

Numsa launch new paper

Numsa News: We say No to handouts, we need real jobs

Highlights include:

Numsa congress: Breaking new ground

Parliament: So, what is the state of the nation when it comes to policy and direction?

Numsa striking for youth jobs against false solutions

ANC vision: An Assessment of Vision 2014

Shop floor: Eskom salary report

Benefits: Will the government take workers' pension fund money?

The meaning of Marikana tragedy

Issue One here!

Numsa on the United Front and the possibilities of establishing a movement for Socialism

4 March 2014, Posted in Press Releases

Numsa convened a press briefing on Sunday 2nd March 2014, for purposes of presenting our 2014 statement on a range of issues and to report the outcome of the historic Numsa Special

National Congress held on 17-20 December 2013.

The media on Monday 3rd March 2014 ran with headlines screaming that Numsa is establishing a new political party. Given the many media enquiries we received we opted not to do a multitude of interviews, but to offer this brief statement which is in line with our 15 page statement of 2 March 2014, wherein we reiterate the following;

1. The Numsa Special National Congress concluded that the ANC led-Alliance has become dysfunctional and incapable of defending working class interest in the midst of the implementation of anti-working class policies such as;
 - The National Development Plan (NDP) which seeks to postpone the resolution of poverty, unemployment and inequality to 2030;
 - Implementation of the e-tolling which is nothing short of the privatization public roads;
 - Failure to ban Labour Brokers;
 - Introducing a National Youth Wage Subsidy which is a tax incentive/subsidy to the rich but a promises of an investigation into the modalities of a National Minimum Wage;
 - Etc
2. The Alliance springs into action every 5 years when it is time for elections, but would otherwise not address pertinent issues agreed upon in Alliance Summits since 1994.
3. For all intends and purposes, the Freedom Charter, which is the minimum program which glued together the Alliance, has been abandoned in favour of GEAR and the NDP.
4. In the current circumstances we see leaderless services delivery protest of about 37 per day furthermore illustrating that the vulnerable and the poor in our society are left to their own devises.

5. The United Front Numsa resolved upon in its Special National Congress is a mobilising tool to organise and coordinate working class struggles. It is no different to what Cosatu had attempted in its Civil Society Conference. It is not "A Party".

6. Numsa is on record as saying that we shall explore and internationally research the possibility of a Movement for Socialism and report back to our Numsa Central Committee in March 2015 on the international experience in the struggle for Socialism. This remains our position as taken in the Special National Congress.

7. In a question posed in the media briefing on Sunday 2nd March 2014, Numsa NOB's did indicate that exploring a Movement For Socialism and the report-back on our international research report to the Numsa Central Committee of March 2015, shall invariably lead to the establishment of a working class party the form, shape and content shall be determined in consultation with left and progressive formations in our country. Whether such a working class party contest elections in 2016 or 2019, the Numsa March 2015 Central Committee shall resolve.

8. Numsa provincial and national consultative conferences shall be convened to enable Numsa National Office Bearers to share with left and progressive formations in our country the meaning of the Numsa Special National Congress resolutions. This Numsa position is no different from the one taken by Cosatu's 1993 conference in Shaft 17 which was never acted on by Cosatu but also never rescinded.

9. The idea that Numsa is forming a political party to contest 2014 elections is false and baseless.

10. Whereas Numsa shall not endorse nor resource the ANC's

elections campaign, the SNC resolved that;

- Numsa shall not endorse any political party in the 2014 national and provincial government elections;
- Numsa members and officials have a right to vote for a political party of their choice.

We hope that this brief statement clarifies the Numsa Special National Congress position and resolutions

Issued by:

Karl Cloete

Numsa Deputy General Secretary

On behalf of the Numsa National Office Bearers

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Numsa Views on the state of Class Struggles in South Africa and the Crisis in Cosatu

“Numsa is calling ALL South African workers, Black and White and African, to join us in our United Front to demand the immediate and radical implementation of the Freedom Charter as the only basis for a truly democratic South Africa and in our fight against all neoliberal manifestations.”

Numsa Headquarters, Johannesburg

“People always have been the foolish victims of deception and

self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."

Lenin in "Three Sources and Three Component parts of Marxism",
March 1913

"Nothing demonstrates better the increasing rigor of the colonial system: you begin by occupying the country, and 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 Sartre, 1964)

A. The world we live in today and our 20 years of "Democracy"

It is impossible to deny that the world has seen the most severe crisis of the global capitalist system. And, there is no end in sight, to this crisis.

[threecolumns]More than anything else, what makes the current systemic and structural global crisis of capitalism more dangerous and frightening than in the past is the total intellectual, ideological, political and moral bankruptcy of the world capitalist leaders and their capitalist theorists: they have no answer to what increasingly appears to be the world's relentless progression towards mass poverty, worldwide unemployment, growing extreme global inequalities within and between nations of the world, vicious and extremely violent civil and international wars, global warming, environmental destruction – all pointing to the eventual destruction of our Earth and all life on it.

The neoliberal "Washington Consensus" has been completely discredited and confirmed dead especially by the 2007/8 global financial capitalist crises.

There is no alternative to discarding the theories and practices of capitalism, if we must save the Earth and its living systems. No amount of cosmetic reforms either in the centre of the global capitalist system nor anywhere in its periphery can hide the most obvious fact today: at a time when humanity has the most profound knowledge and technology, the world capitalist system of private greed risks all our lives and the very Earth we live on.

Mankind today is faced with one choice: abandon the capitalist system or perish by it.

We at Numsa have no illusion that only a total destruction of capitalism and all it represents can save the Earth and give birth to a new civilisation, a new reordering of common and democratic ownership, production and consumption patterns along a higher human life and Earth respecting human civilisation. Such a civilisation is Socialism.

A.1. The South African “Democratic Transition” and squandered opportunity

We at Numsa have taken the trouble of reading the South African economic and political history, ultimately focusing on the imported capitalist revolution in the 20th Century and our “negotiated settlement”, and their impact on the South Africa we live in today.

We have come to the following conclusions, very well captured in our policy papers and resolutions of our December 2013 National Special Congress, also found in the SACP “Path to Power” document of 1989:

a. The South African capitalist state did not emerge as a result of an internal popular anti-feudal revolution. It was imposed from above and from without.

b. From its birth through to the present, South African capitalism has depended heavily on the imperialist centers.

c. Capital from Europe financed the opening of the mines. It was the colonial state that provided the resources to build the basic infrastructure – railways, roads, harbours, posts and telegraphs.

d. It was an imperial army of occupation that created the conditions for political unification. And it was within a colonial setting that the emerging South African capitalist class entrenched and extended the racially exclusive system to increase its opportunities for profit.

e. The racial division of labour, the battery of racist laws and political exclusiveness guaranteed this. From these origins a pattern of domination, which arose in the period of external colonialism, was carried over into the newly formed Union of South Africa. From its origins to the present, this form of domination has been maintained under changing conditions and by varying mechanisms.

f. *In all essential respects, however, the colonial status of the black majority has remained in place. Therefore we characterise our society as “colonialism of a special type”.*

The 1994 “democratic transition” was supposed to lay a foundation for destroying colonialism of a special type in South Africa, a form of colonialism characterised by the existence side by side, of the colonial subjects and the local agents of colonialism and imperialism in the same geo-economic and political space.

Today, 20 years after the “democratic transition” nothing best confirms the fact that *in all essential respects, however, the colonial status of the black majority has remained in place* than of the 26 million South Africans who live in abject poverty, 25 million are Africans.

Further, all economic policies since 1994 have been incapable of defeating *Colonialism of a Special Type* and the effects of Apartheid capitalism, which condemned the South African black

working class to a life of misery and hardship.

The South African government own 2011 Census so well captures this ugly fact, the fact of the continuing colonial lives of millions of Black and African South Africans, post 1994.

Any shallow class analysis of the “negotiated settlement” in South Africa easily reveals the most obvious fact: the “negotiated settlement” was secured on the basis of abandoning the Freedom Charter and the land and property claims of the “natives”.

These devices of protecting white property rights in the “1996 negotiated constitution” effectively guaranteed white property rights and therefore, white economic dominance, and the logical and inevitable continuation of imperialist economic and political domination of South Africa.

A.2. The Freedom Charter and the Negotiated Settlement

At Numsa we are convinced that the abandonment of the property clauses of the Freedom Charter by the ANC and the SACP formed the basis for the “democratic transition”.

We now know that while Cosatu was busy putting together the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), ANC and SACP negotiators, together with representatives of South African white monopoly capitalism and their imperialist counterparts were busy stitching together a neoliberal post-Apartheid South Africa.

We are not surprised, therefore, that the RDP was quickly discarded in favour of GEAR, which has now formally become the National Development Plan (NDP).

It was inevitable that in 2012, in the ANC Mangaung Conference, GEAR mutated into the neoliberal National Development Plan, and, in the ANC, the matter of expropriating land and the commanding heights of the economy without

compensation was formally buried. Effectively too, was buried any prospects of a worker friendly “National Democratic Revolution” and all hope of a seamless transition to a Socialist Republic of South Africa.

Today in South Africa, black and African poor people must wait for the profits to grow of white people and their sprinkling of a tiny filthy rich black and African middle class for any changes in their mass poverty and widespread unemployment.

It is this cruel reality, post 1994, and 20 years into our “democracy”, which caused Numsa to hold its historic 2013 Special National Congress, and to take the resolutions it did, prominent among which is the recognition that the ANC led Alliance no longer serves any revolutionary purpose in South Africa today.

A.3. The State of the South African black and African working class

At Numsa we are, following the class analysis above, not surprised that in all black and African communities there is a state of restlessness, there are widespread protests now increasingly turning violent, against the bitter and cruel conditions of life in these communities.

We are not surprised that 20 years after the negotiated settlement, very little real wealth has been redistributed and as a result, education, housing, water services, sanitation, electricity, distance from quality social and economic productivities activities and so on continue to be disastrous problems for black and African people of this country.

We are not surprised that South Africa, post 1994, has become the most unequal and socially violent place on Earth today.

We are not surprised that the white population continues to dominate in the economy, society and culture, today.

It is against this background that we examine the President of South Africa's State of the Nation Address of 2014, and the ANC government 2014 Budget Speech. Further, we examine the election promises using this background.

We in Numsa understand the crisis in Cosatu as simply a reflection of the on-going class struggles in the wider South African society in general and inside the ANC led alliance in particular.

B. State of the Nation Address (SoNA)

There is nothing in the State of the Nation Address that even remotely indicates that the ANC and its government are embarked upon a "radical transition" for full social justice in South Africa.

Nor does anything in the SoNA remotely signal the fact that the ANC is worried that virtually ALL Black and African communities, 20 years into democracy, are at war inside themselves!

While the SoNA correctly recognizes the ongoing extreme burden of unemployment, mass poverty and extreme inequalities, the SoNA simply treats all these as products of the failure of the South African economy to grow fast enough post 1994, and on the global crisis of capitalism.

The SoNA lamentably fails to locate the real roots and causes of the South African crisis of unemployment, poverty and extreme inequalities – the ongoing economic and social domination of South Africa by white capital and its black and imperialist surrogates.

The SoNA celebrates liberal democracy in South Africa without any shame at the exclusion of more than 25 million South Africans from this system that is black and African.

We see that the 2014 Budget Speech takes its cue from the

SoNA, and also wastes time singing praises of the neoliberalism of the past 20 years.

C. ANC's Elections Manifestos: a look at the ANC's 2014 Vision

In 2004, the ANC launched its "Vision 2014". The 2004 Manifesto was framed within this vision. We have now reached 2014, and the ANC has produced another Manifesto and yet another vision, which is now called "Vision 2030". It is therefore propitious that we evaluate the ANC's performance in relation to its "Vision 2014" and in relation to its subsequent Manifestos.

In its 2004 Message from the President, the ANC called for ***"A People's Contract to Create Work and Fight Poverty"***.

The combination of some of the most important targets and objectives making up Vision 2014, together with our findings, are as follows:

- Reduce unemployment by half through new jobs, skills development, assistance to small businesses, opportunities for self-employment and sustainable community livelihoods.

Today, unemployment has in fact increase beyond the 2004 levels today, self-employment has dwindled, and, more dangerously, Black and African communities are reeling from violent crimes and daily violent protests!

- Reduce poverty by half through economic development, comprehensive social security, land reform and improved household and community assets.

Precisely because unemployment has in fact increased beyond the 2004 levels, we see today that more than 26 million South Africans are classified as extremely poor!

- Provide the skills required by the economy, build

capacity and provide resources across society to encourage self-employment with an education system that is geared for productive work, good citizenship and a caring society.

Marikana sums it all: the bulk of the population remains poorly educated, unskilled, living in abject poverty and in a very uncaring society. Today we are being conditioned to accept that every community protest will lead to deaths of some protestors!

- Ensure that all South Africans, including especially the poor and those at risk – children, youth, women, the aged, and people with disabilities – are fully able to exercise their constitutional rights and enjoy the full dignity of freedom.

Violent crime and crimes against women and children are still intolerably high. An African child in South Africa today is many times more likely to be borne in a poor household than before 2004.

- Compassionate government service to the people; national, provincial and local public representatives who are accessible; and citizens who know their rights and insist on fair treatment and efficient service.

Again, the Marikana massacre speaks volumes about where we are. It is an open secret that the system of local government has collapsed, with very few of them having clean audits. So-called service delivery protests are the order of the day everywhere in the country. South Africa in fact leads in the number of violent community protests in the world today.

- Massively reduce cases of TB, diabetes, malnutrition and maternal deaths, and turn the tide against HIV and AIDS, and, working with the rest of Southern Africa, strive to eliminate malaria, and improve services to achieve a better national health profile and reduction of

preventable causes of death, including violent crime and road accidents.

While there have been some improvements in these variables, the quality, levels and efficiencies in the health system, especially the public health system, are pathetic. TB cases have actually increased.

- Significantly reduce the number of serious and priority crimes as well as cases awaiting trial, with a society that actively challenges crime and corruption, and with programmes that also address the social roots of criminality.

Unemployment is globally recognized as a “significant contributor” to all crimes, including violent ones.

The fact that unemployment has in fact increased since 2004 is experienced by black and African communities through the high incidence of violent crimes, today with an increasing incidence of extreme forms of violence even among teenagers.

The failure to implement the property clauses of the Freedom Charter is the most profound root cause of violent crime in South Africa, in our opinion.

- Position South Africa strategically as an effective force in global relations, with vibrant and balanced trade and other relations with countries of the South and the North, and in an Africa that is growing, prospering and benefiting all Africans, especially the poor.

The xenophobia that has engulfed post 1994 South Africa is the best test of just how badly positioned South Africa is globally, especially in the South. None of the rhetoric on balanced trade and other relations have materialized precisely because the ANC government has no real economic levers, because it has not implemented the property clauses of the

Freedom Charter.

D. The ANC 2014 Budget speech

Numsa has carried out the only comprehensive and detailed class analysis of the National Development Plan (NDP). Our conclusions are that the NDP is simply GEAR dressed up as a populist document.

Not only does the NDP fail to tackle the economic and social structural and systemic foundations of South African colonial economy and society, it quite pathetically promises wholly unrealistic and totally unachievable goals, just like its father – GEAR.

Numsa has consistently argued that South African National Treasury Department has been post 1994, the home and custodian of neoliberalism in the South African government.

Pravin Gordan's 2014 Budget Speech announces that it locates the 2014 medium term budget in the NDP.

Like the SoNA, the 2014 Budget is littered with some self-praise, and the false promise of jobs, more housing, more water, more social security, better health and so on, all of them to be done within the NDP framework.

It is impossible to ignore Lenin's words in 1913:

"People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises."

The sweet coated promises contained in this Budget, including the pathetic increases on the social grants do not succeed to hide the fact that this is a budget designed to please South African white capital and its local agents and imperialism and their rating agents.

There is nothing in this budget which signals a “radical transition”. This is why the bosses and their political formations have received it very well.

A most blatant betrayal of the Black and African working class is the bribery to white and black capital the budget gives in the form of the Youth Employment Incentive Tax. This has been done without exhausting the NEDLAC process and actually by contemptuously bypassing NEDLAC.

Rather than abolition the colonial and apartheid wage as demanded in the Freedom Charter, the budget instead bribes capital with free money, to divide the working class!

This budget, more than anything else, confirm the rightwing shift in the ANC/SACP government.

E. The crisis in Cosatu

We understand Cosatu’s launching principles and values as being the following:

- a. Cosatu is a worker controlled and democratic trade union federation.***
- b. Cosatu is a Revolutionary Socialist Federation.***
- c. Cosatu is an anti-imperialist federation; it fights against foreign capitalist domination.***
- d. Cosatu rejects all forms of cultural, male chauvinist and racist prejudices.***
- e. Cosatu is a militant federation.***
- f. It is a transformative federation.***
- g. Cosatu is a champion of working class democracy.***
- h. Cosatu believes in working class power, and advocates worker control not only of the progressive trade union***

movement, but of society as well.

i. Cosatu believes in the revolutionary power and unity of the working class, which is why it champions the formation of one union in one industry and one federation in one country.

In our opinion, it is these values and their articulation, which is at issue in Cosatu today.

On one hand, there are those among Cosatu leaders who see a Cosatu guided by the values above as a threat to their potential careers in the ANC or its government. These leaders have long abandoned Socialism and are only paying lip service to the struggle for Socialism.

On the other hand, there are those leaders such as in Numsa and the affiliates Numsa is working with, who are determined to defend and advance the ideals for which Cosatu was founded, including defending a Socialist Cosatu.

Given the abandonment of a radical NDR by the ANC and the cooptation of the SACP into the ANC and its government, it is inevitable that Cosatu must be plunged into a crisis by the fight to the death between these two class positions in Cosatu – one for a Cosatu that simply transmits the wishes of the right wing ANC nationalists among the working class and the other which wants to fight for a Cosatu with its original values.

Numsa has thus become the “enemy within” among the Cosatu leadership clique that is imbedded in the ANC and SACP. It so happens that this clique is numerically strong in the CEC of Cosatu.

This pro rightwing ANC and SACP clique in Cosatu wants to engineer the expulsion of Numsa from Cosatu. It has already engineered first the paralysis, and later the suspension of the General Secretary of Cosatu – Zwelinzima Vavi.

This right wing Clique ignores the Cosatu Constitution at will. It has refused to abide by the Cosatu Constitution that demands that when a third of Cosatu affiliates demand the convening of Cosatu Special Congress, the President of Cosatu must convene such a Congress or be replaced by a convener.

This rightwing clique, knowing very well that its positions have no mandates from its own members, is very scared of a Special National Congress because it knows the Special National Congress, besides exposing this right wing, may also trigger leadership removals in their unions.

Numsa's positions are very clear and quite simple:

1. Zwelinzima Vavi's unconstitutional public humiliation, harassment and suspension must be lifted immediately.
2. All mischievous and unconstitutional efforts to frustrate and expel Numsa from Cosatu must stop forthwith.
3. A Cosatu Special Congress as requested by the appropriate number of unions must be convened immediately, to resolve all the causes of the crisis in Cosatu.
4. Numsa will do everything possible to achieve these objectives, including using the courts to stop the violations of Cosatu Constitution.
5. Numsa is calling upon all members of Cosatu affiliates to defend their federation from being swallowed into the ANC/SACP right wing camp.

In the meantime, Numsa continues to run with its section 77 campaigns.

F. Progress on the United Front and the Movement for Socialism

In order to understand Numsa, especially in order to understand our resolutions on the United Front and Movement

for Socialism, one has to understand what Numsa is first.

Numsa is a revolutionary formation, a red trade union, playing a leading role in the struggle to defeat capitalism and the exploitation that is associated with it. In that role we are unashamedly Marxist-Leninist, rooting ourselves in the traditions of Marx and Lenin. So we defy the boundaries between nations that are set up to divide workers as we proclaim ourselves as proletarian internationalists. That tradition also gives us democratic centralism, that combination of robust, vigorous and democratic debate with the discipline of marching together when we have made a decision. That combination makes us what we are proud to be – a red union.

The leadership of the national liberation movement as a whole has failed to lead a consistent radical democratic process to resolve the national, gender, and class questions post 1994. *This leadership is predominantly drawn from the Black and African capitalist class; it kowtows to the dictates of white monopoly capitalist and imperialist interests. It is nothing more than parasitic and crony capitalists.*

It is half-hearted and extremely inconsistent in the pursuit of a radical democratic programme and has completely abandoned the Freedom Charter.

It is these circumstances, combined with the worsening situation of the South African working class as a whole post 1994, which has lead Numsa to rethink and revisit its relationship with the ANC and its Alliance.

Work is well underway to mobilise the working class in all their formations, into a United Front for the radical implementation of the Freedom Charter and against neoliberalism.

During our January Numsa Marxist-Leninist Political School we met with the leaders of some of the social movements and

community structures, to begin the process of mapping out how we will work together.

In order to reach out far and wide, Numsa shall convene Provincial and National consultative meetings to share the content of our resolutions on the United Front and Movement for Socialism.

We are happy to note that many social movement organisations and community organisations are joining us in our Section 77 campaigns starting with a national strike on 19th March 2014.

During the course of this year, work will be done to assess the state of the world socialist movement and its formations, to inform our work towards the Movement for Socialism. The Numsa Marxist Leninist School in the first week of April 2014 shall receive representatives of Workers and Communist Parties from countries such as Brazil, Greece and Venezuela to share experiences and to lay the basis for our international research.

G. Engineering and Eskom negotiations in 2014 – The Numsa National Bargaining Conference (NBC)

As always, Numsa has begun our Ear to the Ground Campaign in workplace general meetings to listen to the aspirations of Numsa members with respect to collective bargaining demands in the Engineering industry and Eskom.

In collecting these demands our key and strategic objective is to improve the benefits and conditions of employment. The demands from the 9 Numsa Regions shall be consolidated and tabled for discussion in our Numsa National Bargaining Conference scheduled for 10-12 March 2014 in Saint Georges Hotel, Centurion.

Without pre-empting anything, we must be upfront that we are preparing for the mother of all battles as we shall champion the struggle for a living wage for workers in the Engineering

Industry and Eskom in particular.

The union will use this round of negotiations not only for wages but also take up a very important campaign of defending existing jobs and to fight for more jobs. In extending our work beyond the factories, Numsa shall on the 19th of March 2014 embark on a national strike to demand the scrapping of the employment tax incentive act or the so called youth wage subsidy. We shall do so in defense of existing jobs as we have reason to believe that the current spate of retrenchments notices across various sectors are directly linked to this stupid incentive scheme.

We refuse that the working class of SA must be forced to pay for the global crisis of capitalism.

That is why we calling on the mining bosses and government to quickly resolved the current strike in the platinum belt. It has become abundantly clear there is a joint pack between government and mining capital to destroy union activity outside of the NUM.

With respect to Eskom, Numsa shall not rest until workers at Eskom receive a fair increase. We view the arbitration award that imposed 5, 6 % as an insult that constitute a wage freeze.

We do need equity of pay. Currently white workers sit at the top of their pay grades while many black workers still languish at the bottom of their grades.

We can no longer tolerate Eskom and Government hiding behind the skirt of Nersa to justify paying lip service to a negotiation process where the power (the only power) of workers to withhold their labour is removed.

We calling on all workers at Eskom to unite behind their legitimate right to demand a living wage if in these round of negotiations Eskom management doesn't move swiftly to make a

real offer that will settle workers' demands and hide behind essential service but pay workers peanuts, they would have to take fully responsibility for a load shedding that would come as a result of workers insisting that their demands must be met.

Eskom now has a shareholder compact with government, but it does not call for fair wages rather it focuses on profit targets. Profit targeting mean Eskom is under pressure to moderate wages.

Our members are victims of high standards of living as a result of administered prices that continue to rise and affecting negatively their basket of food and all aspects of their lives.

They continue to receive low wages as there is no National Minimum Wage that can guarantee them a living wage.

Workers are taking loans from loan sharks in-order to make a living.

There is poor or virtually no assistance from the employers.

Unemployment which makes those who are working to support those not working imposes a heavy burden on our members as a result of the triple crises poverty, unemployment and inequalities.

It is our members who are victims Privatization and Commodification of basic needs/services.

H. What is to be done?

As Lenin so well said, in 2013:

"People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases,

declarations and promises."

Twenty years into our "democracy", we the Black and African South African working class are sick and tired of listening to the same stories about us having to wait for the rich to grow their profits for us to see some minor improvements in our lives.

The working class can only be defeated because it is not united. United, no force on Earth can defeat us.

As immediate tasks, we state the following:

- Numsa is calling ALL South African workers, Black and White and African, to join us in our United Front to demand the immediate and radical implementation of the Freedom Charter as the only basis for a truly democratic South Africa and in our fight against all neoliberal manifestations.
- We are calling on all members of affiliates of Cosatu to demand that their national leaders explain where they stand today, on the ongoing crisis in Cosatu.
- We call on all members of affiliates of Cosatu to stand up and defend their federation from the vultures who want to turn it into a toy telephone of the ANC and the SACP.
- We call on all mineworkers to stand together, united against the mine bosses and the government who are both fighting mining workers in their just struggle for a living wage.
- As Numsa, we fully support the just demands for a living wage for the mineworkers. We remain convinced, however, that with the increasing marriage between the ANC and its government and the mine bosses and shareholders, no just wage will be secured by mine workers.

We therefore call upon all workers to intensify the struggle

to nationalize South African wealth, including the mines and land.

Our consistent Marxist-Leninist inspired class analysis of the world and South Africa today informs us that we have no option but to fight to the bitter end, for a Socialist world and Socialist South Africa.

Issued by: Numsa National Office Bearers

March the 2nd, 2014.

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NUMSA 2nd Deputy President Comrades Basil Cele on jobs for Youth demonstration

Read this here:

<http://www.numsa.org.za/article/speakers-notes-numsa-2nd-deputy-president-comrades-basil-cele-jobs-youth-demonstration/>

Numsa to strike for Youth Jobs

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa's (Numsa) representing 341 150 members will come out on a protected socio-economic strike on Wednesday 19 March 2014 to demand jobs for South Africa's youth.

This is the first of a series of rolling socio-economic strikes that the union decided on at its Special National Congress in December 2013.

Since November 2013, Numsa has been involved in negotiations with government at the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) where the union objected to the Employment Tax Incentive Bill that government had tabled in parliament.

see more
here: <http://www.numsa.org.za/article/numsa-strike-youth-jobs-march-19-2014/>
and here:
<http://www.numsa.org.za/article/joint-statement-numsa-trade-unions-progressive-social-movements/>

On events in Bosnia-Herzegovina: a letter to a Trade Unionist

[threecolumns]Dear Comrade,

Let's think through what positive and appropriate proposals to put forward in discussion with Bosnian worker or socialist activists. We will be of some use if we just find ways to help a given social movement to draw from the experience of the international workers' movement (which we know something about) which is long-buried in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We don't need to invent anything, especially not substituting ourselves for the Bosnians; all we need do is generalise and bring together the demands they themselves are fighting for.

1. **The character of the movement:** (1) it is clearly *social*, workers and young people suffering chronic unemployment; (2) This movement is up against a political regime with the following characteristics: – *political paralysis* as a result of the Dayton Accords which installed a two-headed federation alongside another state (republica serbska), this means no common measures of any significance can be achieved; – *endemic corruption* whose source is the nationalist political parties; – *a liberal viewpoint*, from which the fourth, social-democrat, component of the coalition is also not exempt; (3) The whole has produced the worst possible remedy for a war-ravaged country: all-round *privatisation*. The slogans on the demonstrations and the political programmes of the collectives involved ("Udar" and "Revolt" in Tuzla) reflect this diagnosis.
2. **Our position** consists of: (1) *supporting* this profoundly correct movement; (2) *clarifying it from the class point of view* (to oppose provocations, running battles with the police, looting and arson), things which workers instinctively agree with; (3) sifting out which of the demands raised are most appropriate to *unite, structure and develop* the movement.
3. The main demand comes from the movement itself:
– **Stop all new privatisations NOW, review all existing privatisations, no privatisation without workers' control!** How? By a national commission of persons of

integrity, including qualified economists (like e.g. Stoyanov, currently an economist at the university of Rijeka), independent of the government and the bosses, under the control of elected **workers' councils (committees)** in all workplaces and institutions, including students and especially in the big mining and industrial units, and structured at a Federation level; total **transparency** of this Commission's work via public media (TV and major dailies): People should know the whole truth about a quarter of a century of fiddles! This Commission should have the authority to set up its own *investigation and enforcement* branches, as there can be no confidence in the state fraud squad, corrupted by the crooks in the ruling political parties who appoint and supervise them. *Immediate payment of unpaid wages! Social security for all! Free access to schooling and hospital treatment for all! Cost-of-living indexing of wages and pensions, etc.*

4. A **Federal emergency job-creation plan!** Between those who have lost their jobs and those who have never had one, unemployment stands at 44%. This is a question of life and death for hundreds of thousands of men and women. Unless the government can very quickly come up with a plan to absorb mass unemployment, they should go! They should resign or be thrown out by the people. Working people always prefer peaceful and democratic solutions, but if that means keeping in power the class of capitalist rascals impotent in the face of unemployment, working people and young people will not stand idly by as society decays. If they can find the will, tenacity and discipline to elect their own **central organ of committees or councils of struggle**, they can put forward a government of suitably qualified people of integrity. Without their own permanent, democratic and durable rank-and-file organisations, all the demonstrations, petitions and cries of anger will go up in smoke. If the country has to look abroad to borrow money, at least it

should be used to create jobs. Life is more important than the laws of the market!

5. *Commission to review privatisations and Emergency plan to deal with unemployment* are merely the first measures to put in place. There still remains the institutional Gordian knot of the Dayton Peace, which engendered a state paralysed from birth. Two or three states in one, half a dozen canton-states in each of them, states which straddle each other so that main roads have to leap-frog over each other on flyovers and suffering unparalleled legislative anarchy and negligence – the situation is untenable. Social progress is what brings peace, not the nationalism which rampaged during the war. The only way forward for working people and young people in the Federation is stretch out a hand to their fellow-citizens, workers and young people of the so-called “republica serbska”: For an **independent, united and democratic Bosnia-Herzegovina!** No Bantustans! There is room in such a joint federation for all the peoples of the region, for all nationalities, all religions and all alphabets, but not for war criminals or state mafias. A joint confederation of three peoples ready to turn the page and secure their children’s future is possible. Two or three states in one, pulled this way and that by great power influence, is not. Bosnia-Herzegovina is condemned to political paralysis, economic stagnation and social decay. Working people and young people in “republica Serbska” have a choice: live together in a common state, with the federation guaranteeing national rights, or eke out a miserable existence as hostages of a state which was criminal when Mladic and Karadzic ran it and has turned into a mafia state under Dodik. Working people and young people in Tuzla, Sarajevo, Bihac and Mostar have shown that they do not want to sacrifice their futures on the altar of nationalist party rule; it is up to their fellows in Bania Luka to respond by joining their struggle for an independent,

united and democratic Bosnia-Herzegovina and refusing to be held hostage to rule by a mafia that can neither acknowledge the crimes of Srebrenica nor catch the guilty.

I think that is essentially the size of it. Privatisations and unemployment — immediate key issues. Medium-term perspective: a re-united country, break with the paralysing Dayton arrangements. Means to do it: Committees of struggle (of action) of working people, unemployed and young people — essentially all the stuff nobody else mentions. Long-term perspective: links with the working and young people in Serbia and Croatia, who have had to put up with the same liberal treatment (privatisation, unemployment) and the same nationalist straitjacket. In brief: suggest ways to strengthen and broaden the movement.

All the best

Radoslav Pavlovic, 10 Feb 2014[/threecolumns]

Nine South African unions don't have unconditional support for the ANC

www.bdlive.co.za/national/politics/2014/01/30/cosatu-affiliates-speak-out-against-unconditional-support-for-anc;jsessionid=9C0FAB3112D042B0EECD04019A2D9E89.present2.bdfm

“NINE affiliates of the Congress of South African Trade Union (Cosatu) on Wednesday accused the federation's leadership of going against policy by giving the African National Congress (ANC) their unconditional support in the upcoming election.

“They also demanded the reinstatement of suspended Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi . . . ”

“The nine affiliates wrote to Cosatu president Sdumo Dlamini last year, asking him to convene a special congress to iron out the divisions in the federation. They have accused him of delaying.

“Workers have never agreed that Cosatu should give the ANC a blank cheque,” South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) general secretary Walter Theledi said at a joint media briefing with the leaders of the eight other unions.

“Mr Dlamini and the Cosatu leadership have repeatedly said the federation’s support for the ANC was unconditional, and it would throw its weight behind the party in the upcoming election.

“But Mr Theledi said Cosatu had resolved at its 2012 national congress that its support for the ANC should not be unconditional, but be based on “advancing” the demands of its members and the broader working class.

The nine unions include Samwu, the Food and Allied Workers Union, the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union, nurses union Denosa, the Communication Workers Union, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), football union Safpu, the Public and Allied Workers Union and the South African State and Allied Workers Union.”

See the joint statement here: <http://www.numsa.org.za/article/press-statement-of-the-nine-cosatu-affiliates-calling-for-the-reinstatement-of-comrade-zwelinzima-vavi-and-for-a-special-national-delegate-congress-as-a-matter-of-urgency/>

The Workers Charter

Workers' Charter

adopted by National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
(NUMSA) 1987

Preamble

We, the working people of South Africa, the main producers of our country's wealth, declare:

That, as workers, we are daily robbed of a rightful share of the fruits of our labour.

That, as black workers, we are subjected to even more intense exploitation by a system of capitalism which uses national domination to keep wages low and profits high.

That, as part of the black oppressed whose forebears were conquered by force of arms, we continue to suffer all the social, political, economic and cultural deprivations of a colonised people.

That, the most urgent task facing us as workers, as black workers and as part of the black oppressed, is to use our organised strength both at the point of production and among our communities, to put an end to the race tyranny and to help bring about a united, non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa based on one person one vote, as broadly defined in the Freedom Charter.

That, we see the winning of such a non-racial democracy as part of a continuous process of creating conditions for the building of a socialist society which will be in the interests of all our people; a society free of all exploitation of person by person which alone can complete the

liberation objectives in all spheres of social life.

That, we are the most vital social constituent of the broad liberation movement in which we play a part both as individuals and through our trade unions and political organisations. We stand ready to work together with all other classes and groups genuinely committed to a non-racial democracy, at the same time safeguarding our class independence and our right to propagate and mobilise for a socialist future.

That, we extend a hand of friendship to our white class brothers and sisters whose long-term interests lie in the unity of all labour – black and white.

In order to ensure:

that victory in the national liberation struggle is not hijacked by a new exploiting class, of whatever colour;

that the immediate interests of the working people are fully safeguarded in the post-apartheid state and;

that we are not prevented from asserting our democratic right to win the majority of the people for a socialist future;

we, the working people, adopt this charter (as an elaboration of the Freedom Charter) and pledge ourselves to strive together, using our organised strength, to guarantee its implementation.

Ownership and control of the economy

The commanding heights of the economy shall be placed under the ownership and overall control of the state acting on behalf of the people. Such control shall not be exercised in an over-centralised or commandist way and must ensure active participation in the planning and running of the enterprises

by workers at the point of production and through their trade unions.

Economic policy shall aim to generate the resources needed to correct the economic imbalances imposed by race domination and bring about wealth redistribution for the benefit of the people as a whole. More particularly, steps shall be taken to do away with the white monopoly of ownership and managerial control.

Participation in the state sector by domestic or foreign private capital, where judged necessary, shall not give such capital a controlling share and all enterprises, whether state-owned or private, shall be compelled to safeguard the interests of the workers and the nation as a whole. The continued operation of market forces in the functioning of the economy shall not prevent state intervention in areas relating to the people's basic needs.

In the period after the defeat of the race tyranny, the fundamental perspective of working class political and trade union organisations shall be to work for the creation of economic and social conditions making possible a steady advance towards a democratic socialist society.

The right and duty to work and to a living wage

Every adult person has a right and duty to work and to receive remuneration according to his or her contribution. The new state shall, as a matter of priority, work to create economic conditions in which jobs are available to all. Until this is achieved the state shall ensure that social support is provided for the unemployed and members of their families.

All managerial and administrative posts and other jobs shall be open to every qualified citizen irrespective of race, colour, sex or religion. The equal right of access to jobs, managerial and administrative posts shall be subject to

positive measures necessary to correct the imbalances inherited from the era of race discrimination. Public and private institutions shall have a duty to provide facilities for training and opportunities to apply the acquired skills.

The State, in consultation with the trade unions, shall adopt and enforce a national minimum wage.

Child labour and all forms of forced and semi-forced labour shall be prohibited. Special attention shall be paid to redressing the

oppressive situation of workers involved in farm-work, domestic service and those trapped in the so-called homelands.

The right to organisation and struggle

There shall be no restrictions on the rights of workers to organise themselves into political parties or trade unions. Trade union organisation shall be based on the principles of “one industry – one union” and “one country – one federation”.

Trade unions and their federation shall be completely independent and answerable only to the decisions of their members or affiliates, democratically arrived at. No political party, state organ or enterprise, whether public, private or mixed, shall directly or indirectly interfere with such independence.

The state shall ensure that the trade unions, as the key mass social organisation of the organised working class, are given the opportunity to participate at all levels of economic planning and implementation.

All workers, in every sector of the economy, shall have the right, through their trade unions, to engage freely in collective bargaining and to use the strike weapon.

All legislation dealing with procedures for collective bargaining, including any limitations on the right to strike in exceptional cases, shall require the consent of a majority in the trade union movement.

In the case of all other labour legislation there shall be prior consultation with the trade union movement whose views on such proposed legislation should be timeously tabled in parliament.

The right to media access

Steps shall be taken to break the existing media monopoly by big business and the State and to ensure effective workers' access to all sections of the media.

The right to family life and social facilities

All legislation and labour practices which prevent or interfere with the right of families to live together shall be outlawed. Migrant labour shall be phased out or, in cases where it is unavoidable, provision shall be made for family accommodation during any period of service exceeding three months.

The state shall aim to make adequate accommodation and children's schools available to all workers and their families, close to their places of work. All enterprises shall help to create local or regional recreational facilities for the work-force as well as creches and primary health care facilities.

No parent, male or female, shall be disadvantaged or disabled from any form of employment by virtue of his or her duty to help rear children and, where necessary, this should be ensured by the creation of special facilities including provision for paid maternity and paternity leave.

The right to health and safety

Conditions of work shall not threaten the health, safety and well-being of the work-force or of the community at large, or create serious ecological risks.

All workers shall have the right to paid annual leave and paid sick leave.

Those injured at work shall receive proper compensation for themselves and their families. Provision shall be made for the rehabilitation of all disabled workers including, where necessary, the provision of alternative employment.

The right to security in old age

All workers shall be entitled to an adequate pension or retirement, provided either by the state or the relevant enterprise.

The rights of women workers

The state shall aim to integrate all women workers as full and equal participants in the economy. Any form of discrimination against women workers in regard to job allocation, wages, working conditions, training, benefits, etc., shall be prohibited.

Positive steps shall be taken to help correct the discrimination suffered by women both in the work-place and the home.

Opportunities shall be created to enable women to acquire skills for employment outside the home.

It shall be the duty of the state, trade unions, workers, political parties and all other mass and social organisations to ensure effective

women's participation at leadership, management and other levels and to take measures, including educational campaigns,

to combat all forms of male chauvinism both in the home and outside.

We declare that the above immediate and long-term objectives are in the best interests of all the working people and of society as a whole. As individuals and as part of the organised working class, we pledge to struggle, side by side, for their full implementation.

Black Thursday at Marikana

By Radoslav Pavlovic,

Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International

While a heat-wave and panic in the northern hemisphere have set off rocketing corn prices, in the southern half it's supposed to be winter. But the seasonal silence has been shattered by the gunshots of the South African police on Thursday 16 August 2012. 34 miners at the Marikana platinum mine were killed, some 80 wounded and more than 250 arrested. It was a bloodbath of a kind unknown since the days of Apartheid, but with the difference that the killers and their victims are both black, while the mine owners and those giving the orders are still white.

The miners were killed because they were on strike demanding an increase in their poverty wages and rejected the management's instruction to go down the mine. So capitalism, which long since entirely entered its second stage of rotten decay, is now passing over to its third stage where free collective bargaining of wages reverts to slavery. There is just one nuance in this new class relationship: power is still in the hands of white capital, but they work through black sub-contractors in the African National Congress (ANC) and the

majority union, NUM, whose leader is on the platinum mining company's board of directors. Remember how the lords of German capital bought the services of the socialists Ebert and Noske when they needed to behead the proletarian revolution? Well the same thing is happening today in South Africa.

I have a brother living in those far-off lands in the south, but I feel closer to my black brothers who are the Marikana miners, because ties of class are stronger than ties of blood. I know that on the football terraces of Zagreb, Belgrade, Warsaw and Moscow hordes of fascist football fans hurl racist abuse at black players and call them monkeys, because they are deluded into believing that they themselves belong to a blue blooded and blond-haired white master race. They go on from abuse to physical attacks on black immigrants on the underground, like the Golden Dawn do in Greece ("Black Death" would be a better name). If there are no migrants where you live, you can always pick on your own local Roma. Then you graduate to organising militias, like the Serb tigers, eagles and wolves in the war in Bosnia and elsewhere, before ending up with regular military units for "special operations", "anti-riot" squads or "national security", in the small Balkan countries as much as in South Africa. If capitalism really is guided by a "hidden hand", it is the white hand of capital operating behind the scenes. If workers get disobedient, there are plenty of the unemployed, thirsting for violence, to turn into uniformed killers.

President Zuma, Commissions of Enquiry, reporters asking "who shot first" are just so much hot air to divert public opinion. What they did is, on the orders of white capital, they shot black miners down like sparrows.

May the memory of our black miner brothers of Marikana live for ever!