaders of the current mine-workers with the aim of making their union (Mineworkers Union of Namibia – MUN) an effective and class-conscious weapon of the country's working class. Meanwhile, the WRP collaborates with other present and former miners and smelter workers campaigning to protect their homes threatened by financial chicanery by former mine-owners in cahoots with the government and in pursuing claims against their employers for work-related illnesses.

The WRP(N) also stands four-square with:

Railway workers trying to track down the theft of state property;

Road workers protesting against bullying, malpractice and

neglect of health and safety by their foreign employers contracted to develop the country's road network;

Fishery workers on the Atlantic coast who have been on prolonged strike against diminishing wages, overwork and dangerous conditions. From being the best-paid workers in the country, they have become among the lowest-paid, while government-sponsored corruption lets foreign businesses ransack the rich fisheries around Walvis Bay;

Home-owners defending their homes against collusion between crooked lawyers and financiers who try to dispossess them;

Young people demanding access to homes;

Small farmers protecting their traditional lands against seizure by business interests;

Ethnic groups who suffered under German colonial rule seeking access to the compensation pocketed by SWAPO ministers;

Bushmen too now have a WRP(N) member among their leaders.

Former soldiers seeking access to their pensions, also stolen by SWAPO ministers;

Former Peoples Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) fighters seeking acknowledgment of and compensation for the deaths and other sufferings inflicted on them by the SWAPO leaders during liberation.

The WRP(N) won two parliamentary seats in the 2014 elections, but is denied the official resources which should accompany this electoral success. The party has had to spend a good deal of time fighting off a state-inspired sham "breakaway" which seriously impeded its work.

Nevertheless it held a very successful second congress in 2015 and is now developing a network of branches and conducting a serious programme of theoretical education in Marxism for the

new forces coming into the leadership of the Party.

And the WRP is now in touch with the United Front established by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) and is preparing to collaborate in its work.

A decisive political break in South Africa

NUMSA launched the United Front initiative in connection with the decisive break with Stalinism in which it is engaged. NUMSA has correctly declared the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to be bourgeois parties and called for a Movement for Socialism to build a Marxist workers' party.

What they have established is a genuine United Front bringing community groups together with trade unions led by the working class. Its purpose is to stand up for real working class communities in the context of extreme inequality, exploitation of workers, unemployment (especially among young people) and mass poverty.

NUMSA's aim in building the United Front (and a Marxist workers' party) is to transform the National Democratic Revolution of 1994 (which left the working class out of the picture and maintained the imperialist exploitation of South Africa intact) into a socialist revolution led by the working class.

The United Front has appealed directly to Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International for political, practical and material assistance in standing United Front candidates in South Africa's local elections on 3 August.

We are sure these developments inspire and encourage our sympathisers and supporters as they do us. We have a target of £5,000 and very little time. Please give generously.

How you can donate

1. Use the button on the top right hand corner of the *workersinternational.info* home page marked 'donate', making clear that your donation is for the Southern Africa Appeal.

2. To transfer from your bank account, send donations to:

Unity trust Bank

Account: *The Correspondence Society*

sort: 60 – 83 – 01

account: 20059400

3. Send cheques made out to Correspondence and marked on the back "Southern Africa Appeal" to : PO Box 68375, London , E7 7DT, UK.

Yours in solidarity,

Bob Archer

Appeal: Help fund our work in Southern Africa

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New edition of The Worker/ Die Werker

IN THIS EDITION

Roads

Marikana support by Namibian miners

Truth & Justice

Letters

Editorial

Available in both English and Afrikaans [here!](#)

Political victory for Polish

Miners

The [Polish miners' strike](#) ended last Friday evening (they went back to work on Monday) with a political victory and an economic compromise. The managing director has left, the sacked trade unionists have been re-employed.

Information and video published on the Syndicat Solidarnost Tuzla website and the Zagreb Workers Front website (see: <https://www.facebook.com/Radnicka.Fronta/posts/915345861833247>)

Miners Strike and repression in Poland

Jan Malewski, 13 February 2015 (Translated from <http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article34332>)

Polish miners at the Jastrzebie Colliery Company (JSW) have launched an [appeal for international solidarity](#) signed by Boguslaw Zietek, president of the “August 80” trade union (1). We would be grateful if you could disseminate it as widely as possible.

The strike started on 28 January when the managing director of JSW, Jaroslaw Zagorowski, sacked 9 trade unionist at the “Budryk” mine for organising a solidarity strike with the miners at another company, KW (Kompania weglowa [“mining company”] Europe’s biggest mining business, which wanted to close four pits and sack the miners. This strike, was successful, with the backing of the whole population. The four

mines were not closed and there were no sackings, according to the agreement with the government signed on 17 January. At that time the government made a commitment that there would be no reprisals against the strikers and those who solidarised with them...) The managing director has also suspended the collective agreements signed two years ago when JSW was converted to a PLC with shareholders. Among those sacked was Krysztof Labadz, leader of the "August 80" union and of the 46 day-long strike in 2007-2008.

All trade unions supported the strike – "Solidarnosc", ZZG (the mining branch of OPZZ), FZZ (Forum of trade unions), WZZ "Sierpen 80" ("August 80" Free Trade Union), "Kadra" (Cadres), etc. etc. There is a united strike committee made up of the five main unions in the region.

Negotiations were carried out via a mediator, a former deputy prime-minister, but the managing director was not there and the company was reluctant. Besides reversing the sackings (agreed in principle during negotiations but not signed) and respecting the collective agreement (partially agreed but not signed), demands included the sacking of the managing director Jaroslaw Zagorowski, who the miners no longer want to see and who they accuse of trying to bankrupt the firm so he can buy it back cheaper.

On Wednesday police fired 37mm rubber bullets on miners gathered outside the JSW company HQ, injuring 20, some of them seriously. As the police fired, miners shouted "Are you trying a re-run of Decmber 1981?" (General Jaruzelski's coup d'etat). A video of the rally the police fired on shows that they did so without any valid reason against a gathering of miners who were singing (2).

The confrontation actually does look very serious. Miners' families (women and children) demonstrated on Thursday, saying that even if they went hungry they would hold out to the end.

19 miners are on hunger strike. According to management, there are more than 5 000 confirmed strikers, but the mines are at a standstill (a lot of miners have taken annual leave days, since they cannot manage 16 days on strike ...)

The court at Gliwice has just declared the strike illegal and threatened to make the strike leaders (including the 9 sacked trade unionists) pay JSW's "losses", which the company states amount to several million euros ... Krzysztof Labadz is among those worst affected ...

On Thursday, Boguslaw Zietek told the Polish Press Agency "We live in a country run by bandits, thieves and Mafiosi who are more powerful than the government". That gives a pretty accurate picture of the mood.

Jan Malewski

1. See [1] on Europe Solidaires Sand Frontieres (ESSF article 34331), [Un appel urgent des mineurs polonais : Ne tirez pas sur les ouvriers !](#).
2. See <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=669643963153352&set=vb.100003232629300&type=2&theater>

An urgent appeal from Polish miners: Don't shoot at workers

Boguslaw Zietek, "August 80" free trade union,

12 February 2015.

Don't shoot at workers!

Don't use state institutions against protesters!

On 12 February the courts ruled illegal the strike by several thousand miners at Jastrzebie Colliery Company (Jastrzebie Spolka Weglowa, JSW) in southern Poland. On the same day, a demonstration of miners' wives and children marched through the town supporting their loved ones in struggle.

The authorities will stop at nothing to break this strike, which has already gone on for 16 days. Special police detachments sent against the miners have tried to crush the protest with unheard-of brutality, using anti-riot weapons firing 37mm anti-riot rubber bullets, water cannon and tear gas without any good reason.

More than 20 miners have been wounded, some of them seriously. At the same time prosecutors have started charges against the protest organisers, threatening them with financial consequences bound up with "losses" the company suffers affected by the strike. Among those charged are the trade unionist Krzysztof Labadz, one of the leaders of the strike at "Budryk" mine which lasted 46 days seven years ago.

The striking miners are demanding the sacking of the company managing director, Jaroslaw Zagorski, whose management has brought to company to the very brink. Even though the government holds more than half the shares, it will not give way. The miners and their families are determined. They are defending their jobs but also the right to protest of all Polish working people.

We call on trades unions and social organisations across Europe to support our struggle and to send us letters of support. Only international solidarity, as with Greece, can force back the diktats of the neo-liberals who rule us. Only together can we face up to their anti-social offensive in Europe.

Boguslaw Zietek,

President of the Free Trade Union "August 80" (WZZ "Sierpen 80").

Send solidarity messages to: darekzal74@gmail.com

Appeal of the Kryvyi Rih Basin Miners to the Workers of Europe

Reprinted from
<http://rs21.org.uk/2014/05/16/appeal-of-the-kryvyi-rih-basin-miners-to-theworkers-of-europe/>

The attention of the world community is currently focussed on the confrontation between pro-government and anti-government forces in Ukraine. This confrontation is becoming all the more tenacious and bloody. All the more it is being turned into an interethnic confrontation that is fuelling a hysterical mutual hatred between workers of different nationalities.

What remains beyond peoples attention at this moment is the sharpening social and economic situation, and not only in the regions where the fighting is taking place. The rapid devaluation of the hryvnia (Ukrainian currency), the steep rise in prices of consumer goods, transport, utilities, as well as the cutbacks in production in many enterprises all this has led to a sharp fall in workers real wages. By our estimates there has been a 30-50% fall in real wages.

The announcement by the governor of Dnipropetrovsk oblast (province) of an increase in pay for April of 20% was actually turned into an insulting hand-out to workers of 300-700 hryvnia (25-58). Miners received only 15% of the actual rate, which often makes up less than half their actual income. As

well, the money was paid out as material support, which means it will not be included in the calculation of their average monthly wage and therefore in the calculation of their annual leave.

As a result we have no option but to demand an immediate doubling of the real wage in the interests of preserving social peace in this country. We are deeply convinced that the main cause of the destabilised situation in the country is the greed of Ukrainian and Russian oligarchs, who pay a beggars wage to workers, send all their profits off-shore and don't pay taxes in Ukraine. In fact the oligarchs are almost completely exempt from taxes on their profits.

We turn to you with a call to support our struggle against the oligarchs, who have brought Ukraine into the current crisis and who continue to destabilise it further, threatening to provoke a fratricidal war in Ukraine which without any doubt will have catastrophic consequences for all of Europe. It is necessary to put pressure on the corporations of the Ukrainian and Russian oligarchs, many of whom have their shares placed on the London Stock Exchange.

There is a mounting labour dispute in the enterprises of EVRAZ plc, whose headquarters are in London. On 11 May 2014 the miners marched through the streets of Kryvyi Rih to the administration of the EVRAZ Sukha Balka plc and showered its office with loose change as a sign of protest against the fictitious wage increase for April. The Independent Union of Miners of Ukraine calls upon the British public to picket the offices of EVRAZ plc and the offices of other Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs corporations in London and other cities in Europe. If we don't force them to come round the chances of preserving peace in Ukraine will be elusive.

At the same time we are demanding that the authorities officially recognise the miners self-defence and the arming of miners brigades. Organised workers and workers self-defence are precisely that stabilising factor which can effectively prevent the escalation of violence in Ukraine. In those places where organised workers are controlling the situation mass

actions never turn into mass killings. The workers defended the Maidan in Kryvyi Rih. The workers did not allow any violence when they took under their control the situation in the city of Krasnodon during the recent general strike there. We call upon the workers of Britain for solidarity. In particular we will be grateful for any information and humanitarian support, but the biggest need we feel right now is for personal protective clothing for members of the self-defence brigades (body armour and the like) and mobile radio communications equipment.

Long live international workers solidarity!

By preserving the peace in Ukraine we will preserve the peace of Europe!

Oleksandr Bondar, Head of the branch of the Independent Union of Miners of Ukraine at the EVRAZ Sukha Balka plc

Yuri Samoilov, Co-ordinator of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Ukraine in Kryvyi Rih, Head of the Independent Union of Miners of Ukraine in Kryvyi Rih.

Numsa President Opening Speech during Central Committee at The Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre on 12 – 16 May 2014

20 Years After 27th April 1994: what is the state the South African Revolution?

“Nothing demonstrates better the increasing rigor of the colonial system: you begin by occupying the country, then you

take the land and exploit the former owners at starvation rates. Then with mechanization, this cheap labour is still too expensive. You finish up taking from the native their very right to work. All that is left for the Natives to do in their own land at a time of great prosperity, is to die of starvation.” (Jean Paul Sarter, 2001)

Numsa National Office Bearers,
Delegates to this Numsa CC,
All Numsa Staff,
Invited guests,
Media present.

On behalf of the National Office Bearers of Numsa, I welcome all of you to this first Central Committee meeting of Numsa after our historic December 2013 Numsa National Congress.

As we seat here, we are meeting after the first South African National Elections in which Numsa as an organisation did not support any political party.

This Central Committee must help all of us to fully understand the moment we are in, from a clear Marxist-Leninist class perspective. There should be no confusion over what Numsa resolved to do, in the Numsa National Special Congress.

All of us must be very clear what these just ended elections mean to the working class of South Africa. All of us must be clear what our revolutionary and trade union responsibilities are, post the Numsa historic Special National Congress.

From the beginning, please allow me to thank the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary of Numsa and the entire Head Office and all our staff in all our Numsa provinces for putting together a most comprehensive information and documentation package for this important Central Committee. This is as it should be.

Among other important matters this Central Committee must

initiate is a serious and urgent national dialogue among all the left formations in general and in Numsa in particular, on the fundamental question of the form and content of the socialism we want for South Africa and the world.

We are required to go beyond theoretical formulations to concretely defining the economic and social formation we would like to see South Africa and the world become, when we win the struggle for a socialist South Africa and socialist world.

In order to help us all fully appreciate the moment we are in, and the state of class struggles in the whole world in general and in South Africa in particular, I want to, very briefly, tackle the following:

- A. The state of the world capitalist system;
- B. The South African revolution: its theory and revolutionary practice;
- C. The Freedom Charter as the minimum programme and basis of the class alliance of the forces that spear-headed the South African violent revolution for freedom in South Africa;
- D. The South African negotiated settlement and post 1994 South Africa;
- E. Numsa and post 1994 South Africa and the Numsa Special National Congress;
- F. The 2014 National Elections and their class significance; and
- G. What is to be done, to build the power of the working class and accelerate momentum towards a Socialist South Africa as the only viable alternative to the savagery of the current racial capitalism and imperialist domination?

Obviously, in the course of this Central Committee delegates must make time to reflect upon these and all the other business of this Central Committee. My hope is that when we depart this meeting on Friday the 16th of May 2014, no one who will have attended this Central Committee Meeting must be a source of confusion when we are back in our regions, locals,

communities and on the factory floors.

Numsa is a serious, mature and revolutionary Marxist-Leninist inspired trade union. We pride ourselves in being a worker driven and worker controlled revolutionary trade union. Internal robust debates and discussions before decisions and resolutions are taken is our democratic lifeblood. This is the cornerstone of our democratic centralism.

It is my duty to always remind ourselves that our Constitution charges us to, at all material times, grow the power of the working class in the factories, in our communities and in the whole world so that we can win the war against exploitation, oppression, discrimination and for socialism.

We are a socialist trade union precisely because we know that our real war is ultimately for winning the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only true democratic state of affairs.

We understand capitalism as the dictatorship of the bosses, of the capitalist, no matter how well concealed this fact may be, behind false liberal hopes as captured in all liberal constitutions.

Very briefly then, allow me, Comrades, to deal with the matters I said I will tackle above.

A. The state of the world capitalist system

We all have a duty and revolutionary responsibility to understand, in class terms, the world we live in. This is important because we need to be fully aware at all times, of the actual revolutionary potential for winning the war against the barbarism capitalism inflicts upon the world working class and peasant populations.

We also analyse the world in order to understand how our own class struggles are linked to the rest of the class struggles taking place in the world, so that we may better grow faster the power of the world working class against our class enemy:

the capitalist class.

The world capitalist system is in a deep terminal systemic and structural crisis. The world capitalist system is terminally sick, it cannot recover. Unless the world capitalist system is soon destroyed by the world working class and replaced by revolutionary and democratic scientific socialism, the Earth and all life on it are faced with the real possibility of being destroyed!

This is not an empty threat, nor is it a false alarm: capitalism has today developed enough atomic, nuclear, biochemical and other kinds of bombs to destroy the Earth and all life on it.

We now know that land, sea and air pollution are all at record high and life systems in all these spheres are threatened with total destruction. Global warming is not a joke. It is real and is fast destroying the energy balance of our Earth system as we know it.

As Marx and Engels so scientifically and correctly explained more than 150 years ago in the Communist Manifesto, the world today is ruled by the money form of value. Everything has been reduced, is being reduced, into a money relationship – finance (money) capital is dominant today. No human value or relationship is immune to the penetration of money.

We live in the true age of imperialism as the phase of human history in which finance capital is truly dominant.

The world capitalist class that owns and controls the global economic production and financial system ultimately controls all our lives, as they make sure that nothing that does not serve the interest of money can survive and thrive! The search for faster, more efficient, global means of accumulating money is conditioning all economic and social activities, and therefore all human life on Earth today.

Even our poverty, diseases, homelessness, ignorance and all miseries are everyday being converted into businesses for making money. If ways have not been found to make money out of any of our problems, those problems will not receive any attention until money can be made out of them!

All this is happening at a time when the development of productive forces have never been so advanced! We now live in the age in which no human being should go to bed hungry – there is enough agriculture and food science to properly feed more than 100 times the current entire human population.

No one should have no decent modern house to live in – there is in fact too much construction science and technology to ensure that every human being lived in a luxurious and palatial house!

There is so much medical science and health technology that each human being can today have their health problems attended to, and medicines provided, according to their individual needs and specifications.

There is so much communication knowledge, technology and science that in fact nursery schools, primary schools, colleges and universities as they exist today are actually museums of ancient education: information technologies and computers, and manmade robots have made learning, transferring skills and education such a simple and accessible process that every human being can virtually learn anything, know anything, acquire any skill, communicate in an instant, as often and as many times as they want in their life time.

In the meantime, billions of human beings live miserable lives because the world capitalist class controls and dominates the world production system, all for money, for profits, and not for serving human beings and protecting our Earth.

Thus we see that on one hand, at no time have the productive forces been so developed such that every human being can live

a full, enjoyable and happy life, on the other hand, precisely because a small and minority world capitalist class owns and controls the world economy for their profits, the majority of the world peoples suffer terribly, and the Earth itself is threatened with total destruction.

Thus there is no alternative to the victory of the world working class over the world capitalist class, if we must save human life and the Earth, from the potentially inevitable destruction from the power of the world capitalist class. We are engaged in a life and death war with world capitalism!

Because of their greed, the world capitalist class has actually already started curving up pieces of the moon for themselves, even as we seat in this CC!

B. The South African revolution: its theory and revolutionary practice

South Africa today is firmly and fully imbedded in the world capitalist system. The 1994 negotiated settlement had as one of its most important objectives the full and rapid integration of the South African economy (inevitably, society too!) into the world capitalist system.

This is not to imply that before 1994 the South African economy was not part of the world capitalist system, rather, the negotiated settlement removed all the impediments which the Apartheid government had caused, and a post-Apartheid neoliberal and vicious capitalist trajectory was adopted to fast-track this "integration".

But, when we say that there was a struggle for freedom in South Africa prior to 1994, what do we mean? What were we fighting for? What was the theory and revolutionary practice of that "revolutionary struggle"?

Was our struggle for the fuller integration of, and the normalization of the white minority South African economy into the world capitalist imperialist system?

Was our struggle a struggle for a neoliberal capitalist South Africa?

Was our struggle for social grants?

Was our struggle for the protection of white minority cultural, social, political and economic rights at the expense of the majority of South Africans who are Black and African?

Was our struggle for the mere reform of Apartheid education, health and other social services?

Was our struggles for us to merely participate in choosing which faction of the capitalist class should be in government through the lottery of capitalist elections once in every 5 years, and then pretend that we too have “political power”?

Was our struggle merely for “basic services” in our apartheid designed geographical ghettos?

Why was our blood shed? Why did we shed blood? Was it for BEE? For Nkandla? For Ghuptas? For tenders perhaps?

Indeed, was our violent revolutionary struggle just for “a better life for all”?

For more than four centuries, why did we kill and risk being killed?

Today, especially after the 2014 National Elections in which the ANC has won a majority in both the national and provincial legislatures, it has become extremely important to sharply remind ourselves why we waged a violent revolutionary struggle, what its theory and practice was.

Only when we fully connect to this understanding will we then have the necessary and sufficient theoretical preparation and understanding, to enable us to summon the courage we need to continue the revolutionary struggle. For, indeed struggle we must, precisely because the revolutionary war has not been won!

Our struggle was about ending forced and violent colonial occupation. Today, less than 8 percent of the white population still own more than 80 percent of our land.

Our violent revolutionary struggle was about ending social and cultural domination.

Today, 25 million Africans live a life no cat or dog of the rich white 10 percent of the population enjoys! They are classified as extremely poor. 23 million Black and African people in fact survive on less than R650 per month, far less than the weekly dog food for a rich white and Black middle class dog!

Our violent revolutionary struggle was about ending exploitation of the Black and African majority who are the bulk of the South African working class! Today, the majority of Black and African people cannot survive without selling themselves very cheaply to white or white black parasitic capitalists!

Today, 20 years after 1994, the majority of Black and African people, who because of our history of violent white land dispossession were turned into labourers on white farms and factories and mines, cannot find even these super exploitative jobs, thus they are left to die of starvation and extreme despondency, at a time when South Africa is one of the richest countries of the world!

Our violent revolutionary struggle was about ending land hunger among the formerly disposed, and restoring the ability and right to live anywhere where one desired in South Africa. Today, neither land redistribution nor decent affordable housing has been made available throughout the country to enable the destruction of Apartheid distributions of our population.

We fought and shed blood, not so that a few corrupt Black and African elites should become the new prison warders of Black

and African labourers by becoming instant credit card billionaires!

In South Africa as elsewhere in the capitalist and imperialist colonies, we violently fought to end colonial occupation, to abolish colonial domination, to abolish exploitation, to end gender oppression and domination, to restore the right to land to all the people of South Africa, to return the wealth of the country to all the people of South Africa.

In a nutshell, we fought – we killed and shed blood – to restore the humanity of both the oppressors, dominators, exploiters and dispossessors and the exploited, dominated, oppressed and dispossessed.

It is my submission that nothing, not even an iota, of the theory and practice of our violent revolutionary struggle has been achieved in the past 20 years.

The extra water, electricity, small poorly located and constructed houses, poor quality but expanded health care, and a raft of empty liberal political rights (precisely because these rights are not backed by economic equality – which is the only foundation of real political freedom) in the past twenty years do not amount to even the smallest achievements of the promise of our violent revolutionary struggle for freedom.

There is nothing extraordinary that has been done in the past twenty years that any ordinary capitalist formation would not have done, I submit.

To the contrary, we now have become the most unequal country on Earth, with the most violent of violent crimes, with an explosive youth unemployment that threatens to blow this this country up any time now, with the world's largest and most violent civil protests against inhuman conditions of life. Our poor rural populations have simply been forgotten!

C. The Freedom Charter as the minimum programme and basis of

the class alliance of the forces that spear-headed the South African violent revolution for freedom in South Africa.

With all the noise making the rounds about “a good story to tell” and the results of the 2014 7th May National Elections, it has become absolutely necessary to remind ourselves of the basic demands that brought together the coalition of forces that participated in the struggle for liberation in South Africa.

The Freedom Charter is the basic document that contains both the principles and the demands for the minimum programme that was the basis upon which the revolutionary block of the African, Black and White working class and other progressive strata in South African society united, and constructed and fought the struggle for freedom and liberation.

We remind ourselves of the 10 demands of the Freedom Charter:

1. The People Shall Govern!
2. All National Groups Shall have Equal Rights!
3. The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth!
4. The Land Shall be Shared Among Those Who Work It!
5. All Shall be Equal Before the Law!
6. There Shall be Work and Security!
7. The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened!
8. All Shall Enjoy Equal Human Rights!
9. There Shall be Houses, Security and Comfort!
10. There Shall be Peace and Friendship!

To govern means to have political power. Land and economic power has not been transferred into the hands of all the people of South Africa as a whole. White monopoly capital and US and British and other imperialist finance capital dominates and controls the South African economy. The people are not governing!

The 2014 National Elections perfectly captures the fact that all national groups do not have equal rights!

The results of the Elections perfectly mirror the colonial and

racist distribution of the racial political groupings in South Africa today. The results are a perfect reminder of the fact that white monopoly economic and political power continues to live side by side with majority Black and African poverty and extreme inequality. Nothing best captures the colonial nature of South African economy and society than the racial voting patterns.

Black and African people are still condemned to live far away from former whites only economic centres, rely on extremely inferior education, health and housing facilities, are condemned to inferior colonial wages and have no similar access to modern science, technology and the fruits of their labour! This explains why Black and African communities today are warzones.

The fundamental point to note here is that as long as a minority controls and owns the economy, with the support of US, British and other imperialist backers, the essence, the fundamental reason for our violent struggle for liberation will remain unachieved: the transfer of the wealth of the country into the hands of all South Africans!

Racism is a necessary feature of our continuing post 1994 racist colonial economic and social system, whose destruction were the basis for our violent revolutionary struggle.

D. The South African negotiated settlement and post 1994 South Africa

Today, 20 years after the 1994 negotiated settlement, we the revolutionary South African working class are very clear that:

- While the working class in the townships were making the Apartheid government and society “ungovernable” and sorting out traitors in their communities, even by using burning tires, the Black and African middle class elites at the heart of the negotiations were busy stitching together with the enemies of the working class, secretly, a neoliberal anti

working class and capitalist post-Apartheid South Africa, without the formal democratic mandates of either the ANC or SACP members and leadership structures.

- We now know that the totality of the openly and secretly negotiated settlement firmly entrenched a neoliberal capitalist post-Apartheid South Africa, and threw the Freedom Charter into the dustbin of history!

- We now know that the racist dominant and exploiting white block won by simply mutating racial social and economic dominance into economic class domination and exploitation through the South African liberal constitution which protected their old and newly created economic and property rights.

- The 1996 South African most liberal constitution guaranteed both existing and created new property rights for the white minority population, especially in land – thus entrenching racial capitalism, post 1994.

- We are now convinced that BEE was secured as a means both to pay off and consolidate a Black middle class, post 1994 that would act as the new policeman for the new version of the same Apartheid capitalist society and economy that South Africa became, after 1994.

- We are very clear that the 1994 democratic breakthrough was nothing but the mechanism for the racial capitalist transition, entrenchment of the racial social and economic domination order we are now living in.

- The 1994 negotiated settlement laid the capitalist foundation for the post-Apartheid rise of a kleptomaniac, corrupt black and African political class.

- The negotiated settlement contained the seeds for the dismantling of the popular and revolutionary block that had waged the struggle for genuine freedom in South Africa.

We are therefore, not surprised that today, 20 years after 1994, Black and African working class communities will, on the same day, participate in the elections by returning a black government into power, even as they are coming straight from a violent protest against their inhuman conditions of life. This is a perfect reminder that our colonial and racist society and economy are alive, and the struggle for freedom continues!

E. Numsa and post 1994 South Africa: the Numsa Special National Congress Resolutions

Numsa is a socialist Marxist-Leninist inspired revolutionary trade union. We make no apology to anyone for this fact.

In our December 2013 Numsa National Special Congress, we confirmed and resolved that the ANC led alliance no longer serves its revolutionary purpose. We, accordingly, ended our political support for the ANC and resolved to campaign for Cosatu to break the Alliance.

We further very correctly recognised that the SACP has exhausted its revolutionary potential in South African politics and in the South African revolution.

In order to prevent Cosatu from being destroyed and converted into a useless and toothless formation of the working class and the poor, we have resolved to call for a Cosatu Special Congress to deal with the class paralysis and leadership question in Cosatu.

I am happy to report that we have placed this demand before the courts.

Our demand for the President of the ANC and the country to resign because of the neoliberal trajectory and corruption in government and the country stands. This CC must determine how to carry this demand forward.

In order to sustain our membership growth and simultaneously to defend and service our members, we produced and adopted a Service Charter for Numsa. We must all live by this Charter,

in Numsa.

F. The 2014 National Elections: Significance for the revolutionary South African working class.

We have already explained above that the continuing ANC victories from all the previous elections and especially the 2014 National Elections are all simply proof of the racist colonial polarization of South African Society – they are all perfect proof of the continuing US/British financed neocolonial economic and social status of South Africa.

The foundation of the South African social and economic formation remains racial capitalism: the super exploitation of Black and African labour.

The ANC negotiated settlement guaranteed this neoliberal and colonial status of post 1994 South Africa. The majority of the population, therefore, who are Black, African and proletariat, in the lottery that is the capitalist election circus cannot be expected to vote for a white minority party with the same capitalist policies as the black party, no matter how rotten the black parties may be!

The solution to this crisis of development lies in the working class (white, black and African) creating their own political organ to continue the struggle for liberation which can only inevitably lead to socialism as the only viable alternative to the savage and backward system of capitalism and imperialism.

Numsa resolved in its December 2013 Special Congress to work to unite the working class behind a movement for socialism, and to work to initiate the formation of a genuine revolutionary political organ of the working class.

G. What is to be done, to build the power of the working class and accelerate momentum towards a Socialist South Africa as the only viable alternative to the savagery and misery of the current racial capitalism and imperialist dominated South

Africa?

Numsa must jealously guard and defend the unity of its organisation as a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist inspired trade union.

While retaining our independence and autonomy as a trade union, Numsa must carry through its resolution to build a united front of the working class in South Africa.

Simultaneously, we must deepen and sharpen our understanding of what we want our socialism to be like, even as we work towards the formation of a revolutionary socialist political organ of the working class which must lead the revolutionary struggle for a socialist South Africa.

The General Secretary will brief this CC on how we expect work to explore the state of socialism in the world is going on. We need to fast track this work. Socialism is international because capitalism is international. The victory of the South African revolutionary struggle for socialism will not be possible if we do not simultaneously struggle for a socialist world.

We must be humble, ready to learn from all other revolutionary and progressive working class formations even as we are very clear about what we want: it is not the resuscitating of any version of some pre-Marxian utopian socialisms: ours is the struggle for scientific socialism in which the dictatorship of the proletariat is the ultimate goal, as the only true democratic state of any society.

I am confident that this CC will do its work properly, and contribute fully to growing our union and firming up our revolutionary struggles for socialism!

Forward to a socialist world!

Forward to a socialist Africa!

Forward to the Socialist Republic of South Africa!

We cannot afford to fail. The future will not forgive us!

Andrew Chirwa,
Numsa President

12th May 2014.

original posted here:

[Numsa President Opening Speech during Central Committee at The Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre on 12 – 16 May 2014](#)