

Numsa says: We built COSATU!! No Numsa Expulsion! No Numsa Suspension!

8 April 2014, Posted in [Press Releases](#)

Today, Tuesday 8 April 2014, over 500 Numsa members, shopstewards and staff picketed outside the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) special Central Executive Committee (CEC). Their message was clear, WE BUILT COSATU: No Numsa Expulsion! No Numsa Suspension! The picket was held in response to a faction within Cosatu wanting to use the meeting to expel or suspend Numsa from the federation.

The picket was addressed by Numsa national office bearers and the national office bearers of all 8 Cosatu affiliates who are in support of Numsa.

We have never acted against the interests of the federation nor in any way are we interested in dividing the working class! We offer eight reasons as to why we should not be suspended or expelled.

- **We built Cosatu!**

Throughout its existence, Numsa has been a dedicated and disciplined affiliate of COSATU. History can reveal that few unions in Cosatu today can match Numsa's contribution in the federation's campaigns, struggles and contributions towards leadership collectives. We are always the first to go in and the last to come out in battles that Cosatu declares. We have always taken ownership and provided leadership of decisions of the federation.

- **We remain an autonomous affiliate of Cosatu!**

As a union we have played our role in building Cosatu as an independent affiliate of the federation guided by Numsa's

constitution and our own worker-controlled and democratic structures. We pride ourselves of being a union that walks where others fear to tread. While others may be surprised it is not the first time that our union has called for a break from the ANC. We resolved this in 1993. When we did not win our position in Cosatu, we subjected ourselves to the discipline of the federation. What is the difference now?

- **Democratic centralism does not mean that affiliates cannot ask difficult questions!**

The fact that Cosatu has policies does not mean that affiliates cannot question existing policies. If affiliates don't have the opportunity to question policies how else would policy change within the federation take place? As Numsa we strongly believe that it is our right to question and criticise Cosatu policies and practices where these do not advance the interests of the working class. This is what our Special National Congress has done. It is the role of the others to prove us wrong, instead of threatening to purge us.

- **Nothing in existing Cosatu policies says that the federation will all the time endorse the ANC!**

The 2015 Plan of Cosatu calls for an evaluation of every election and to base our strategy on elections on what we have achieved in the implementation of the previous Election Manifesto. According to Numsa, no such evaluation has taken place on the 2009 ANC Election Manifesto. Most of the promises made then remain unfulfilled and we have seen few advances for workers and the poor.

- **Unions are creative animals!**

Our call for a critical review in organising strategies and approaches is in line with the 1997 recommendations of the Cosatu September Commission that argued that unions need to recognise the shifts and changes in how global capitalist production is organised. Cosatu itself has spoken about mergers and cartels between metals, mining, energy and chemicals. We as Numsa cannot be accused of taking a lead

in what are federation-wide decisions.

- **No dues for flouting the constitution!**

Nine unions in Cosatu have called for a Special national Congress in line with the federation's constitution. This has been persistently denied. How can we continue to pay dues to an organisation that flouts its own constitution?

- **No levy for liquidators!**

There had been a persistent campaign by the SACP over the past 18 months to attack Numsa and undermine its leadership. There have also been both open and clandestine attempts by the SACP to split our union. How can we continue to provide political support and resources to an organisation that has made it its mission to liquidate Numsa and its leadership?

- **We believe that the unity of workers and of the working class is sacrosanct!**

For us the unity of the working class is sacrosanct. Expelling or suspending Numsa will lead to a split in Cosatu. The only beneficiaries of this split will be the bosses. To us Cosatu was not an end in itself. It was an instrument of struggle. It is for this reason that we understood Cosatu as one step towards one country one federation. Our call for a revolutionary, militant and independent union movement and against a "yellow federation" is about safeguarding the capacity of workers and the working class more broadly to act in its own interests.

We built Cosatu!

Reclaim COSATU for Workers' Unity!

Defend Numsa! Defeat Factionalism!

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Calling On All Workers Demanding a Strong and United COSATU!

7 April 2014, [Originally posted here](#)

Come and Welcome Comrade Zwelinzima Vavi back to COSATU House from 8.00am Monday 7th April at COSATU House at 110 Jorissen St, Braamfontein (near Civic Centre)

The historic High Court ruling last week confirmed that Comrade Zwelinzima Vavi had been wrongly suspended for eight wasted months by the current leadership faction of COSATU. Friends and comrades are gathering outside COSATU House to say:

- Welcome back to work Comrade Zweli! Provide the dynamic leadership we need!
- End the paralysis in COSATU! Give workers a strong and independent voice once again!
- Forward to a COSATU that challenges corruption, exploitation, inequality and unemployment!
- Call the Special National Congress! Stop the victimisation of NUMSA and other Unions!
- Out with factionalism! Build a United, Independent,

Democratic COSATU under Workers Control!

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South Africa's youth unemployment crisis

5 March 2014, Posted in [NUMSA Bulletin](#)

Lessons from Germany

South Africa's structural unemployment crisis which affects the youth in particular could do with a good dose of German training medicine says Boniswa Ntshingila.

South Africa's youth unemployment crisis

South Africa's youth unemployment rate is amongst the highest in the world. Therefore one of the greatest socio-economic problems currently facing South Africa is youth unemployment.

According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey by Statistics South Africa, in the third quarter of 2013, 34.8% of young South Africans¹ could not find a job compared with less than 15% of adults over 34. If one breaks down the youth unemployment figures by race, the picture becomes more gloomy for African and coloured youth. In 2010, African youth unemployment hit 58%, coloured youth unemployment 45% while Indian and white youth unemployment were at 22% and 18% respectively. However, these figures do not correctly reflect the seriousness of the youth unemployment problem because it

excludes young people that have not been looking for employment².

If all young people are considered in the calculation of youth unemployment then the actual youth unemployment rate was 47.5% for the third quarter of 2013. This means that 1 in every 2 young people cannot find a job and has very little chance of ever finding a job.

Since 1994, the South African government has implemented various policies and strategies aimed at tackling this serious challenge. However these policies and strategies have failed to create enough jobs for young people and to dramatically reduce youth unemployment. Instead youth unemployment has continued to increase. Between January 2008 and September 2013 youth unemployment increased by 2%.

South Africa's unacceptable high youth unemployment figures are a ticking time bomb that pose a threat to the country's political stability. Recent events in North Africa and some Euro countries show the importance of creating job opportunities for young people and the need for inclusive growth in South Africa.

South Africa's youth unemployment challenge has increasingly become an important topic in policy discussion. The recent youth wage subsidy and employment tax incentive scheme are just some of the policy proposals from government that have created a lot of heated discussion about youth unemployment and ways in which it can be solved.

It has become very clear from the policy discussions that in order for South Africa to permanently and sustainably solve its youth unemployment crisis will require that the inherited structural problems that are hindering the creation of jobs for young people must be eliminated. South Africa can draw some key lessons from international experience in order to properly tackle the youth unemployment challenge.

Global youth unemployment

In most countries in the world, whether industrialised, developing or in transition, young people suffer from lower access to the labour market than the adult active population. The global youth unemployment rate increased by 1.1% between 2011 and 2013 and grew to 12.6% in 2013. Global unemployment is expected to continue to increase and by 2018 the global youth unemployment rate is expected to rise to 12.8 per cent. Furthermore, young people continue to be almost three times more likely than adults to be unemployed.

Youth unemployment in the United States and Europe has seen a big increase since the beginning of the recent global financial crisis in late 2008. By the end of 2012, youth unemployment in the European Union stood at 23.3 percent, while it was at 16.3 percent in the United States.

International youth unemployment rates

Although there was a significant increase in youth unemployment for the European Union, however, not all countries in the European Union experienced increases in youth unemployment. Whilst many countries such as Greece, Spain and France witnessed significant and sustained increases in their youth unemployment figures, Germany on the other hand was able to escape this trend and its youth unemployment has continued to decrease. Germany's experiences should therefore be considered because they could draw some interesting lessons for South Africa.

The Case of France and Germany

France and Germany represent two opposites in the European debate about rising youth unemployment. Unlike France which has witnessed an increasing youth unemployment rate Germany's youth unemployment has been on a continuous decline for many years in spite of the recent global financial crisis. By the end of 2012, the French youth unemployment rate was at 25.5

percent. On the other hand, youth unemployment in Germany has been falling continuously since its peak at the beginning of 2005. It now stands at 7.9%.

How Germany was able to solve its youth unemployment problem and France was not?

Germany's institutional settings and public policies have played an important role in influencing school-to-work transitions and ensuring that enough jobs for young people are created.

The labour market institutions and labour policies that explain the differing youth unemployment experience between France and Germany are namely:

- a) vocational education and training;
- b) minimum wages and employment protection; and
- c) activation measures and labour policies.

So how does the German dual apprenticeship program work?

German apprentices sign a training contract that last about three to four years with a firm. It alternates between school- and firm-based training. Over 50 percent of all companies with at least one employee have acquired an entitlement to train. Apprenticeship training is basically provided in all sectors of the economy. Firms bear the costs of work-place training facilities and pay apprentices a standardized salary (about €600 to €700 Euro per month in 2011).

Companies benefit from this type of training scheme because it allows them to work with new employees and to retain those that perform well. Firms can also show their social commitment. The returns to completing dual apprenticeship training are significant in Germany because 66% of those who successfully complete training subsequently enter employment. Additionally participants of the dual apprenticeship program

also have faster entry into the labour market when compared to participants in school-based vocational training (Parey, 2011).

Furthermore, the dual apprenticeship system significantly improves wages and employment stability when compared to individuals with –schooling only|| (Adda et al., 2011). After about 3 to 4 years, about 80 percent are employed (of whom 60 to 70 percent are in –stable|| employment relationships). Their wage profile is similar to university students in early years, but flatter in later years.

The dual apprenticeship systems rely on the broad support of employers, trade unions and the government regarding regulation and financing. In particular, their success critically depends on the trade unions' willingness to accept apprenticeship contracts which are paid below the level of standard contracts–in exchange for a commitment from employers to offer practical training.

The support of the government involves not only developing special vocational schools and training qualified teachers, but also offering preparatory training for young people who are not yet ready to start apprenticeship after leaving school.

This –pre-apprenticeship|| training is essential for low-qualified young people–in particular, when the access to the dual system is as competitive as in Germany (Caliendo et al., 2011). As a consequence of such a broad support, vocational training via apprenticeships is widely recognized by young people, their parents and society as a solid pathway to employment in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

1. In South Africa youth are defined as individuals aged between 15 and 34.

2. This paper reports the narrow definition of unemployment (used as the official definition in South Africa by

government). Individuals are narrowly unemployed if they “(a) did not work during the seven days prior to the interview, (b) want to work and are available to start work within a week of the interview, and (c) have taken active steps to look for work or to start some form of self-employment in the four weeks prior to the interview”

Structural unemployment

Many countries in Europe and the US are facing cyclical unemployment because of the global financial crisis from 2008 that affected economic growth in those countries. If the economies begin to pick up again, their unemployment figures will drop.

However, South Africa’s unemployment crisis is often called “structural unemployment”. This is because even if our economy is growing, there is still a problem of unemployment because of:

- the apartheid legacy of poor education – “out of a group of 100 Grade 1 pupils, only 40 will reach Grade 12. Of those, 28 will pass matric and four will enter university. Of the four, only one will graduate.” (Eugene Daniels, a former district director in the Western Cape) The less education you have, the less likely you are to find a job.
- the mismatch of skills. Not enough people are acquiring education in the careers that are in demand. Therefore some students get a tertiary qualification but cannot find jobs because there is no demand for their kind of skills.

A comparison of France and Germany’s policies for tackling youth unemployment

GERMANY FRANCE

Vocational education and training

Germany has established a dual apprenticeship system which

allows combining work experience, on-the-job training and classroom teaching.

France does not have a dual apprenticeship system but only has traditional vocational education.

The youth that participate in the vocational education and training are low-skilled young people.

The youth that participate in the vocational education are relatively qualified young people, i.e., youths who already have an equivalent or better diploma than the secondary school leaving exam.

This form of vocational training makes up the main path of transition from school to work in Germany. About 66% of the youths completing general schooling each year enter the dual apprenticeship system in Germany; and about 20% participate in full-time vocational schooling.

In France most young people are only exposed to the traditional vocational training program and apprenticeship system.

Businesses are open to hire apprentices.

Businesses are reluctant to hire apprentices.

The course contents and expectations are appropriate for vocational training which is developed through close and continuous engagement with the social partners, aimed at establishing and regularly updating training courses for each type of qualification.

The course contents and expectations for the final exam are too stringent and unsuitable for vocational training. The course content is similar to that of a professional qualification.

The apprenticeship pathway is viewed as a solid alternative in

Germany. Every detail is discussed and negotiated, including the duration of apprenticeships, expectations for the final exam, course content and pay levels.

In France there is a negative attitude and perception regarding the apprenticeship programme. Apprenticeships in France suffer from the perception that this training path is only an inferior alternative to full-time vocational schooling.

Activation measures and labour policies

Germany has compulsory and specific systems requiring the public employment service to encourage low-qualified young job seekers to resume their studies, apprenticeships or training courses (i.e. activation measures). The public employment service assists job seekers in searching for employment, preparing for interviews etc.

In France however such a system does not currently exist. This essentially means that young people in France are not afforded the same support in finding employment and becoming employable as in Germany.

Almost everywhere in Europe including Germany young people have access to a minimum income scheme before turning 25 years.

This income ensures that whilst young people are seeking employment with the assistance of the public employment service, they are not plunged into poverty.

France is furthermore an exception amongst European countries because it restricts its minimum income scheme to people who are 25 years and older. The consequence is that currently half of the poorest 20 percent of the French population are between 15 and 29 years old (Cahuc et al., 2013)

Half a million people to take to the streets on Wednesday 19 March in demand for youth jobs

17 March 2014, Posted in [Press Releases](#)

Yesterday Sunday 16 March many of you woke up to posters on lampposts announcing that “Numsa declares war”. Unfortunately, little did the posters tell you what the war was all about. Also not properly explained was the fact that the battle that made yesterday’s newspaper headlines involved not only the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) but hundreds of community groups, faith-based organisations, other unions, numerous women’s groups, taxi associations and a number of youth formations. This coming **Wednesday (19 March 2014)** close to 500 000 people will take to the streets to demand jobs for young people. After Greece and Spain, South Africa has the third highest unemployment rate in the world for people between the ages of 15 to 24. Half of the people between the age of 15 and 24 are unemployed in this country. About 71% of all unemployed people in South Africa are between the ages 15-29. Most of them are women; the majority of which have never had a job in their lives. As workers and parents, we are no longer prepared to fold our arms while our children remain jobless. We are also tired of political parties and business organisations that often refer to youth unemployment as a ticking time-bomb but do little to address the problem. As workers we also cannot continue to use our meagre wages to send our children to schools, colleges and universities to only find them wallowing in hopelessness as they cannot find employment after completion of their studies. Youth unemployment is a real problem in South Africa. **It is time for those with power to act!** On **Wednesday 19 March 2014**, we as a

coalition of trade unions, community groups, faith-based organisations, student groups, organisations of unemployed people, taxi associations, women and youth formations; we will march in seven towns (Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Emalahleni and George) to highlight the issue of youth unemployment and demand real solutions to the problem.

Youth unemployment demands real and not false solutions:

When presenting his Budget Speech on 26 February this year, the Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan announced to a great applause in the Houses of Parliament and from the press gallery that since the introduction in January 2014 of the youth employment tax incentive, there have been

56 000 beneficiaries of the scheme. Little did the Minister tell us that the Employment Tax Incentive Act that President Jacob Zuma signed in December 2013;

- made it possible for employers to backdate the claims for the subsidy to October 2013. So many of the 56 000 people that the Minister referred may have been employed last year.
- for the 56 000 beneficiaries there will be no mandatory training.
- that for those in his 56 000 beneficiaries where there is no bargaining council agreement or sectoral determination or collective agreement; there will be no enjoyment of benefits such as provident fund and other benefits.
- No figure is given for actual jobs created since the Act was signed.

Why are we opposed to the Employment Tax Incentive Act?

The *first* thing that South Africans must note with the Employment Tax Incentive Act is that what is being proposed is something broader than a youth wage subsidy. The Act proposes two *additional* categories of workers to be subsidised:

- workers who work in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as envisaged in the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act that was recently passed in Parliament.
- workers in industries that the Minister may designate by notice in the *Government Gazette*.

In both these additional categories of workers, there is no age restriction. Subsidised workers in designated industries and in SEZs could be older than 29 years. The Minister has the power to move beyond the 18-29 years bracket through designation.

This means that employers in SEZs get an extra “bonus” benefit in the zone together with the other benefits in the act.

The *second* thing that we need to note is the hypocrisy of the whole thing. While we hear everyday about how social grants create “a culture of dependency” among the poor and that there has been the rejection of the demand for a Basic Income Grant, employers seemed happy to accept handouts from taxpayers in the form of tax concessions or subsidies for them to open factories and create jobs. It looks as if the philosophy that underpins the legislation is that; *handouts to the poor are bad but good for the capitalist class!*

As this coalition we remain opposed to the Employment Tax Incentive Act for the following **NINE** reasons:

Reason 1: The Act asks the working class to subsidise employers.

As the Act says no incentive will be paid in respect of employees who earn more R6 000 a month. The bulk of qualifying employees in terms of the Act pay no income tax as the current tax threshold (2013) is R67 111. This means that an employer can withhold the subsidy he is entitled to from the general tax deductions. Tax which workers pay for schools, hospitals etc can be used by the employer as his subsidy!

This in effect means it is coming from workers and to an extent the middle class. It is they who will work to subsidise the capitalist class.

Reason 2: The philosophy of the Act is that 'handouts' to the poor are bad but good for capitalists!

The philosophy of the Employment Tax Incentive Act is that grants to the poor are bad but good for capitalists. The government is prepared to forego revenue to entice the capitalist class to create jobs. This is the same capitalist class that speaks about how social grants create dependency and that grants are unsustainable. The Act is also being implemented by a government that has thus far refused to implement the Basic Income Grant and which makes no effort to pay current social benefits at anything near a decent level.

Reason 3: The Act is based on the assumption that it is 'high' wages that are causing unemployment and not the refusal of the capitalists to invest that leads to joblessness.

The idea behind the Employment Tax Incentive Act is that it is 'high' wages that are the cause of unemployment; which is why we must subsidise wages. Unfortunately for capitalism even its supporters in the World Bank no longer believe this. In its 2013 *Development Report*, the Bank argues that youth wage subsidies have not worked.

The architects of the Employment Tax Incentive Act are however silent about the "investment strike" by the private sector that has been going on in South Africa for many years. No-one seems to be able to put a figure on this but there is little disagreement that it exists. It is the problem of the refusal to invest on the part of the capitalist class that government refuses to tackle head on. It is this avoidance of the real problem that leads them to false solutions such as the tax incentive scheme.

Reason 4: Even sectors with agreements are not immune from

abuse.

The drafters of the Act do not seem to know the distinction between ACTUAL and MINIMUM wages. In the implementation of the Employment Tax Incentive Act, eligible employers can bring in qualifying employees and pay them minima in the agreements. The implications for a two-tiered labour market therefore remain with one group of workers on actuals and subsidised workers on minimums.

In collective bargaining this will have an inevitable downward push on wages in general. This is not “greedy” workers trying to protect their own conditions. Each worker in South Africa supports many more who are at home and unable to find decent work. In reality the vast majority of workers in this country, have no bargaining protection and don't even negotiate their wages!

Reason 5: The dangers of displacement of older and permanent employees are not totally eliminated

Although the Act states that an employer will be deemed to have displaced a worker if the “order of court or otherwise, reveals that the dismissal of that employee constitutes an automatically unfair dismissal”, for us this is not good enough. For a start the employee must prove that he or she was displaced because of the subsidy.

The worker must then wait for the Labour Court to decide that the dismissal was caused by displacement. Employers are never likely to announce that a worker is being dismissed to replace him or her with a subsidized employee. Workplace reorganization will cover a multitude of sins! An employee could be dismissed, or leave in one unit and be replaced with a worker from another unit. The job of the replacement worker could then become subsidized. No new job has been created, the number of jobs remains the same.

But more serious in relation to any potential unfair dismissal

case is that in the case of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and industries that the Minister may designate, there is no age limit. So we cannot use age as the basis of an “automatically unfair dismissal” case.

Reason 6: Fraudsters are not disqualified!

In the original bill an employer who committed fraud would be disqualified from receiving the subsidy. In the Act that was passed although, there is a new penalty of R30 000, the automatic disqualification for receiving the subsidy in respect of other employees has been removed. According to the Act, a fraudster employer may not be disqualified if the Minister feels that the effects of the disqualification may directly or indirectly have an impact on employees of the employer.

Reason 7: There are still no mandatory training provisions in the Act.

Although there is some talk about regulations for training, these are very weak. The key word to watch in the Act is “MAY”; which is a very weak commitment. The Minister may or may not prescribe regulations requiring training or skills development. Don’t believe what is in the ANC Election Manifesto. The law says the Minister “may” pass regulations! They are not there.

Reason 8: The Minister of Finance still has wide ranging powers.

Except the consultation with the Minister of Labour on the training regulations that may be prescribed, the Minister of Finance still retains too much power. The Minister does not have to consult with other Ministers or stakeholders when designating industries for qualifying employees and eligible employers. Nor is there any provision for criteria that would guide the Minister’s decision.

Reason 9: The Act bypassed NEDLAC.

As this coalition we still maintain our view that the Act should have been tabled in NEDLAC as it is a socio-economic policy. This is what the NEDLAC Act requires. This was also the commitment in the Youth Employment Accord.

Don't believe what truth twisters say!

Last Monday 10 March, members of the ANC's Economic Transformation Committee (ETC) attacked our opposition to the Employment Tax Incentive Act and accused Numsa of speaking with "forked tongues". Leading the pack was the architect of the employment tax incentive scheme Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan and unfortunately Numsa's former general-secretary Enoch Godongwana. Both claim that Numsa is dishonest in opposing the tax incentive scheme because "tens of billions of rands worth of government incentives have over the past years gone into the auto industry and that such incentives have kept the auto industry alive".

Displaying the buffoonery that characterises what he says or does these days, the Secretary-General of the ANC Gwede Mantashe was blunter than Gordhan and Godongwana. According to Mantashe, "Numsa accepts incentives for the capitalist class in the automotive industry but refuse government subsidisation of unemployed people".

In the workshops that we have run in all our 52 locals since January 2014, we have dismissed as disingenuous the criticism that as union we accept incentives for the capitalist class, but refuse subsidisation of unemployed people. As indicated above it is not all incentives that NUMSA is opposed to.

We are opposed to schemes where the working class is forced to subsidise capitalists. The APDP works differently from the employment tax incentive scheme. Yes, through the duty-free import credits the state foregoes some revenue for the fiscus but this is different from asking the working class to

subsidise capitalists. The incentive scheme in the Act uses PAYE and avoids touching profits.

Gordhan, Godongwana and Mantashe conveniently forget that the APDP, through Numsa 's intervention has other components such Vehicle Assembly Allowance (VAA) and Production Incentive (PI) that promote local production and local assembly. Our support for APDP and opposition to the Employment Tax Incentive Act is not double speak or opportunism. Our support for the MIDP and now APDP is premised on our overall objectives of job creation, localisation and creation of decent jobs.

What are we then demanding?

In place of the false solutions that government is putting forward, WE DEMAND:

- A repeal and scrapping of the Employment Tax Incentive Act.
- Macro-economic policies that increase the demand for labour such as a tax system that penalizes companies who pay out dividends instead of reinvesting in job-creating activities.
- Credit and the lowering of the cost of capital for job-creating companies and sectors.
- A move beyond public works programmes to public-sector employment programmes.
- Training of apprentices, learners, experiential learners and interns to achieve qualifications.
- A job-seekers grant or a basic income grant instead of a subsidy for employers.

Our strike is protected:

The strike on 19 March is protected in terms of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) as the unions have served notices to the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC). Every worker can join the strike without fear of dismissal or victimisation.

STRIKE FOR YOUTH JOBS

AGAINST FALSE SOLUTIONS!!!

Contact: **Irvin Jim**, NUMSA General Secretary, 0731576384

Or

Karl Cloete, NUMSA Deputy General Secretary, 0833890777

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 President Opening Speech: 'Numsa National Bargaining Conference'

10 March 2014, Posted in [Press Releases](#), [Speeches](#)

"The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirit of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language..." (Karl Marx, 1984, Eighteenth Brumaire)."

NUMSA President Opening Speech: 'Numsa National Bargaining Conference'

Central Committee members

The officials of Numsa present here

Our invited guest

Most importantly the delegates of the Bargaining conference, Numsa shop stewards

On behalf of the National office bearers of our red Union I greet you all and welcome to the Numsa National bargaining conference 2014. Once again the time for ear to the ground in preparation for the 2014 class war against the bosses in our Engineering sector and house agreements like Eskom has arrived. Collective bargaining remains central to our revolutionary work to reclaim the surplus value that is stolen daily by the bosses at the point of production, as part of our program to take war to capital.

The National bargaining conference take place in the context of the:

- State of the Nation address
- The Budget speech
- The coming election
- Cosatu in the intensive care unit
- The working class under seige

Political developments

The bargaining conference takes place at the time when our country is still facing difficult challenges, the devils of unemployment, poverty and inequality, the truth of the matter is that no matter how many times we keep on talking about the triple crises, it will not go away unless if our country takes a new political and economic path to address this challenges. The old solutions no matter how many times they get recycled they are not capable to deliver the required results which is a new economic path, in these regards i do wish to borrow from Karl Marx on the Eighteenth Brumaire;

“The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirit of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language...” (Karl Marx, 1984, Eighteenth Brumaire).

The results of the failure to implement the freedom charter is the stubborn triple crises we facing today, all what is left is to lie to our people that we have a vision 2030(a good story to tell) and south Africa will be a better place (wokers and the poor in these country have a bad experience and story to tell). We have a bad history of shifting goal post in

defence of the right wing agenda that our movement have accepted. Today we want to tell our people that they must forget about vision 2014 that we all supported and even refuse to make an honest assessment of ourselves.

The truth of the matter is that we only replaced white man with a black man, the system is still the same, and the South African capitalism continues to flourish with cooption of few black capitalist, whilst majority of our people continue to be excluded from the economy. The Anc government continues to be the supervisor of white monopoly capital, and that's why they will fail.

The Sona provides nothing as part of taking forward the second phase of radical transition and the budget speech was even more decisive giving the bosses free grants with a an illusion that they will create jobs.

The developments in Cosatu

The enemies of our people and our revolution have intensified their campaign to isolate and defeat us; the forces of capitalism are now plotting to dismiss us from cosatu, under the pretext that our congress resolutions are not consistent with that of cosatu, as if we are not an independent trade union with all rights to take decisions.

Numsa has been given 7 days to respond why we should not be suspended or dismissed and we complied last week Friday. The letter from cosatu was very clear that the CEC has resolved to dismiss us to complete their master plan.

- To paralyse cosatu
- Get rid of Vavi
- Dismiss Numsa

Finally you have cosatu of your dreams and aspirations but not cosatu of the workers, a conveyor belt of the Anc alliance, while the Anc is clear about serving their masters which is

capital, while Cosatu of Sdumo grouping is paralysed the Anc government is forging ahead with anti worker policies.

This grouping does not care about workers issues anymore, the CeC of casatu is now a circus, and for the whole year now cosatu is still stacked on the same old matter.

They are now resorting to tribalist divide due to their desperation to divide workers for their selfish ends.

The Sacp was quick to go all out in defence of misuse and theft of tax payer's money used at Nkandla project but is quite like an Egyptian mommy on zwelinzima vavi and cosatu.

Ours at this moment is to mobilise the base of the working class to stand up and reclaim their federation from this power hungry grouping that has no regards for Cosatu constitution.

The court date for our long awaited trial on the unconstitutional suspension of Vavi is on the 27and 28 march, we call on all workers and activists who care's about the unity of the federation to join us on the picketing line in South Gauteng high court.

The battle lines are clearly drawn now.

Socio Economic context in which the takes place

Indeed comrades we still bedevilled by the stubborn crises of capitalism, and we shall not pay for the crises.

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.

Today 26 million South Africans who live in abject poverty, 25 million are Africans

- Unemployment grew from 36% in 2007 to 37% in 2012; among Africans it grew from 40% in 2008 to 46% in 2012
- For every 1 unemployed white workers, there are 80 unemployed African workers.
- Between 2008 and 2012 the number of “discouraged work-seekers” nearly doubled (from 1.2 million to 2.3 million)
- 71% of those employed are not unionised,
- 54% of workers do not receive regular wage increases,
- 24% of workers work for more than 48hrs a week, average working time is 44 hours a week
- According the General Household Surveys, 77% of the unemployed rely on employed workers for survival.

This is just part of the state of the working class in this country; it is a bad story to tell.

Collective Bargaining

Numsa has begun our Ear to the Ground Campaign in workplace to develop our demands for 2014

In collecting these demands our key and strategic objective is to improve the benefits and conditions of employment. The demands from our 9 Numsa Regions shall be consolidated and tabled for discussion in this Numsa National Bargaining Conference.

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 and other house agreements.

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,

We 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 senseless incentive scheme.

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

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 Nersa to justify paying lip service to a negotiation process while 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 full responsibility of the consicoensies.

Workers 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 and inequalities.

It is not in the nature of capital to give, the working must be prepared to wage a class war to advance their interests.

In conclusion

We must use this moment to mobilize for unity of the working class and even recruit those workers who are still non Union members to Numsa.

1. 1. History has imposed on Numsa a huge responsibility as can be seen from the outcome of our ground breaking Special National Congress
2. 2. Forces of evil are plotting and planning to destabilize Numsa from within and from without
3. 3. All Numsa Regions are expected to rally the broadest possible support for our S77 national strike action on 19 March 2014
4. 4. The Numsa Moment calls for absolute maximum unity

Forward we go and backward never.

Amandla

NUMSA Sedibeng statement on

SACP Gauteng futile exercise!!!!

We are therefore calling on the SACP to swallow its pride and accept that we are no more within their alliance , and do not regard them as vanguard of the working class and the poor anymore ,and we are forging ahead to establish a United Front that will be the vanguard of the working class and the poor South Africans.

7 March 2014, Posted in [Press Releases](#)

The current action and so called mobilization exercise of the Gauteng Province of the SACP is another attempt to discredit Numsa and a distortion of facts.

The SACP is moving around companies organized by Numsa in what they term as mobilization to encourage Numsa members to vote for the ANC in the coming national and provincial elections.

Numsa Sedibeng region view this as nothing but another attempt to create confusion amongst its members and discredit us. These dirty tricks will not succeed; our members have taken the decision and are firm and running with speed to see implementation.

We are aware that the SACP will be in Sedibeng from Monday 10th March 2014 where meetings have been arranged with our members in Arcelor Mittal Vereeniging Works. We are further aware that towards our Special National Congress, the same SACP tried in vain to use the same members who are employed by a labour broker called Workforce and PPO to rebel against Numsa through a fabrication on unsubstantiated lies. Those attempts drastically failed as we marched through our Special National Congress and took resolutions that are to emancipate the working class and the poor from neo-liberal economic

exploitation they are currently faced with.

We want to set the record straight especially for the attention of the SACP in the District of Sedibeng and Gauteng Province. The Numsa Special National Congress resolution is very clear and says "Numsa as an organization is not going to endorse any political party going to elections in 2014, we are not going to release any funding and any of our resources to mobilize support for any political party, but however, our members have the right to vote for any party of their choice in the coming elections". Finish and klaar!!!

We are therefore calling on the SACP to swallow its pride and accept that we are no more within their alliance , and do not regard them as vanguard of the working class and the poor anymore ,and we are forging ahead to establish a United Front that will be the vanguard of the working class and the poor South Africans.

Contact:

Mokete Makoko

Sedibeng Regional Secretary, 083 297 8784

**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 devices.

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

Contact: **Karl Cloete, Deputy General Secretary, 083 389 0777**

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/>