

International support for Rössing Union leaders

Rehire Namibia Mineworker Union Rossing Leaders President Xi-Jinping! Rally At SF Chinese Consulate

<https://youtu.be/kjLdDEnONqo>

Trade unionists and workers spoke out at the San Francisco Chinese Consulate on February 12, 2021 to demand that the Chinese government rehired the fired Namibia Mineworker Union Rossing branch. The Chinese National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) which is controlled by the government has illegally fired the NMU Rossing union executive committee in September. They also recently fired a newly elected chairperson in an effort to completely destroy the union. Speakers also opposed the US imperialist encirclement of China but said that internationalists must back the struggle of not only the Namibian workers but all workers around the world whether they work for Chinese companies or other US and European capitalists companies. The rally took place before the labor arbitration hearing that is being held in Namibia on February 15, 2021 to decide on their discharges.

Additional media: Namibia Mine Workers Union Rossing Leaders Report On CNNC & Letter To Chinese President Xi-Jinping
<https://youtu.be/oNoaMxLiC9U>

The Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) Rossing Branch & The Struggle of The Namibian Working Class
<https://youtu.be/1LCD5ZuAgvc>

Namibian Rössing Mine Workers Face Covid-19 & Attacks From State Owned China National Uranium Corporation Limited (CNUC)
https://youtu.be/pHsDDqy_WPU

Namibia Rössing, union in wage deadlock

<https://www.namibian.com.na/198882/archive-read/Rössing-union-in-wage-deadlock>

China and Namibia Rössing Workers on Collision Course
<https://www.facebook.com/informantenam/posts/3090166147716991/>

Namibia MUN claims China National Nuclear Corporation is falling short of its Rossing promises
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nLuFIxwcIM&feature=emb_logo
<https://www.nbc.na/news/mun-claims-china-national-nuclear-corporation-falling-short-its-rossing-promises.29304>

Namibia Rössing uranium mine union members face dismissal by Chinese owners
<https://www.namibian.com.na/203896/archive-read/Rössing-union-members-face-dismissal>

Swapo, what is 'Socialism with a Namibian Character'?
<https://www.namibian.com.na/183845/archive-read/Letter-of-the-Week-Swapo-what-is-Socialism-with-a-Namibian-Character>

Namibia says China can buy Rio's uranium stake if it respects laws
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-rio-tinto-namibia-china/namibia-says-china-can-buy-rios-uranium-stake-if-it-respects-laws-idUSKCN1SZ0UR>

Anatomy of a Bribe & Fish Rot Files
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_FJ1TB0nwHs

Production of Labor Video Project www.laborvideo.org

Press statement by the Rössing Nine

Press statement by the Rössing Nine

Comradely greetings to all our comrades, workers, brothers and sisters around the world.

Rössing Uranium Ltd has been producing and exporting uranium oxide from Namibia to nuclear power utilities around the world since its inception in 1976 and the union movement got into focus, so much so that the struggle spilled back from South Africa back into Namibia. In 1978 the labour movement (union) was born at Rössing Uranium Mine when the oppressors tried to brutally suppress but did not succeed and they jailed the leaders under Administrative General (AG) proclamation 26.

The repression continued but failed to suppress the rising working-class movement. In 1984 the workers won the rights to organise the union movement and register trade unions. The culmination of those rights were contained in the 1992 Labour Act (Legislation), the pinnacle of labour rights in Namibia. The problem is while as the Namibian working class succeeded in winning these significant union and labour rights as was enshrined in the 1992 Labour Act and the 1990 Democratic Constitution of Namibia, the multinational corporation came down with a vengeance to nullify the unions and labour rights in its entirety.

The mechanisms used against the union movement and working-class rights were among others: privatisation, Labour judicial corruption, the return of the labour-hire through outsourcing, formalisation of labour-hire companies, etc. One of the reasons which facilitated the derogation of rights was the co-option of working-class leaderships into state structures. Endemic corruption furthered the historic weakness in the

struggle of the working class in that it failed to create a working-class leadership in its own name and for its own interest.

The historic significance of this struggle is that it pointed the workers to the end-goal by showing everyone the indispensability and the power of the working class, through the 1971 to 1972 general strike that brought the entire nation to a standstill and inspired the South African working class to rise up since 1973 until South Africa overthrew Apartheid in 1994,

The Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) was formalised in 1986. The Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) Rössing branch signed the first ever recognition agreement in Namibia on the 14th November 1988 that governs the relationship between the Mineworkers Union of Namibia (MUN) and Rössing Uranium Ltd., which is still in existence to date.

Under Rio Tinto as a majority shareholder in Rössing Uranium Ltd., as employees we were part of the greater Rio Tinto and labour relations were based on the existing laws. Although we had our difference, we still mutually coexisted and the Rio Tinto respected and complied with legislation, the internal policies and agreements. Rio Tinto understood the role of the union with regards to the Supreme Law of Namibia and Labour Act 11 of 2007.

This all started to change when Rio Tinto sold all its shares in Rössing Uranium Ltd. to China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) in July 2019. The CNNC management used every opportunity to suppress and threaten union rights by demanding to renegotiate among others the following agreements to less favourable agreements:

1. Procedural (Recognition) Agreement of 14 November 1988
2. Performance and Conduct Procedure (Disciplinary Code)
3. Recruitment Policy

4. Retrenchment Package Agreement

5. 5 Conditions of employment

- Leave Days
- Sick Leave days
- Commutation system

6. Salary scales and structures

7. Medical Aid Provider

Their renegotiation attempts failed and this culminated in grave attacks on the Branch Executive Committee. Among the attacks are the exclusive unprocedural correspondences between the General secretary of MUN (Eben Zarondo) in which the Chinese General Manager instructed him to discipline the Branch Executive Committee, and when he failed to find any grounds or faults, CNNC Rössing Uranium Ltd. took the matter in their hands by unlawfully and illegally dismissing the Branch Executive Committee.

Between July and September 202, the management unlawfully and illegally suspended, charged and dismissed the Nine Executive Committee Members in their individual employment positions on witch-hunt and unfounded allegations against MUN (Mineworkers Union of Namibia) of allegedly leaking confidential information about the illegal employment of the 4 Chinese nationals in management to the media, breaching employment contracts, bringing the company's name into disrepute and dishonesty.

The illegal and unlawful employment of the Chinese was exposed by the media to the nation, drawing the attention of immigration control officers to investigate, arrest and detain them and a police case number CR08/08/2020 was registered upon the full establishment that they were indeed illegal and unlawfully working for CNNC Rössing Uranium Limited and for violating the Namibia Immigration Control Act.

The illegal and unlawful employees were then transferred to

Narraville Police Station to be held in custody and to be brought before court for prosecution. However, close to midnight that very day, an awful and disgraceful act happened in that, the accused were jail-broken on an instruction from some high-ranking government official. These instructions were illegal and unlawful, as the officials that dispensed the instructions are not part of the justice system, neither are they from the office of the Prosecutor General or the Police and no document or police bail was processed for their release, only instructions from above.

For the mine to dismiss an organ of the union is a complete renunciation of the laws of Namibia. What will be the full social, economic and political implication of this? It will mean that Namibia is not a sovereign state, there is no rule of law, and legal entities in Namibia are without any legal protection.

MUN Rössing Branch is the foundation and torch-bearer of the union movement in Namibia. These attacks on the union movement as expressed in the Chinese National Nuclear Corporation Rössing Uranium Limited situation echoes the capitalist attack on the union movement around the country and around the world.

As leaders of the workers' movement (union), we will defend the fundamental rights which Namibian workers have fought for more than a century and won,

The sad situation informs the way forward and the basic element of the program is as follows:

- The rebuilding and training of the working-class basic organisations and structures of the union, both national and international
- The rebuilding of national and international solidarity as the means of achieving such workers' organisations
- The rebuilding and re-affirming of the working-class movements for political power nationally and

internationally to avert the onslaught on the rights of workers.

The role of imperialism today as reflected in the Rössing example is to destroy fundamental rights and derogate social, economic and political relations and in particular the proper relations brought to bear on the working class worldwide.

We firmly believe that the only outstanding matter to resolve this increasingly destructive situation is the crisis of leadership in the working-class movement. We dedicate ourselves to work to resolve that crisis by building such a leadership nationally and internationally.

We thank our brothers and sisters who stand in solidarity; the Rössing Uranium Ltd. employees, MUN Walvisbay Salt Refinery, Namibia United Fishermen Association, AR movement, individuals and we further extend gratitude to our brothers and sisters internationally from the USA, UK, Brazil, Japan, Greece, Australia, Argentina and many others.

Your solidarity actions national and around the world is already a major step in realizing our program of action and change.

In solidarity

Injury to one is injury to all

The Struggle Continues

The Nine Dismissed Union Leaders

Political training in South Africa under “lockdown”

“SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

We are born of class struggle, in the fight to demolish the capitalist system that insists on the continued exploitation of most of society by a few humans. We seek to educate, agitate, mobilise and organize the working class into our political organisation.

The working class must fulfil our historic mission: to defeat imperialism and capitalism, establish a Socialist South Africa, Africa and World, as a prelude to advancing to a truly free and classless society: to a Communist South Africa, Africa and World!” (SRWP homepage)

It turns out that political organising and education can take place a lot more effectively than some comrades feared online, even during “lockdown” when physical gatherings of any size are impossible within the state’s arrangements for dealing with Covid-19. Some of the resources which have assisted imperialism to step up exploitation across the globe, such as computer technology and modern communications, are also tools in the hands of the workers’ movement.

At time of writing, the Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party of South Africa (SRWP) has just contributed to members’ political education online with two talks on Marx and the early beginnings of capitalism by SRWP Deputy General Secretary Dr. Vashna Jagarnath and a session with Vijay Prashad of Transcontinental: Institute for Social Research and Chief Editor of LeftWord Books.

Vijay Prashad’s contribution on “CoronaShock & Imperialism” on 23 April 2020 is the one I would like to discuss here. It can

be viewed on the SRWP Facebook page, so I urge the reader to do that, and I will make no systematic attempt to summarise his contribution here. It contained a number of important and useful observations.

Although Vijay Prashad only makes a couple of passing references to the Covid-19 pandemic, he does lay out succinctly an analysis and a conception of present-day imperialism. Unfortunately, very informative though this presentation is, it does not shed light on how and why, in the course of the political struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie at an international level for more than a century now, we got to the point which society has reached today. Vijay Prashad merely lists as objective facts the changes in features such as technology, communications and banking and finance which facilitate the current form of imperialist plunder. Nor does his presentation refer to or illuminate the aims of the SRWP stated above: "our historic mission – to defeat imperialism and capitalism, establish a socialist South Africa and World", etc.

His references to the class struggle are all about forms of it which can be contained within the framework of existing bourgeois society. These are either trade union struggles over the extraction of surplus value in the form of "unpaid labour time", or the politics of pressure on the bourgeois state to set limits on the rapacity of the bourgeoisie, provide welfare and other essential services, and so forth. These have been historically very significant ways in which the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat has been waged, and indeed continue to be so. However, it has always been the understanding of Marxists that the culmination of this struggle must be what is expressed in the aims of SRWP set out at the head of this article.

In the globalised economy described by Vijay Prashad, these two forms of struggle are held in check for reasons which he describes lucidly. His economic analysis of the workings of

imperialism is linked to certain considerations of class relations, but the political issue of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalist society, of which imperialism is the highest expression, and progress towards a higher, Communist society is not mentioned.

But it was for precisely that purpose that Lenin wrote his famous little book: *Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism*, early in 1916.

Vijay Prashad does refer to the book. He notes that Marx and Lenin viewed imperialism as being rooted in the political economy of capitalism. This is to his credit: there are those on the left who try to separate the two completely. However, in presenting Marx and Lenin's views on the matter, Vijay Prashad carefully steers around some core issues and mishandles others.

Vijay Prashed discusses certain topics which Lenin dealt with in *Imperialism*, but leaves other vital matters out. He (Prashad) picks up Lenin's description of the changes on the world scale within capital accumulation as the 19th century ended and the 20th century opened as "concentration of production and monopolies"; Vijay Prashad refers to the "finance capital and the financial oligarchy" which Lenin dealt with, and he also mentions the "export of capital". (These are all section headings in Lenin's book).

By the way, Lenin also mentioned "the division of the world between ... powerful trusts" and comments that this: "does not preclude redivision if the relation of forces changes as a result of uneven development, war, bankruptcy, etc".(1) He also devoted a whole section of his pamphlet to "Division of the World Among the Great Powers"(2) which catalogues the forms this took 100 years ago; the forms have changed but the essence remains today!

But Lenin's *Imperialism* is about so much more! For a start,

Lenin emphasised that the development of imperialism is a dead end for capitalism:

“Monopolies, oligarchy, the striving for domination and not for freedom, the exploitation of an increasing number of small or weak nations by a handful of the richest or most powerful nations – all these have given birth to those distinctive characteristics of imperialism which compel us to define it as **parasitic or decaying capitalism**”(3). (My emphasis – BA)

In discussing the concentration of production and the growth of enormously powerful industrial and financial monopolies Lenin noted:

“Capitalism in its imperialist stage leads directly to the most comprehensive socialisation of production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, into some sort of a new social order, a transitional one from complete free competition to complete socialisation.”(4)

Lenin believed that the “new social order” of imperialism is a contradictory one, a “transition” from complete free competition to complete socialisation. He certainly did not believe that the necessary outcome (complete socialisation) can be achieved by methods which leave the social, economic and political power of the bourgeoisie intact. The transition will not take place spontaneously or without the deliberate destruction of the bourgeois social order as thoroughly as the bourgeois revolution destroyed the feudal social order that preceded it.

He devoted a significant part of the book to a critique of socialist theoreticians, such as Karl Kautsky, who thought that a stable and peaceful form of imperialism could be attained without violent disruption. Lenin had learnt his Marxism at the feet of such Marxists of the Second (Socialist) International as Kautsky, but at the outbreak of World War I

they found themselves on opposite sides!

One of the problems socialists face today is the prevalence, in public discourse and indeed of peoples' minds, of reformist approaches to imperialism, attempts to rein in the system's truly degenerate and destructive features and achieve a system of peaceful and progressive nation-states without attacking capitalist social relations at their root.

Lenin wrote in 1917 in a new preface to *Imperialism*:

"This pamphlet was written with an eye to the tsarist censorship ... It is painful, in these days of liberty, to re-read the passages of the pamphlet which have been distorted, cramped, compressed in an iron vice on account of the censor"(5)

Nevertheless, what stands out in reading the pamphlet, even as published in 1916 under the whip of the censor, is Lenin's extremely plain language when he is dealing with former Marxists like his own respected teacher and guide, Karl Kautsky, who now proposed that a peaceful and fruitful way forward would be possible under imperialism:

"No matter what the good intentions of the English parsons, or of sentimental Kautsky, may have been, the only objective, i.e., real social significance of Kautsky's 'theory' is this: it is a most reactionary method of consoling the masses with hopes of permanent peace being possible under capitalism, by distracting their attention from sharp antagonisms and acute problems of the present time and directing it towards illusory prospects of an imaginary 'ultra-imperialism' of the future. Deception of the masses – that is all there is in Kautsky's 'Marxist' theory".(6)

And yet it was a version of Kautsky's theory which came to dominate in the Communist International after Lenin's death and the defeat of Lenin's followers by the bureaucratic caste which later took control in the Soviet Union.

The main expressions of the Kautsky-inspired politics of Stalin and his supporters were (1) asserting the possibility of building socialism in a single country, relying on "peaceful co-existence" with the imperialist powers, (2) the abandonment of revolutionary politics in the richer capitalist countries in favour of reformism ("Popular Fronts" and reformist socialism) and (3) the limitation of the revolutionary struggle of those peoples oppressed and subjugated by imperialism to national independence under their "own" bourgeoisie (the "Third World project").

Any analysis of imperialism which does not address these issues is bound to be of limited value because it leaves too many vital questions untouched. Imperialism exists today in the extreme form that Vijay describes in part. But imperialism has only been able to rot every more deeply because the working class and the masses have been disarmed politically by Stalinism. It was the Stalinist politics of the SACP leaders which led to South Africa's first democratically-elected government being firmly in the hands of big business and big financial groups. And these are precisely the question which were raised by the decision on the part of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) in 2013 to split the reactionary, Kautsky-inspired alliance of Cosatu, SACP and ANC and find a way back to the genuine, Marxist policies of Lenin.

It is important to emphasise these points because without accounting for the fate of the Bolshevik project, the seizure of power in 1917 and establishment the Communist International and its eventual fate, there can be no all-round understanding of imperialism in its current iteration. If imperialism survives until today and takes on even more extreme and even absurd forms, it is because of the degeneration and collapse of that Leninist project.

Without studying and understanding that, the historical account of imperialism is simply reduced to "one damn thing after another", with no connection or thread of continuity,

and consequently the collapse of the USSR is simply an objective “event”, a false step in history, at best a convincing reason why nobody can now ever look beyond the limits of the imperialist system. And yet that system is in front of our eyes falling into the ever-deeper forms of “decay and parasitism” that Vijay Prashad describes so vividly.

That is why Vijay Prashad can regard the epoch of imperialism such as Lenin described it as being over and done with, replaced by a new period of “globalisation” defined by new and in his view specifically different forms of financial capital from the ones Lenin analysed, involving more than just the “export of capital” but actually “new ways” in which capital accumulates. If the imperialism Lenin defined is over and done with, then so are the tasks it posed in front of the working class and the masses by that period.

This is how Lenin presented dialectically the changes between capitalism in the nineteenth century and capitalism at the beginning of the twentieth century:

“Half a century ago, when Marx was writing *Capital*, free competition appeared to the overwhelming majority of economists to be a ‘natural law’. Official science tried, by a conspiracy of silence, to kill the works of Marx, who, by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism had proved that free competition gives rise to the concentration of production, which in turn ... leads to monopolisation. Today monopoly has become a fact”.

Vijay Prashad treats modern-day financialisation as something essentially different from the “finance capital” that Lenin described.

He argues that whereas Lenin talked about the “export” of capital across borders, such borders are insignificant today as far as finance capital is concerned. They are only “borders” for the workers imprisoned in one country or

another. But while such a distinction is not without its significance, it surely does not indicate a *systemic* change; it is merely an intensification of the contradictions of the imperialist epoch.

A better way to look at it all might be this: Imperialist policy in the last fifty years has successfully played on its ability to divide workers in the advanced metropolitan countries from workers in the rest of the world, which itself is in no small part caused by the leaderships of mass movements dominated by Stalinist and now post-Stalinist politics. Vijay Prashad gives graphic and compelling examples of how this works out, but not of the political developments which allowed it to happen. The results are that classic and significant weapons of the working class in advanced capitalist countries, like trade union militancy and parliamentary political pressure, are held in check by the threat (and the practice) of shifting production to underdeveloped countries. Meanwhile the factory owners in many a “developing” country can (and indeed must) impose savage rates of exploitation on their workers under the threat of “losing the contract” if production costs rise. By the way, the current setup frees the Multi-National Corporation, brand or main contractor from the obligation to fund the investment in production in the “developing” country: the local entrepreneur has to scrape that together somehow, further intensifying the pressure to exploit “their” workers.

These workers’ wages are kept extremely low, even to the extent of compromising the reproduction of the labour force and with devastating cultural and social consequences. The tax bases of governments in underdeveloped countries are also eroded, so these governments have to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for permission to borrow money, which is only granted on the condition of sustained cuts in living standards and wages. And so, the “Third World Project” is over. Meanwhile attempts to copy what was achieved in Cuba

have resulted in long and debilitating and in the end fruitless guerrilla wars.

Most governments in former colonies have become “compradores” effectively servicing imperialist looting (while lining their own pockets at the same time, and stripping away any real democracy or the rule of law). Vijay Prashad can describe the ability of Multi-National Corporations and financiers to lord it over a global system which seems to offer no limit, but he fails to put his finger on the aspect of this that Lenin identified: These features are the characteristics of constantly intensifying “parasitism and decay”.

“Globalisation” is not a completely new period in the history of capitalism, however essential it is to know at any stage “what is going on” and to take that into account when providing political leadership to workers. The fundamental features of imperialism are continued and intensified and above all unresolved today. The continued existence of capitalism in imperialism and the indeed increasingly absurd forms that takes testify not to the strength and viability of capitalism as a system but to the problems which have arisen in constructing the leadership of the working class.

It is indeed extremely difficult to raise these matters directly in most places. “official science” and “a conspiracy of silence to kill the works of Marx” join with a mood of resignation in many parts of the working class following the ignominious debacle of the Soviet Union and a series of industrial and political struggles frustrated by the “globalising” tactics which the imperialists have adopted.

But the class struggle never stops, never goes away entirely until it is actually resolved. The mass outburst of working-class resistance that led to the Marikana massacre and the subsequent wave of industrial action in South Africa lifted a corner of the blanket of “official science” and “killing the works of Marx”, and that is what made the 2013 Numsa special

Congress decisions and the work to establish the SRWP so important, not just in South Africa but on the international stage.

Workers International greeted these decisions and encouraged their implementation. They open the door to a fuller and franker discussion on the past and the future of the workers' movement than is probably possible anywhere else on the planet at the moment.

These are the matters which deserve to figure most prominently in the political education of SRWP members, when they are preparing themselves to lead the political struggles of the South African working class. SRWP members need to make themselves familiar with all issues around the struggle for working class political power: the fate of the Paris commune, the Russian Revolution, the split with reformist "Marxism" and revisionism, the struggle to build the Communist International, how and in what way the Soviet Union and the world communist movement degenerated.

A cadre of politically-educated South African workers will not only be a powerful force in South Africa, it could also play a significant leading role in building anew the revolutionary proletarian leadership of the world socialist revolution.

Bob Archer

23 May 2020

1. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Moscow 1968 p.66

2. *Ibid.* p.71

3. *Ibid.* p.118

4. *Ibid.* p.23

5. *Ibid.* p.3

6. *Ibid.* p.111

A powerful manifesto and a serious appeal

As the Workers Revolutionary Party of Namibia submits the Manifesto reproduced below to voters in the 2019 National Assembly Elections, reports flood in from around the globe of movements by the masses in Iraq, Lebanon, Chile and elsewhere in direct and open opposition to poverty and exploitation and the corruption and economic mis-management of their 'own' venal governments acting as the local agents of imperialist powers and interests.

They follow on from the events of the "Arab Spring" earlier in the decade and the more recent echoes of these movements in Tunisia and Sudan.

These movements are impressive in their scope and energy and their ability, especially since in Iraq and Lebanon they unite sectors of the population hitherto separated by religious and ethnic affiliations.

Powerful as they are, however, all these movements are hampered by the lack of a political programme and of a well-thought-out strategy to alleviate the suffering expressed in their simple and compelling demands.

In a few boldly-drawn paragraphs, the Namibian WRP Manifesto sketches out the main lines of that programme and underscores the rightly central role which the working class is called

upon to play within such movements, how it links to other parts of the masses and what targets it can set itself to ensure future progress.

Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International is extremely proud to submit the Manifesto to the consideration of serious socialists everywhere. Our comrades in Namibia have established significant roots among mineworkers, fishery workers, pensioners, homeowners and tenants and more.

The Namibia WRP are experiencing a wave of media and other public interest in their Manifesto. They need resources to spread it far and wide. Workers International will provide whatever support it can so that they can send material, speakers and organisers the length and breadth of the country in the election campaign. Please help us:

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THE CONTEXT OF THE 2019 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Namibia is an example of a Comprador State. In a political context the word “comprador” is used to describe an agent having control over a nation’s workforce by acting on behalf of foreign masters. In Namibia it means the Namibian government having control over the working people on behalf of foreign and capitalist masters.

Using law enforcement agencies, the care-taker regime since 1990 has systematically destroyed the legal rights and gains of the working class through legislation and corruption. At the behest and in favour of corporate business, these agencies, which include the Office of the Labour Commissioner

and the Courts of Law, disregard the laws concerning the rights of workers.

The State is destroying the nation's infrastructure (roads, hospitals and schools) by a lack of maintenance and brazen theft. Our education system is proof thereof. The adage "education is the greatest equalizer" remains out of reach for the masses, where enrolment in private schools is reserved for children of the middle class and the children of the working class and the poor (peasants) receive sub-standard 'location' education.

The State's express policy on the land issue is "no land to the poor". The plight of those who lost their land to imperialists is not addressed by the care-taker regime. On the contrary, the state further disowned the impoverished communities by seizing their remaining snippets of land.

The judiciary is subservient to the same masters, foreign and local corporate business; banks, industries and capitalists. It destroys the rule of law.

The *modus operandi* of the imperialists and international corporations in conjunction with the State is to exploit the workers by means of low wages, hazardous work conditions and the blatant disregard of labour laws. This practise is common in southern Africa.

The imperialists and capitalists have a vested interest in our presidential and national assembly elections. Our elections are a farce. It is run and controlled by the Indian Army and nullified our sovereignty. Both the registration of voters and voting by the electronic machines are a mockery. Voter registrations are duplicated. Voters can cast their votes multiple times.

Since independence these farcical elections are approved by the USA, EU, AU, SADEC and the IEC as "free and fair" in the name of 'political continuity' to serve their interests and to

ensure the unbridled exploitation of the colonies.

Under the Comprador State, Namibia as a whole is disintegrating by the day. The prospects for the nation are a continuously lowering material and cultural standard of living. The vast resources of fish, minerals (strategic and precious), oil and gas reserves, and the most essential resource, the land of the people, are corruptly sold to foreign masters.

The State, bankrupted by rampant looting of the Treasury, is further intensifying its insolvency by turning the country into a tax haven for money launderers. Industries operating in Namibia are registered for tax purposes elsewhere, where they pay no taxes in any event.

There is no HOPE, only DESPERATION unless the programme of the workers' party is realised.

PROGRAMME

The only force which can turn the economic and human wastage around is the organised working class.

The WRP as the vanguard of that organisation is participating in the 2019 National Elections for no other reason, but to throw light on the main issues wracking this nation and the Southern African working people and to propagate its proposals to achieve working class organisation to fight the scourge.

It harbours no illusions about the mockery of elections which will once more yield results contrived by the Indian State in collusion with the Namibian State.

ISSUES

1.Plundering of natural resources

Namibia's coastline is unguarded. This allows for unlimited exploitation of marine resources. Also, this resource is sold

to imperialist countries (South Africa and Spain) by the State on behalf of individuals.

2.The land question

The majority of Namibians have no access to land. Dispossession is absolute and total. The Comprador State has gone as far as legislating the Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000, which prohibits communities from owning their land. The so-called traditional authorities have no authority or jurisdiction over land.

The stated policy of the regime is, “no land to the poor”.

3.Labour situation

Legislation, pervasive corruption, non-policies and dysfunctional administration and executive combine to set off unbelievable levels of unemployment with literally hundreds of youth rushing for single job openings.

The incumbent regime is oblivious of mineral and natural reserves of priceless minerals (strategic and precious) and massive self-generating resources such as marine and other natural resources. The greatest source of life, land, is squandered away in the same manner.

The obscene squandering of all these resources for laughable bribes by national and international capital leaves the nation abused and bewildered.

PROGRAMME

The WRP uses these elections to articulate its clarion call to the working class to organise at all levels to declare war on **the destruction of the nation through the destruction of its sovereignty**, its self-determination and its liberation, etc.

The programme of the WRP calls on the working class to rebuild their unions in the fishing, mining sectors and industrial and

commercial fields under the guidance of the workers' party. This rebuilding shall take place in the process of arresting the unadulterated exploitation of the country by such demands as opening the books of corporations from mines to factories, and from banks to insurance companies; a public audit of the resources exploited and taken out of this country; the cessation of the money laundering mechanism put in place by the Comprador regime; the derogation of labour rights through legislation and corruption; and, a national review of the de-education of the youth.

The WRP programme calls on the working class to organise at all levels to optimise the utility of their resources; the optimum utilisation of these massive resources to create permanent jobs, to demand rational industrialisation demanded by the total human and technical and natural resources at its disposal.

The WRP call on the working class to treat issues affecting women, men, youth, homosexuals, etcetera as issues affecting the working class as a whole and not issues to be separated.

The working class has no interest in the designs of the black and Khoisan middle classes to step into the shoes of the white landowners by laying claim to the lands of the people. Its sole interest is to restore the collective property of the disowned communities which was collectively disowned. The WRP advise the working class and poor peasantry to call for a national land conference to discuss the restoration of legality in the country by restoration of illegally expropriated lands. (The peasants never held individual title, they held collective ownership. Both the black and white middle class baulk at the idea of a historical inquiry into the land issue in Southern Africa.)

ONLY the ORGANISED working class armed with a programme for all the working people of the NATION can take power and lead the country out of extreme backwardness and squalor in the

midst of untold wealth.

ONLY the ORGANISED working class led by a workers' party can break the suffocation of the nation by imperialism.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (WRP)

TO REBUILD THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

A political party duly registered in terms of the electoral laws of the Republic of Namibia

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Appeal from Ukranian Trade Unions

Appeal for international solidarity!

A major dispute is developing in the industrial city of Kryviy Rih in south east Ukraine. Trade unions from both federations, the confederation of free trade unions of Ukraine (kvpu) and also the federation of trade unions of Ukraine (fpu) have united in their demands and held a join conference to launch the campaign.

Their dispute is with the steel giant Arcelormittal, part of the Mittal steel company which is a world-wide corporation. the workers in Kryviy Rih are calling for international

solidarity in their struggle. International support is important and has assisted the Ukrainian unions against the mining company Evraz and more recently to defeat the trial of 94 miners for protesting. Ukraine solidarity campaign will be publicising the campaign and calls for assistance in this campaign. We publish below a report by kvpu on the conference to launch the campaign.

Trade unions have united to protect the interests of workers of the pjsc "Arcelormittal Kryviy Rih"

On march 27, the conference of the labor collective of the pjsc "Arcelormittal Kryviy Rih" that was announced at a rally organized by nine trade-union organizations on 14 march was held in Kryviy Rih. At the conference, the representatives of the labor collective of the pjsc "Arcelormittal Kryviy Rih" made requirements to the Chairman and CEO of steel group "Arcelormittaland" Lakshmi Mittal and to the CEO of pjsc "Arcelormittal Kryviy Rih" Paramjit Kahlon.

Employees organized this Conference, despite the efforts of the administration of the enterprise to disrupt its conduct. At the same time, the administration organized an alternative conference in the office of the enterprise. Moreover, before the Conference of labor collective delegates faced with the public disinformation campaign and pressure.

At the Conference, all primary trade unions at the PJSC "ArcelorMittal Kryviy Rih" have united to protect their members' social and labor rights. They demand to raise wages, to provide safe working conditions, to stop reducing personnel and persecuting trade unionists.

The trade unions hoped for a dialogue with the administration, but management didn't want to talk about workers' problems. Taking this into account, the labor collective conference voted for ousting from offices the Director of the Personnel Department Elena Pilipenko and her deputy Iryna Futruk.

Delegates of the conference approved the composition of the joint representative body of trade union organizations at the enterprise, which will represent employees in a collective labor dispute with the employer. It was also decided to begin preparations for a strike if the management of the "ArcelorMittal Kryviy Rih" rejects the demands of the workers and conciliation procedures doesn't bring any results.

The Chairman of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine (NPGU) Mykhailo Volynets claimed during his speech at the Conference: "It's a significant situation when employer's action and attitude has united almost a dozen different trade unions for defending the employees' rights".

Demands of the labor collective of PJSC "ArcelorMittal Kryviy Rih":

1. To raise the average monthly salary of employees to 1000 EUR from 01.04.2018.

2. To ensure safe working conditions for all workers.

– To conduct a comprehensive examination of all buildings, structures, equipment and mechanisms of the enterprise by the state organization in accordance with the approved schedule.

– To develop a comprehensive plan of measures for the examination of all floors, roofs, and construction of the PJSC "ArcelorMittal Kryviy Rih".

– To develop measures for elimination of standards violation with specific deadlines.

3. To carry out an expert examination of all buildings and constructions of the converter shop and to give a report on the results of the inspection to the labor collective and the trade union organizations.

– To make an overhaul of the roof overlapping of the unit No. 2 of the converter shop until 01.04.2018.

4. Stop the policy of reducing job places and outsourcing the workers.

5. To ensure the implementation the state construction in the ablution placement

6. To cease the antisocial and anti-union policies of the administration.

– To dismiss those who are responsible for conduction of such policies.

Further information from: Ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org

Numsa's New Year Message

Original .pdf here: [NUMSA-Special-Edition-20180125](#)

NUMSA News Special edition

20 January 2018

Message to NUMSA members in welcoming 2018

Welcome 2018!

The National Office Bearers of NUMSA wish all NUMSA members a fighting and revolutionary 2018, to advance and defend the interests of the working class and to struggle for Socialism. Even with the miserable wages we receive from the bosses, we hope all our members had some well-deserved rest and some fun, during the festive season.

2018 is upon us. It is time to go to work to defend our livelihoods and to advance the struggle for Socialism. We can do this if we defend and grow NUMSA, return the United Front

to what we intended it to be, defend and grow SAFTU and urgently put all our revolutionary energies in creating and growing the Workers Party. These are our revolutionary tasks in 2018.

2017 was indeed a difficult year for workers and challenging for NUMSA, whose task at all times is to defend hard won gains of workers and wage relentless struggle to improve workers benefits and conditions. The socio-economic conditions of the working class have constantly worsened under the current political leadership of all political parties in South Africa.

This is a fact. StatsSA has the figures supporting this fact about the state of the working class and the poor conditions under which we toil. It is another institution under attack, with the recent unceremonious departure of its CEO, as it has the proof of the dismal performance of our government as a result of poor policy choices by the ANC for the past 24 years. StatsSA puts unemployment figures at 27,7 percent but it does not count those unemployed workers that are considered discouraged because they have lost hope of finding a job. If we add include these discouraged workers, unemployment is over 36 per cent and as a result over 30 million South Africans live in abject poverty with no food on their table.

Those in employment are often underpaid and unprotected. Some in South Africa are determined to peg the national minimum wage at R3 500, which is well below a living wage. If your employer does not believe that a worker deserves a living wage, then this is in fact a racist stance. Black economic empowerment begins with a living wage.

We know that it is tough for workers all over the world. Since the 2008 global economic meltdown; capitalism has been in crisis. The old international capitalist order of the industrialised world is being challenged by a new capitalist disorder with the rise of emerging nations. This, together with rising inequality and deindustrialisation in the

developing world, is creating a new dialectic of capitalist privilege. We are part of a globalised world and our sectors and ultimately our jobs are affected by global capitalist sourcing and production which is constantly seeking higher profits, especially with regard to multinationals. We cannot just look at the situation in the country in isolation of the global dynamics of the sector and in the supply chain. We must keep up to date with and be vigilant of changes, so that we are not caught off guard and fight to protect workers, we must be both a shield and a spear.

In our country changes in capital accumulation strategies globally is destroying jobs. We are suffering the consequences for these changes in plant closures and disinvestments of companies such as General Motors, retrenchments and attacks on collective bargaining by hostile right wing employers who continue to pursue the old apartheid mentality which views workers and their trade union with contempt.

The mess that we bring into 2018

Company closures are destabilising entire sections of our economy. We have seen this in components plants and suppliers that are linked to car manufacturers such as Johnson Control. This deindustrialisation is now our reality. If we are going to recover from this, it will take decades to rebuild and those jobs are not coming back in our lifetime. And its not just our manufacturing sectors, the whole economy is down having slumped into a technical recession in 2017. Two of the three international rating agencies have downgraded the South African economy to junk status and a third has put the country on review pending a junk status downgrade early in 2018.

Why are we in this mess? The blame lies with the ANC government supported by COSATU and the SACP that arrogantly continues to implement these policies that are hemorrhaging jobs and destroying the economy. Now it is clear that the whole country was put on terms as we see that the white

monopoly candidate Cyril Ramaphosa has been victorious at the ANC conference and immediately the confidence of the capitalists in South Africa improves, seen in the strengthening of the Rand.

Remember in 2013 NUMSA was ridiculed for calling on the ANC led Alliance to remove Jacob Zuma. Getting rid of Thabo Mbeki and putting in place Jacob Zuma did not result in a break in the neoliberal agenda. We are distracted from the shocking state of affairs in this country with no compassion for our people, who remain the working poor, exploited by the ruling class. Our distraction is the soap opera antics of the alliance-made politicians with Jacob Zuma cast in the leading role; he is an embarrassment, moving from one scandal to another.

The alliance partners, the SACP and COSATU, has stood by these politicians. Worse still they have defended them, absolved them from wrong doing as they did with Zuma over the Nkandla debacle, been the bouncers when anyone within the alliance spoke out. We witnessed in 2017 an imploding of the ANC led Alliance; unable to contain the rot internally, infighting among themselves spilled into the public arena. We are vindicated when we witness the SACP, its cronies threatened from within the Alliance and compromised to such an extent that the party had no option but to scrape together its last vestiges of credibility by joining civil society marches that demanding 'ZUMA MUST GO'; the very same stand that the SACP publicly tore into NUMSA for taking.

NUMSA has been ridiculed for making radical economic demands in the interest of economical marginalized and dispossessed. The Alliance cast aside the Freedom Charter which could have been the blueprint to restructure the South African economy. Instead they have refused to address the land question, and the fundamental critical demand of ownership and control of the economy in the hands of the people. Instead they have allowed our economy to remain in the hands of white monopoly

capital and have implemented backward, right wing, conservative, structural adjustment programs in the form of GEAR and the NDP. The NDP does not advance manufacturing or industrialization in order to create jobs. They want people to create their own employment as entrepreneurs, opening window cleaning services or hair dressers. It does not touch the huge wealth of this country that is kept out of reach of the black majority. So the mineral energy and finance complex that makes up the South African economy as we know it has remained untransformed.

The ANC government dumped the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), a policy that affirmed the black majority in development carried by a democratic state. Had we remaining committed to transformation in a manner that change power relations, we could have uprooted racism in South Africa. Instead the ANC-led alliance and government chose to listen to the terrible imperialist advice from the West despite knowing what this advice has done on the African continent. African countries are trapped in poverty and debt having listened to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade Organisation (WTO), they took instructions from multinational capitalist CEOs at the World Economic Forum. Their message is always the same, that government has no business in business. Their actions go even further, undermining the autonomy of governments to determine their development path and creating an environment that makes it virtually impossible for democratic trade unions to exist.

The West served the interest of white monopoly capital, saying that the state's role is not to intervene in the economy, its role was merely to level the playing field and allow the private sector to drive development. By taking this inferior advice, government has destroyed state capacity. It is ironic the apartheid Nationalist Party, before its defeat in the liberation struggle, actually used the state for the Afrikaners – the apartheid state intervened in the economy by

building critical institutions such as Eskom, Telkom, Transnet, Volskas Bank, Iscor. In other words the apartheid state was directly involved to create jobs for its Afrikaner folks. The racist regime served the Afrikaner well and because it was in the best interest of the Afrikaner, municipalities and provincial government during the nationalist party regime employed black workers in public works that had capacity to build gravel roads, tar roads, four room houses that were both owned and rented stock. All of this created jobs and the ANC leadership chose to be the best Man in the wedding of capitalist accumulation Umkhaphi Emtshatweni.

These jobs were destroyed by the ANC government's tendering system that has plunged us into a very deep crisis of cronyism and corruption. Billions have been lost from the national fiscus and this government cannot deliver basic services. NUMSA has challenged this path of development, where the government champions outsourcing and casualisation and has stripped state assets. We warned the ANC that a social crisis would unfold unless they dumped these policies and address the land question, restructure the South African economy, nationalise all South Africa's minerals under worker control and ensure that they are beneficiated to champion a job led industrial strategy. Almost 60 percent of our population lives in poverty, a number that grows exponentially each year. Today South Africa is world leader in service delivery protests because there is a crisis in service delivery.

NUMSA was dismissed from COSATU for warning the ANC that continuing with these policies would frustrate South Africans and they would lose political power to the racist Democratic Alliance, the political axis of the exploitative class the party of big business, led by Maimane. As predicted all the metros were lost to the DA in the last election. Other rivals have risen from the inability for the ANC led Alliance to critically engage on the shortcomings of leadership. Julius Malema was a lapdog for Zuma but when he dared to question

policy direction of the ANC, he was kicked out of the ANCYL and he monopolised on the discontent to create the Economic Freedom Fighters.

Indeed all revolutions that fail to address the property question, that fail to affirm its indigenous people to own and control land, The economy after colonisation and ravages of oppression and exploitation, always end up being victims of corruption and dictatorship that continue to serve and benefit imperialist powers.

This has been the fate of the ANC. ANC National Chairperson Gwede Mantashe admits that the biggest issue is corruption but fails to take responsibility for the policy environment that has allowed this to fester. Instead he says they will be able to defeat corruption because they now have a rich ANC President in Ramaphosa. Mantashe insults honest working class men and women by insinuating that they cannot give good leadership, that only the rich can lead and exposes the ANC as having no revolutionary agenda to liberate the working class. Contrary to his excitement the most corrupt class is the capitalist class it has elicited billions out of this country both legal and illegal and Stenhof is the case in point.

In the build up towards the 2017 ANC Conference there was a big noise about 'Radical Economic Transformation'. Yet in 2012 NUMSA and the ANCYL won the nationalisation debate in the commissions leading to the Mangaung ANC Conference but the resolution was changed unilaterally by the ANC leadership to keep it off the table. At this point, we began to lose faith that democratic processes could take forward pro poor and working class agenda in the ANC.

Despite radical economic resolutions taken at the 2017 Conference, it is clear that the ANC will never pursue radical economic transformation and any NUMSA member who believes this "usenga inkunzi" (is busy milking the bull). The nationalisation of the Reserve Bank, expropriation of land is

given lip service to rally popular support but this is immediately tempered by assurances to white monopoly capital that there is no commitment to actually carry out any of these resolutions.

There will be no radical economic transformation from the ANC because we were sold out by the ANC before 1994, in a deal with white monopoly capital that they will continue to own and control the economy and the land. This deal was negotiated by Ramaphosa and Rolf Meyer of the Nationalist Party regime. Are we supposed to be proud of a worker leader that was willing to leave behind his class? Since then Ramaphosa has been busy becoming rich, his personal riches and opulence made possible by the policy environment he helped to put in place. He has become a servant to maintain the dominance of white monopoly capital accumulation, a very rich one but a servant none the less.

There should be no confusion within NUMSA ranks that Ramaphosa represents the interest of the white monopoly capital. He is a blood billionaire whose business has tentacles in all sectors of the economy. He is a greedy capitalist, a South Africa Trump. We will not forget that Ramaphosa was a Director at Lonmin and his call for a strong action by the police resulted in the slaughter of workers exercising their constitutional right to strike in Marikana, a year later he let Lonmin workers and their families starve in the longest strike in South Africa's history simply for demanding a living wage.

Ramaphosa has been allowed into the ranks of the mining oligarchy and now champions the racist wage of super exploitation of black labour as an accumulation strategy for white monopoly capital in South Africa. Billionaire Ramaphosa and his sellout collaborators at NEDLAC insult workers with a national minimum wage of R20 an hour or R3500 a month. This is an insult to those workers who were brutally killed by the state at Marikana fighting for a wage of R12,500.

The excuses of the Alliance partners cannot be tolerated any longer. The National Democratic Revolution has not been delayed, it has been abandoned. An entire generation has been raised in the absence of a revolutionary agenda, the hoax of the 'born frees' enslaved to poverty. The SACP leadership flip flopping without a political vision for the future of workers and the working class. SACP party leaders decided to back capitalist billionaire Ramaphosa for President of the ANC and the country. This had nothing to do with working class interests, these leaders were booking their ticket on the next gravy train to parliament. Zuma dealt with this betrayal by removing these leaders from leadership positions in the NEC and the final blow was the removal of SACP leader Blade Nzimande from the cabinet. Their current bravado challenging Zuma is not motivated but a sudden interest in the working class, but a show for Ramaphosa of their availability to once again sell out the working class.

In fact, both factions in the ANC serve capitalist interests, a deal has been reached to made to maintain dominance of these capitalist forces. The real losers are the working class, we are on our own. The ANC will not improve the life of Africans who are economically marginalised and dispossessed, it just does not have such an agenda or interest.

Ramaphosa and ANC economic transformation committee led by Enoch Ngodongwana will never agree to implement the Freedom Charter; they will not nationalise the commanding heights of the economy, put all our minerals and mines under worker control and champion a job led industrial strategy. They will never repeal the property clause in the constitution and agree to expropriate land without compensation into state hands under worker control this does not mean there will be no NUMSA members or shopstewards of NUMSA who will support this forces correctly so that NUMSA as a union is not a political Party so freedom of association and political affiliation is protected and its an individual choice but we are upfront that truth is

truth.

They will not dump the destructive policies of GEAR and the NDP. At the beginning of 2017 Ramaphosa accompanied by Pravin Gordon went to Davos to the World Economic Forum to promise global capitalist leaders that the ANC will maintain and champion austerity measures.

This is not new, GEAR has been all about putting in place austerity. They imposed belt tightening that closed nurses colleges, agricultural colleges, teachers training colleges. It closed irrigation schemes in poor villages and destroyed a state led agricultural sector. They clustered poor municipalities through a process of demarcation and reduced budget allocations so most working class communities have no meaningful local development plans, leaving those in ghost towns and rural villages condemned to a life of poverty.

They will not agree that all the boards of corrupt State Owned Enterprises must be reconstituted and that labour must have representation on those boards. They will not agree to dump tenders, fill all vacant posts and create more jobs in the public sector to build once more the capacity of the state to provide services. They will not agree to nationalisation of the Reserve Bank change the Reserve Bank's inflation targeting policy which maintains high interest rates that destroy jobs for the sole interest of protecting the value of white wealth. They will not move away from serving the IMF, World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. They will not break with legacy of Mbeki that was supported by Trevor Manuel, Tito Mboweni, and Pravin Gordon, of austerity measures and privitisation.

Our demands

NUMSA calls on the Ramaphosa and the ANC to boldly endorse free and compulsory education for all children who pass matric as education is the key to liberate society. This is only possible if the South African government is prepared to tax

the rich; instead corporate tax reduced in South Africa during Trevor Manuel's tenure as a Minister of Finance from 48 % to 28. If we nationalised the mines under worker control and used our minerals to diversify and industrialise then we would have money for free and compulsory education but Ramaphosa dare not touch the interests of his mining oligarchy.

NUMSA demands that the ANC government end reckless spending and abandon the Nuclear Deal. We have enough electricity capacity out of Medupi, Khusile, Ngula. Instead and as a matter of urgency the focus must be to fix the problems at Eskom so that the utility can deliver a competitive electricity tariff both to electrify communities and the economy. The whole Eskom board and all other boards of SOES should be fired and replaced with a competent board that has representation from government, business, labour and civil society.

Their first task must be to employ a competent, qualified and skilled CEO. All Eskom coal mines that were ceded to mining companies must be taken back and others nationalized to supply Eskom with quality, cheap coal. Eskom should return to its original mandate of delivering cheap electricity to the economy and to electrify communities. This can only be done if Eskom moves away from commercialisation. NERSA must also be dealt with and restructured as many companies are going to be affected with negative impact on jobs because of the five percent.

NUMSA members and all workers in SAFTU must be prepared for national strikes and stay aways in 2018 to fight back against the attack on workers.

We must ban labour brokers once and for all. We must honour those massacred workers in Marikana who demanded R12500 by working against the R3 500 or R20 an hour minimum wage.

We remain resolute in our demand for a national minimum wage

but it must break the backbone of the apartheid colonial wage not perpetuate the racist capitalist accumulation strategy achieved through the super exploitation of black and African labour. NUMSA demand that as a starting point, workers should receive a national minimum wage for now of R12500 and is should be compulsory for all employers to negotiate through centralised collective bargaining.

Ramaphosa is using his position politically and in business to champion an agenda at NEDLAC to tamper with the right to strike. He wants to bring back an apartheid practice that before workers can embark on a strike they must first ballot. We defeated it then and we will defeat it again. We must be prepared to take rolling mass action and we will also challenge it in court as an attack on our constitutional right. Such actions prove that Ramaphosa and the ANC leadership are anti worker, and anti-trade unions. defend your right to strike. We know the DA is fully behind this counter reactionary agenda which is why we will never understand how our members can be confused and vote DA or why a political party that claims to be revolutionary like the EFF would cooperate with DA.

Building the Workers Party

We cannot accept the continued betrayal of the working class. NUMSA has led the way in the United Front, we have launched a new federation SAFTU which is both a spear and a shield for workers, and now we are forging ahead, resolved to form a Workers Party which is firm in demanding socialism in our life time to end economic exploitation, poverty, unemployment and inequality. NUMSA Central Committee of NUMSA in December 2017 appreciated the work we doing to put together structures and supports the launch of the Workers Party in 2018. This year we will not just register the Workers Party but we will let you know the following details:

a) The name of the Workers Party and the joining fee.

b) Its constitution will be revealed very soon.

c) Its national core will be introduced. Remember the Workers Party will be completely separate from NUMSA. NUMSA will remain an independent worker controlled union that supports the formation of the Workers Party.

d) We shall very soon announce how many members are needed form to a branch of the Workers Party.

e) We shall reveal its regalia in terms of T-shirts, and we shall be calling on our members to volunteer and make financial contributions to build the Workers Party. A Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party that is challenge the present exploitative system of capitalism will not be funded by the capitalist class.

This is not a gravy train Workers Party it's a party to deal with working class miseries. The party will work for and support NUMSA and SAFTU members and the working class in general. It must have clear policies when it is launched that deal with the miseries of the working class. To have a situation where one in three people are unemployment is completely unacceptable. Politician that stand by while companies close are not friends of the working class. Why must the working class vote into power political parties who champion policies that subject workers to poverty by destroying their jobs. These parties will refuse to take decisions that will protect jobs, yet workers continue to vote these butchers into power. We cannot expect exploiters and oppressors to hand us our freedom.

Many of us have comrades and family, who worked for a company that was closed. We are witnessing plant closures and massive retrenchments when every worker supports five people or more, so job losses put communities in distress, with many homes struggling to meet basic needs. As 2017 was coming to an end we called on all NUMSA nine regions to give us a list of

companies that have retrenched and plant closures. The picture looks extremely bleak. This is a ticking bomb, pushing our people to despair and desperation. We have to defend our production capacity and jobs by championing industrial policy that meet the needs of our people.

Inequality is a national crisis, South Africa is the most unequal nation in the world. More than 40 million South Africans have no food. Members of NUMSA and SAFTU know that this is not just a number, these are our people, our children, our mothers and fathers that are caught up in the everyday struggle of what will they eat. Those of us that have jobs are the fortunate one but tomorrow it may be our turn to be retrenched. We can no longer trust the ANC with our members' lives. It's time to take a stand and fight for workers, for their right to work and to demand that the state must be the employer of last resort.

The Workers Party we talking about should go back to basic of building organisation of peoples' power what we used to call M Plan. NUMSA, the United Front and the Workers Party should launch a campaign going door to door, street by street, collecting information about in each household. If each member of NUMSA and SAFTU did this on their street, we would have a detailed understanding of our communities and their needs. Workers Party activists will need to call general meetings in communities to hear from the people in a democratic fashion what do they suggest must be done to address their plight, to find solutions making sure people have somewhere to eat and something to eat. Street and area committees whose task and mission must be to bring to an end to crime and restore pride, dignity and hope in our communities. This form of community organising existed in the past when we were fighting Apartheid and the Nationalist Party and unionists volunteering in their communities as activists were vital to the success of these efforts not this today's opportunistic culture of renting the masses to fill stadiums and still render them to be victims of

poverty until the next January 8th statement of the ANC.

The Workers Party is going to need honest leadership including young men and women. We have to take head on patriarchy, where women are oppressed, looked down upon at work, at home and in the community. The Workers Party as well as NUMSA and SAFTU must champion women as equal to men, promote women's active participation and inclusion in structures and in leadership positions.

Building NUMSA and SAFTU

NUMSA can only be strong and deliver on these noble aspirations for workers and the working class in general if it succeeds as a union to successfully represent workers against the bosses so quality service by organisers and by all of us in the leadership of NUMSA remains compulsory in 2018.

NUMSA is committed to improve turnaround time to resolve workers problems. We must not frustrate workers; when a problem is reported, we must report on progress and discuss what is the way forward within a reasonable time period. Where employers are taking workers for a ride NUMSA must constantly take the side of workers and fight for them. We must continue to win hearts and minds of workers. We need the confidence of our members because NUMSA has many enemies and opportunists that are looking to prey on our members, wanting to snatch them away with promises they can't keep. NUMSA is loyal to its members and needs loyal members for us to go from strength to strength.

There is a political agenda to deal with NUMSA. Our members in many of the state owned enterprises are being tested by a deliberate attack on our union recognition rights. We are the majority union in PetroSA with full organisational rights, but this is the exception. We are facing resistance in a number of others such as Eskom, SAA and Denel. Transnet is refusing to deduct NUMSA members' dues. We call on our members in state

owned enterprises to hold the ground we have won, we are committed to organising your workplaces as they are key to our industrial development and we will convene a national shopsteward council in 2018 to strategise on how we can fight back.

In 2017 we have had running battles with employers who consciously take cue from Cyril Ramaphosa national minimum wage. They want to vary down NUMSA members' benefits and conditions in the key collective bargaining sectors of motor and engineering to be paid at R3500 or to half their wages. We reached a wage agreement of 7 percent increase with the majority of employers within SEAFSA and we are expecting to gazette this agreement so that it is extended to all employers in the sector. NUMSA has negotiated at plant level with some companies, achieving even higher agreements, for example 9 percent at Scaw Metal and 9.5 percent at Nampak. In 2018 we are ready ourselves for battle with those employers that are hell-bent in making sure that the signed agreement in the engineering sector is not extended to include plastic employers and those affiliated to NEASA.

In 2017 we had good cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry and the Economic Development Department. We secured anti-dumping measures and an increase on tariffs for 8 products at Arcelor Mittal to protect jobs. Despite this Arcelor Mittal has served us with section 189 A notice and we closed the year defending our members. We did not back down and overcame this challenge with Arcelor Mittal withdrawing the notice and agreeing not to close the plant in Vereeniging and Newcastle.

We saved over 300 jobs at Scaw Metal by putting workers on a training lay off scheme. Transnet had ordered wheels from Italy instead of from Sacw, creating the threat to jobs. IDC that had a majority stake in Scaw, sold this to investors in the hope that the company can be turned around but the new investors want to break up the company. Numsa is challenging

this, we believe that Scaw Metal can be saved intact and that the company has an important role to play in the future development of our country.

NUMSA has never accepted the closure of Evaraz Highveld steel we pleased to report that our consistent fight has results. There is the possibility for reopening Evraz, Mapochs mine and Venchem.

We campaigned against closures of five power stations in Mpumalanga. NUMSA is not against reduction of emissions but we call for just transition that must first guarantee jobs security for workers. In terms of renewables, there must be a social owned renewable sector. It is against this backdrop that NUMSA rejects the introduction of nuclear at the present moment as the country cannot afford it and it will destroy many jobs in the manufacturing sector as our electricity costs are already uncompetitive. Instead we should invest in gas as a strategic niche of Petroleum South AFRICA (PETROSA), defending existing jobs of PETROSA workers and creating more jobs. There is a lot of gas in South Africa and Mozambique this can be mutually beneficial to both countries.

All car manufactures are not compliant with the BEE score card; these companies are MBSA, VWSA, BMWSA, NISSAN SA, FORD SA, TOYOTA SA and GMSA which is now ISUZU SA. Government revised BEE requirements and car manufacturers must ensure that 25 % of their core business is given to black individuals or black workers. Instead companies make a mockery of the BEE objectives by outsourcing. We are currently negotiating with MBSA to resolve the BEE score card issues but the final position on this matter can only be taken at a Workers Indaba so that NUMSA acts on the mandate given by members. So far we have succeeded in getting MBSA to withdraw plans to break up the plant into separate legal entities.

NUMSA has engaged employers and government through DTI to begin to plan the future of the Auto industry called Vision

2035. The plan forces car manufacturers to stop dumping and to champion localization in a way that will create jobs both in the car manufacturing and the component sector. Employers have turned against the plan, unwilling to give up on existing incentives that they are using to maximize profits.

NUMSA must address the needs of level five workers that want to break the ceiling on their career path. We are seeking a solution to this through negotiations with employers at the Industry Policy Forum. Another challenge we face is the gap in wages between auto workers in the assembly car plants and component supply and logistics workers. The NUMSA Central Committee calls on all members and shop stewards to recruit workers in companies where we work and we must include workers in service providers to our companies, including security services, material handling, logistics, canteen workers, component suppliers and cleaners. We must make sure that they are well represented and that NUMSA bargains for them. We cannot win gains for our members whilst there are other workers in our workplaces that are exploited. It is our revolutionary duty of NUMSA members to ensure that these workers are represented by our union.

The union has employed an actuary to restructure and transform retirement funds so that workers money can be deployed strategically in a manner that benefits workers whilst they still work to address some of their needs such as housing and still be available to workers when they retire with good value. We are working with the NUMSA investment company on the formation of an industry medical aid. our aim is to pool our contributions, reduce cost and ensure that our members' have access to good quality health care. At the same time we need to demand a national health insurance scheme and quality healthcare facilities and services accessible to every South African.

The most important victory we secured in 2017 which NUMSA members in all sectors and all workers in the entire country

must continue to celebrate and defend as the victory of NUMSA on behalf of its members and all workers a victory COSATU and all its affiliates failed to secured against labour brokers, is a victory NUMSA secured against one labour broker company called Assign services which set a precedent for all labour broker companies that after three months all workers who work in South African companies must and should be automatical made permanent employed.

Whilst we were still busy celebrating this victory this blood sucker employers decided to appeal this labour court ruling in the constitutional court we pulling all the stops we are taking to senior legal counsel lawyers to go and fight for NUMSA members and all workers in the country to defend this working class victory but we also call on our members to come to court on that they to demonstrate support for such a ruling and call on the constitutional court not to temper with the previous ruling that fairly makes workers permanent after three months. NUMSA members and all exploited workers must under labour broking slavery must continue to celebrate this victory against scrupulous labour broker employers, ANC and DA leadership that refused to ban labour brokers.

What must be done

Our members must be honest and loyal to NUMSA by raising their concerns about their union inside their union, with the intention to better NUMSA. Building NUMSA means workers must be united to defend workers and improve their benefits and conditions. NUMSA at all levels starting with the President and the General Secretary must be committed to this task.

We need to recruit every unorganised worker in companies where we work under banner of NUMSA and take up the fight against exploitative and scrupulous bosses. An injury to one must be an injury to all, at plant level, at sector level and even at international level.

NUMSA members and shop stewards must organise and advance working class interests, in our churches, shebeens, burial societies, in our choirs, sports clubs, and hairdressers. We must advance a struggle to end economic exploitation by building our union.

We must also build the United Front to take up the struggle to say no to privatisation of municipal services and challenge poor service delivery in our communities, fighting back against crime, corruption and violence against women. This might necessitated that once more forming of street and area committees.

NUMSA members must remain critical of their union and its leadership and must continue to make every NUMSA shop steward accountable to members, every NUMSA leader accountable including the President and General Secretary. Our members must not be confused by yellow unions, our union is alive and well, we are a fighting union, a militant union but most of all we are a democratic worker controlled union. Numsa will always uphold organisational renewal through worker democracy leadership. Members are free to contest leadership including that of the Numsa secretariat and the General Secretary through democratic process upheld in our union constitution. The winners of these democratic processes will lead Numsa and the losers must respect elected leadership and continue to make valuable contribution to our union.

In 2013 as a result of being sold out by the ANC led Alliance, NUMSA resolved at the Special National Congress that it was time for the working class to organize itself as a class for itself by forming a and building a movement for socialism meaning it must lay building blocks to form a Worker's Party. This was resolved and further endorsed at the 2016 NUMSA National Congress. "We know as a matter of fact as our union announce its honest intention of correctly, sticking to its resolved to catalyse formation of the Workers Party which will continue to be both a shield and a spear for workers to raised

working class revolutionary consciousness to take up the struggle against capitalism and all social ills which it breeds such as crime, poverty, violence and abuse of children and women, inequalities and unemployment, economically marginalisation, land hunger for the majority which is black and African.”

Be assured that our support for the formation of a workers Party is to ensure that there is political representation of working class interests. NUMSA is South Africa’s biggest trade union, we are worker controlled and we intend to remain so. We have no intention of becoming a political party. There are those who will continue to attack this initiative because they fear what is to be born. Defend our union against attacks by government and the ANC led alliance; workers deserve political representation that has not compromised the working class. This workers Party when its final launched it will be completely separate from NUMSA will be in the street with workers and the poor.

In 2018 we are building NUMSA and continuing to grow as a fighting giant to resist and reject any attack on workers. 2018 will be a year of action for gains in our workplaces. At the same time we shall continue to build and strengthen the United Front and we shall launch the Workers Party. All those who want to join a revolutionary Workers Party, whose mission and task is to overthrow capitalism and build a system that detest greed of capitalism which is socialism are free to do so. NUMSA is part of this initiative to build the Workers Party but membership is voluntary. NUMSA remains committed to recruit all workers, regardless of their political affiliation. We must be extremely vigilant and jealously guard unity in NUMSA as a home for all workers regardless of their political affiliation and we should not allow opportunists to create confusion in our ranks and for those who have made their business to attack this revolutionary mission to succeed.

NUMSA President Andrew Chirwa in closing the NUMSA 10TH National Congress in December 2016 had this to say about this important but difficult journey to build an alternative Workers Party and the need for workers to pursue class struggle against capitalism for a socialist republic of South Africa.

“There is no alternative to organizing the working class for the revolutionary struggle for them to be their own liberators, their own masters. We have no choice but to take on this huge revolutionary task. The alternative is permanent misery, poverty, unemployment and suffering extreme inequalities. All this of course leads to brutal and painful short lives, for the majority of the working class. We must create the revolutionary mass vanguard political party to lead the struggle for socialism in South Africa. The alternative is the continued savagery and barbarism of capitalism, and civil wars.”

Let us be victorious in 2018. I leave you with a quote from Lenin which better represent the NUMSA moment and the urgent need to turn the NUMSA moment into a working class revolutionary movement in the form of a Workers Party, “What Is To Be Done? Dogmatism And ‘Freedom of Criticism’” (1901).

“We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire. We have combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighboring marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now some among us begin to cry out: Let us go into the marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: What backward people you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh,

yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render you every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are "free" to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh"

Viva NUMSA Viva!

IRVIN JIM

NUMSA General Secretary

Workers Day Celebration, Durban 2017

News from Namibia

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

United Fishers and Tsumeb Workers news

Issue 5 of Die Werker out now.

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

In this edition:

1. Fishermen
 2. Miners
 3. Reparations
 4. Jeremy Corbyn
 5. Letters
 6. land
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Appeal: Help fund our work in Southern Africa

Dear Comrades,

WE are launching an ambitious Appeal to members and supporters to raise funds for our work in Southern Africa.

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

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

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

interests.

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

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

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

Road workers protesting against bullying, malpractice and neglect of health and safety by their foreign employers contracted to develop the country's road network;

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

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

Young people demanding access to homes;

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nevertheless it held a very successful second congress in 2015 and is now developing a network of branches and conducting a serious programme of theoretical education in Marxism for the new forces coming into the leadership of the Party.

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

A decisive political break in South Africa

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

What they have established is a genuine United Front bringing community groups together with trade unions led by the working class. Its purpose is to stand up for real working class

communities in the context of extreme inequality, exploitation of workers, unemployment (especially among young people) and mass poverty.

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

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

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

How you can donate

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

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

Unity trust Bank

Account: *The Correspondence Society*

sort: 60 – 83 – 01

account: 20059400

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

Yours in solidarity,

Bob Archer

New edition of The Worker/ Die Werker

IN THIS EDITION

Roads

Marikana support by Namibian miners

Truth & Justice

Letters

Editorial

Available in both English and Afrikaans here!