

# Special supplement of “The Journal”

In this special supplement of *The Journal* we publish the full text of the “True State of the Nation Address” issued by the United Front in South Africa on 11 February 2015, the 25th anniversary of Nelson Mandela’s release from prison.

THE UNITED FRONT was initiated by the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA). We believe that this statement is of special interest to the People’s Assembly in Britain and people standing up for socialism all over the world.

NUMSA explained that for them the massacre of the Marikana miners “marked a turning point in the social and political life of South Africa”. It could not be “business as usual”. They put the question: “How do we explain the killing of striking miners in a democracy?” They had to conduct “a sustained and thorough analysis of the political meaning of Marikana”.

The leadership concluded that the decisions of the union’s ninth Congress “were no longer enough to guide [them]. The situation had changed to a point where [they] needed a new mandate from the membership”, and their Special Congress in December 2013 decided to break with the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) and call upon the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to re-establish its independent campaigning role, for “there is no priority more important than safeguarding the capacity of the working class to act in its own interests”.

In so doing NUMSA raised matters of vital importance for workers everywhere “engulfed by the crisis of capitalism which manifests itself in mass unemployment, deepening poverty and widening inequalities”. To end the rule of capital, workers

are faced with the task of breaking with fake “socialist” and “communist” parties acting on behalf of the capitalist class and “failing to act as the vanguard of the working class”.

The Special Congress therefore decided on a new united front to coordinate the struggles in the workplace and in communities, to explore the establishment of a Movement for Socialism and to conduct a “thoroughgoing discussion on previous attempts to build socialism as well as current experiments to build socialism” and “an international study on the historical formation of working class parties”.