

KwaZulu Natal United Front: Media Statement

10 December 2014

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It has been realized that the Government is failing to meet the needs of most if not all poor communities. This is evidently shown by a significant number of community struggles such as road blockade, burning of tyres, etc. While on the other hand the government is using the state through police brutality to smash those communities that are aggrieved.

This led NUMSA in its Special National Congress (SNC) that took place in December 2013 to take resolution of being a catalyst or a facilitator in forming the United Front (UF), since most NUMSA members are the victims of the policies promulgated by the government.

For instance E-Tolling, affects the poorest of the poor directly. If the bread cost R10 including delivery cost, the owner of the bakery will add E-Toll amount into the price of bread, of which the poorest of the poor may end-up paying R12.

Likewise the National Development Plan looks like a good plan, but most people hardly look at how it is going to be funded. It talks about infrastructures like roads to be built, funding coming from users, of which it will be through the e-tolling system.

It is evident that in most countries outside Europe where Western countries have intervened; the situation gets worse than before. That means in South Africa we need to coordinate these protests in order not to be hijacked by agencies of the West. And everything should and must be from below (Bottom Up Approach).

On 15 November 2014, the KwaZulu Natal (KNZ) had a UF provincial workshop to address the Numsa idea of a United Front. The people who attended the workshop adopted the Numsa idea of the UF which is independent from Numsa. A steering committee was elected of 15 people around KZN.

The steering committee had its first meeting on the 7th of December 2014. On that meeting, 5 interim office bearers were elected, who are Themba Mchunu: Chairperson, Bonginkosi Khanyile: Deputy Chairperson, Bandile Mdlalose: Secretary, Philani Nduli: Deputy Secretary, Gcina Makhoba: Coordinator.

The role of the KZN UF is to form UF local structures and encourage communities to form their own community organizations that can affiliate to UF; to dismantle the silo system that communities and organizations are working within, to address the issues faced in KZN emanating from the government policies.

The UF is not a political party, not affiliated to any political party, not a trade union nor a structure formed to attack or being against the governing party, but it is formed to unite the Civil Society to speak in one voice as the united body.

Having observed many community protests, such as blocking roads, burning tyres, etc. demonstrates that these protests are genuine but not coordinated. And it is the fact that the real struggle is not about short term reforms, but it is all about struggling for economic equality, which will assist on closing the inequality gap in the society.

Some of the activities that we are going to start with, to deal with these challenges till the end of March 2015 are as follows:-

Water and man-made diseases: Mtubatuba

Transit Camps: Shaka's Head

“Grey Water”: Inanda

Within the three campaigns we will also be engaging with researchers and academics to be assisting communities in the fact-finding and scientific evidence.

There will also be political education workshops that will be taking place from time to time in various community areas.

On 13 and 14 December 2014 the KZN UF office bearers will be joining the United Front National Assembly to be held in Johannesburg this coming weekend.

As we go, we shall be doing the formative assessment, and then do the summative assessment by the end of March 2015.