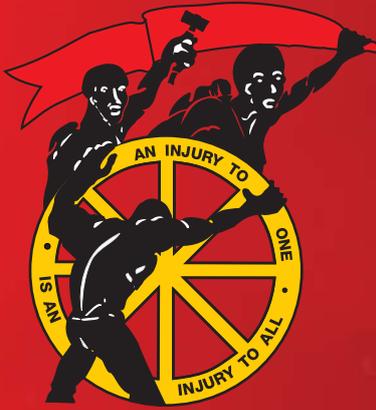


BOOK 1



COSATU

COSATU 7th Central Committee

**20-23 September 2021
Virtual**

Secretariat Report



35 years of militant working class struggle!

*"Deepen the Back to Basics Campaign, Consolidate the Struggle
for the NDR & Advance the Struggle for Socialism"*



**7TH COSATU CENTRAL COMMITTEE
SECRETARIAT REPORT**

HELD ON

20 – 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2021

COSATU



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Background

This Central Committee, the Mid-Term Evaluation Conference of the federation, COSATU, offers a very unique and critical opportunity for the working class and its organs to do an honest, robust and frank reflection into the state of the revolution in South Africa, on the African continent and throughout the world.

As a Constitutionally determined organ of our federation, it is an important and decisive moment for this Central Committee to do what it is specifically assigned by history and the class with the required seriousness and dedication. The work of constantly evaluating the work and progress we are making or otherwise, is not just a formality, but a life and death matter for the working class struggle and the federation itself.

We herein start by assessing the obtaining international and domestic balance of forces and their implications for the working class and our struggle for socialism.

The essence of COSATU policy remains guided by the principle and affirmation of workers' rights to effective and full participation in matters affecting their lives at the workplace, national, international and community level. Our full presence in all public affairs, policy influencing structures and decision-making bodies remain fundamental.

It is for that reason, that we emphasise that COSATU is proud and remains committed to the role it played in the struggle against apartheid and still plays in building working class power to transform the economy and society, as we simultaneously fight for the improvement of the conditions of life for the majority of our people, particularly in our communities.

Our rights, including the right for workers to have a voice in all policy and decision making spaces, we won't waiver or outsource to anyone, because we have seen how in other countries such rights can be a life and death matter for workers who are excluded. Its only that, in exercising this right we must be clear how we exercise this right in a way that advances and defend the rights, gains and interests of workers. This is with particular reference to very contested public policy spaces.

But the workplace is our core focus and primary terrain of struggle and organisation, therefore, a base of our organised and strategic power.

Our last Congress, the 2018 National Congress, took bold and wide reaching resolutions on almost all areas affecting workers and the working class, particularly in the categories of; Political, Organisational, Socio economic and International, which laid the basis for our work in the past 3 years. Towards that end, this Central Committee (CC) is about that comprehensive assessment of what has been done, how has it been done, what remains to be done and where to next?

Having emerged from a very difficult period of serious challenges, COSATU has earned its stripes as the seasoned and time tested force of working class power and unity, not without challenges, but remain focussed on that mission and programme. As if that was not enough, the COVID 19 pandemic became another very vicious and difficult terrain to navigate, but here we are, having weathered that storm and defended workers with all our might and emerged very bold under very uncertain and complex situations.

With these few words, the National Office Bearers (NOBs) of COSATU hereby present this Secretariat report and hopes it becomes a launching base for our critical and constructive engagement, interrogation and analysis to develop a solid wayforward for the working class and the federation at the helm of that new momentum.



1. POLITICAL SECTION

PART ONE – INTERNATIONAL BALANCE OF FORCES

1.1 Capitalism in the age of Imperialism and its meaning for the working class internationalism and solidarity

The development and evolution of capitalism was well summed up by Lenin in his popular writing on, *Imperialism, the Highest stage of Capitalism*, when he said, *“It is precisely the parasitism and decay of capitalism, characteristic of its highest historical stage of development, i.e., imperialism. As this pamphlet shows, capitalism has now singled out a handful (less than one-tenth of the inhabitants of the globe; less than one-fifth at a most “generous” and liberal calculation) of exceptionally rich and powerful states which plunder the whole world simply by “clipping coupons”.*

He went on to say, *“Capital exports yield an income of eight to ten thousand million francs per annum, at pre-war prices and according to pre-war bourgeois statistics. Now, of course, they yield much more”.*

Then he made amongst the most remarkable observation, *“Obviously, out of such enormous super-profits (since they are obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their “own” country) it is possible to bribe the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. And that is just what the capitalists of the “advanced” countries are doing” – Vladimir, Ulyanov Lenin – July 6, 1920 (Popular version to the 1917 original text)*

Towards this end, there are five features of imperialism that should help ascertain the definite outlook of imperialism, as further elaborated by Lenin and these are;

1. The concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a **decisive** role in economic life;
2. The merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this “finance capital”, of a financial oligarchy;
3. The export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance;
4. The formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves, and
5. The territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed.

This principled definition and outline of the essence of imperialism, help us explain the behaviour, characteristics and orientation of not only the capitalism, but states and monopoly companies and trusts, particularly finance capital. It was as relevant then as it is today.

The structure and functioning of global capitalism in this age of imperialism is not happening in an empty space or vacuum, but in a context and with definite measures. Our experiences as a working class and the rest of society, particularly in the developing world is not without theory that explains what is happening and why.

It is precisely these analyses that help us understand global power relations in general and the global power structure in particular. The political economy of war, of health and of any other variable, can be explained in relation to these underlying and basic fundamentals.

That is why we use them to determine if the traditional western imperialist states led by the US and the newly emerging powers of the world, including China, Brazil, Russia, Turkey or India qualify or not, to be determined as such.



Such conclusions in more detailed and conclusive terms remain a subject of our work towards the Central Committee (CC) in September. But, there are a few observations we seek to point out regarding Lenin's definition and the present situation. These are;

- The analysis have been confirmed by both historical and present conditions as scientific and truthful in helping us understand the system and its behaviour
- There have been several changes to the global structure, both in terms of substance and character, in the evolution of capital and society since Lenin's analysis were made. These may have tinkered with and or even changed some parts of the original set of circumstances and indicators that model the system. In this regard, what developments may have been imagined or not imagined by the situation then, given the obtaining situation today
- The duty of revolutionaries, at all times, is to do a concrete analysis, basing themselves on the guidance by historical materialism (the scientific history of class struggle) and comparative experiences of the working class throughout the world and in different regions and countries of the world. This we say, because the truth is concrete and nothing exempt facts, analysis and struggle if we are to derive correct observations, theory and correct practice.

In that regard, we seek to do exactly that. We seek to avoid abstract generalisations, on the one hand and or exceptionalism, on the other, given the experiences of other revolutions in general and our own NDR in particular, which is a key part of the global struggle against capitalism.

In that regard, we have to frame the discussion correctly, with due consideration for the many experiences of other revolutions and liberation movements on the continent and beyond, in relation to how they performed or are performing and what are the reasons.

The lessons from various international struggles, including liberation struggles on the African continent are so telling for the importance of solidarity and internationalism.

The state of liberation movements, including PAIGC in Guinea Bissau (including Cape Verde), ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, UNIP in Zambia, KANU in Kenya, CCM in Tanzania, FRELIMO in Mozambique, FLN in Algeria as examples, illustrate the fact of how capitalism tended to isolate and capture or weaken (in various ways) the revolutionary movements into agents of its interests, though grudgingly, at times.

This is also true of liberation and progressive forces beyond the African continent, including the experiences of Fretelin in East Timor, the once glorious Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the experiences of Grenada, Haiti and other such liberation forces, which were sabotaged by US imperialism and subjected to the most cruel forms of subjugation. But they equally suffered internal weaknesses that undermined the revolution big time.

In cases, where they couldn't capture the revolutionary leaders, like Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso, Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, Amilcar Cabral of PAIGC, Chris Hani in South Africa, Hebert Chitepo in Zimbabwe, etc, they resorted to murder of those leaders.

These experiences are important for us to understand, but not oversimplify the different conditions and experiences without properly studying and understanding what makes ours similar and different.

The process of capitalist capture of revolutionary, liberation and other progressive forces is a long range game by the capitalist system, which co-opts some form the ranks of the oppressed and kill others in pursuit of weakening the revolution.



1.1 The working class in the era of the COVID 19 pandemic

The duty of this discussion paper is not to provide answers, but stimulate and provoke the questions we must ask and answer honestly as a federation and as a working class. This is important because we are involved in a concrete struggle to find concrete solutions, basing ourselves on correct theory and proper tools of analysis.

The international situation we are facing has exposed the brutal deterioration of the working and living conditions of people. Workers are facing growing unemployment, inequalities and poverty as more and more companies face closure and retrenchment becomes the norm. This is the result of capitalist crisis and the struggle for “new” and more profitable frontiers of capital accumulation.

Further, it is both the result of the deepening crisis of the capitalist system and the vicious race to the bottom in terms of labour standards, quality of life and work, impact of delivery to the poor and all other measurements in human development terms, which are imposed by capitalism.

According to the 7th Edition of the ILO Monitor on COVID 19 and the World of Work, “New annual estimates confirm that labour markets around the world were disrupted in 2020 on a historically unprecedented scale”.

It went on to indicate that, “Globally, the decline in working hours in 2020 translated into both employment losses and a reduction in working hours for those who remain employed, with significant variations across regions”.

Finally, it states that, “Global labour income (before taking into account income support measures) in 2020 is estimated to have declined by 8.3%, which amounts to US\$3.7 trillion, or 4.4% of global GDP”.

The global picture points to both the decline in the share of income for workers and the resultant deterioration of their living and working conditions. In other words, whatever country, region and place where they are found, workers are on the receiving end of the crisis, as a class, with women workers and African workers at the lowest end of the whole picture.

In a separate report, ILO Country study, it says, “South Africa has been the hardest hit African country; globally, it has the 5th highest number of COVID 19 cases, despite some of the strictest lockdown regulations. As a result, the COVID 19 crisis has led to a fall in formal employment and 9 out of 10 South African businesses have reported losses in turnover”.

In the words of President Ramaphosa, the 2nd Pandemic in South Africa is Gender Based Violence, hence COSATU’s consistent call for the ratification of Convention 190 on ending all forms of sexual harassment against men and women in the workplace, as a critical tool and not an end in itself, in the struggle against patriarchy, sexism and GBV generally.

Linked to this call is the COSATU campaign against Collective Bargaining and workers rights, hence our ramped up call for the ratification of Conventions 151 and those that have reinforcing aspects in our battle to defend and even strengthen workers gains and labour market institutions. This means even using those instruments that the country is party to, like Convention 98 as spaces to advance and defend our bargaining rights.

Towards this end, the global trade union movement has been consistently calling for governments to put in place recovery and resilience plans which include the following;

- Job Protection and Job creation;
- Income protection and minimum living wages;
- Occupational Health and Safety – including global standards and provisions for safe workplaces;
- Universal Social Protection to build resilience;
- Responsible business conduct through supply chains; and



- Government accountability with social dialogue and the provision of privacy rights (in the context of growing usage of smart apps to track and trace people exposed to COVID 19)

The huge cuts on the CCMA and other institutions regulating labour relations in our country, pose a real danger that workers are on their own and employers never cease to take advantage to intensify workers exploitation. The National Treasury has become the fertile ground to ram through the Neo-liberal agenda and disrupt the power of workers and their living and working conditions.

The crisis have exposed the need for more tighter social dialogue on all aspects; from health and safety to Gender based violence and sexual harassment, to retrenchments, to labour broking and outsourcing, to the need for the fundamental transformation of the economy.

However, the biggest lesson is that, even as we fight defensive workplace battles, we must not lose sight of the fundamental transformation issues, the structural questions and the broadening of the productive base to be inclusive and redistributive.

1. The COVID 19 pandemic and the Vaccine battles – The struggle for better conditions for frontline workers and the call to all workers to the frontline against COVID towards quality public health for all!

The period after the November CEC last year was marked by a very eventful duration. The un-anticipated surge in the pandemic, characterised as the Second wave, led by a particular variant which contains a mutation known as N501Y.

The Second wave proved more vicious, found us not ready in terms of public health response and national state of alertness, Instead, we were and still are gripped by fear, uncertainty and indecisiveness in many respects. But the economic crisis, particularly joblessness and hunger deepened and made the situation more vicious for workers and their families.

The loss on human lives, not just in South Africa, but throughout the SADC region in particular, intensified even more. The pandemic became vicious to the point the President had to adjust the lockdown level back to level 3 and closed several key places, particularly those regarded as “Superspreaders” or having such risk levels.

It was a festive season unprecedented in recent history and imposed conditions that had severe effects on people, their lives and livelihoods, their families, communities and nations at large.

It particularly savaged the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Gauteng, KZN and to some extent, Limpopo. The other Provinces felt it but not to the extent of these aforementioned herein above. Some or many workers, could not even be able to go home for the festive, of course, for different reasons, including the situation of the pandemic.

This has led to the worsening situation we are in, the economy in crisis, health and livelihoods in crisis, jobs in crisis and every other social indicator prove the magnitude of the crisis we are in.

It is against this background that the vaccine debate intensified. The debates on the vaccine exposed so many fault-lines of the social discourse and the trajectory we are currently on;

- The predatory nature of global capitalism is ever growing vicious with the competition between the advanced economies for the share and control of markets, now joined by other historically non-capitalist and “emergent” economies
- The crisis of private health accumulation as a profit frontier than a social good, which has brought about the huge inequalities in access, quality, affordability and safety, thus impacting on the overall life expectancy and other corresponding rates measuring quality of life for society in general. This also exposed our failure to invest properly in health and social development in general. The case for a State Pharmaceutical Company cannot be overemphasised, this has made it even more glaring than ever before. It has crushed all the key arguments against it, for the extension of private profit in health.
- The low levels of social consciousness reflected in the degeneration of the discourse to the level of irrational, often mythical and unscientific exaggerations that only served to feed more on the fears and vulnerability



of the poor and majority of the people. This confirms how dangerous low levels of ideological analysis and consciousness can be. It is said that most people who perished to Scurvy and other dangerous diseases died from denialism, fears and misconceptions instilled in the name of traditions, cultures, religions and other beliefs that tended to hold back progress of society at the time.

- The importance of a consistent overall culture of healthy lifestyle, hygiene and sanitation for overall environmental and human health in general. This includes workplaces, homes, communities and places of worship and recreation.

There are notable patterns that have characterised the current global vaccine economy and what prospects it signals about the global power structure of production and control;

- There has developed strong **vaccine nationalism/imperialism**, the tendency for vaccine self-interest and the reproduction of systemic domination in a world based on extremes of underdevelopment, inequality and disproportionate disease and hunger burdens. This nationalism is reinforced or based on the logic of the north-south divide, one highly industrialised and the other extremely poor and underdeveloped, with limited or no technical, industrial and research capacity to develop the necessary vaccine or even systems towards it. In this regard, every person for him/herself and the devil takes the hindmost, solidarity, shared resources and knowledge, distribution to meet human needs in remote parts of the world, have all been thrown out of the window. Again, this is with the exception of a few, including Cuba and its consistent solidarity with other human beings in need, even amongst the most developed countries, such as Italy, for instance.

The general patterns reinforce the design of global imperialism and the further marginalisation of developing countries and their further exclusion from the world economy and power

- **Vaccine-driven industrial development or potential for it.** This is the tendency by which some developing countries have taken the initiative to challenge the dominant designs and fault-lines of skewed development that favours a few and reinforces the monopoly over all resources, including health and medication. A few African countries have produced some form of vaccine dosage and attempts to upgrade the research and content quality of what they offer, which has laid basis for creation of more systemic infrastructure in the whole medical and technical scientific value chain beyond COVID 19.

The lessons and experiences from these have confirmed COSATU positions on a number of issues, including;

- The centrality of the NHI and deliberate investment in research and medical industrial value chains as the primary vehicle for the effective delivery of safe, affordable and accessible quality healthcare for all, particularly the working class which is ravaged by disease and poverty
- The need for decisive and developmental investment in Public healthcare and rolling back of the profit drive in social goods, such as effective health delivery. This means the acceleration of the State Pharmaceutical company and all the relevant value chains of the health industrial complex as public goods
- The urgency of intensifying our all-round comprehensive Programme and campaign by the trade union movement, the tripartite alliance and all progressive social organs and communities around health, the environment and against poverty, unemployment and corruption
- The primacy of international solidarity and unity of the global working class movement in the context of the universalisation and massacre of the class on a global scale, with Africa as our primary terrain, in our case as COSATU. There are sometimes illusions whether internationalism or solidarity is an after-thought or a choice. In the world we are living in, no trade union worth its salt, would not understand that, the class battles are international and so must the solidarity of the fighting classes.



1.2 Overview of major trends and International Balance of Forces

The capitalist crisis in the world economy remains intense with many countries witnessing shrinking GDP numbers because of COVID-19 inspired economic crisis. All major western economies are experiencing a long downward drag.

The Chinese economy has shown some signs of recovery, though we have witnessed a more assertive-to-aggressive foreign policy posture by the Chinese, which has somewhat created uncertainty for the global economy and the future we headed towards.

The United Kingdom's exit from the EU and the fight over vaccines continues to exacerbate the disorderly separation that is likely to have negative consequences for the global economy in the short term, but in the long term, it creates an opportunity of heightened inter-imperialist rivalries that may be weakened the strangle-hold of the advanced economies and be of interest to developing countries, including Africa as a continent.

The prolonged period of high uncertainty in the global economy because of COVID-19 has hampered and somewhat disrupted traditional trade patterns in many ways. In several developing economies, such as Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, the inability to achieve a sustained revival in investment could weigh on already weak long-term productivity growth, further impeding their sustainable development prospects.

The recent US elections have resulted in the chaotic exit of the right-wing populist President Donald Trump who was replaced by another hawkish member of the US political establishment in Joe Biden. The new President has been one of the supporters of the US aggressive foreign policy during his time in Congress but also as a Vice President to President Barack Obama. In his first foreign policy speech, he reassured the watching world that "America is back."

He signalled a no-nonsense approach to China and Russia, called on the military junta in Myanmar to bring their coup to an end, a sign that the US is still around in the Asia Pacific region. He withdrew US's support for the Saudi offensive in Yemen and halted the withdrawal of US troops in Germany.

This means that we are likely to see another tension-filled relationship between Russia, China, and the US.

Joe Biden was quoted as saying "We'll confront China's economic abuses, counter its aggressive, coercive action to push back on China's attack on human rights, intellectual property and global governance,"

He said nothing about Latin America and Africa and like his predecessors before him, he is unlikely to be concerned with the relations with the continent but will likely use it as a battlefield to engage and minimise what the US considers to be an assertive China and an emboldened Russia.

The CEC needs to study further the implications of the chaotic change of the US administration and its likely impact on the world or what it means in class terms as the US is the primary force of global imperialism.

On China

According to the Marxist Left Review, 2014, "This article is divided into three parts. The first outlines Lenin's theory and the key ideas necessary to apply it in today's conditions. The final section applies the Leninist theoretical framework to show that China is not a rising imperialist power, and that even its full development as a capitalist economy is blocked by imperialism. Before looking at China however, it is necessary to dispense with misunderstandings that prevent Marxists from grasping Lenin's theory and encourage us to dismiss Lenin as wrong, dated or marginal.. There are many distorters of Lenin. Marxists academics, on the whole, are as guilty of this as any party....."

China has no doubt, risen to become a world power in several aspects and has challenged the global centres of power in many spheres than ever before, which has somewhat given an opening or possibility for alternative development models in the world, particularly for Africa and the developing world or global south in general, who have been suffocated by imperialism through subjugation and perpetual domination.



But there are contradictions in the development and rise of China, as is the case with others too, including how South Africa is viewed in very under-developed countries. China's rise has made it felt in many developing countries as a super-imposition in some aspects, particularly the economic sphere, where it has no doubt, been driven by their own "national interests" to advance and protect what they define as strategic interests for China. This includes development cooperation and how to ensure returns to their investments and economic inputs in various countries.

There have been mounting tensions between the US and China since Donald Trump imposed tariffs on China and their differences over the protests in Hong Kong and the future of Taiwan. The future of the South China Sea remains a point of contention. This inter-imperialist rivalry and geopolitical competition is likely to increase the threats of foreign interventions in various countries.

China is also steadily asserting its hegemony in Northeast and Southeast Asia. The Hong Kong demonstrations have added to the tensions between the US and China who are already at loggerheads over the Taiwanese problem and the situation of the Uyghur minority ethnic group.

In the past few months, Chinese foreign policy appears to have taken a dramatic and aggressive turn. Beijing has cracked down on the once semi-autonomous region of Hong Kong, enacting a far-reaching National Security Law and arresting numerous pro-democracy activists, though we must admit that the western world would like to continue having major influence in Hong Kong, even though its now officially part of the Chinese territory.

China has taken on Australia, where the two are contesting the Asia Pacific sphere of influence, with the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic as mere disguise. It has also bolstered its claims in the South China Sea, increased its patrols around the Japanese-controlled Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and clashed with India in the Himalayas, and recently sent warplanes across the median line in the Taiwan Strait. The surrounding territories are key for the geo-political dominance of each power and, China too.

China has also doubled down on efforts to defend Huawei from the economic onslaught against Chinese Companies in the west, as they moved to charge Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor with espionage after a Canadian court refused to stop extradition proceedings against CFO Meng Wanzhou and has warned the United Kingdom it would "bear the consequences" for excluding the telecom giant from its 5G network.

China has the second biggest economy and is projected to overtake the US by 2030 and this means that it has huge significance in the overall future of the world. The federation needs to analyse its robust foreign policy, its economic power and its intolerance of disagreements and dissent domestically.

On the Middle East and the question of Palestine

The world's biggest laboratory of imperialist theatrics is the Middle East, from Syria to Iran to the Gulf region to Turkey and the whole Mediterranean region, the US and its allies are on the rampage and the biggest casualty is the Palestinian people.

In an article titled, "Israel: new government, same rotten politics", Franz Rieger and Francesco Merli on the 15th June, they indicated that, "On Sunday, the Knesset (Israeli parliament) elected a new government with a narrow majority of 60 against 59 – ending Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's 12 year long hold on power. His rule was characterised by right-wing policies and the brutal oppression of the Palestinians, based on the personal standing of Netanyahu as Israel's strong man. The final example of this was the recent bloody bombardment of Gaza. What will the new government bring? And why did Netanyahu lose his grip on power? A focussed discussion on these issues beneath the surface is crucial.

But an overview of the whole region and its dynamics is even more crucial. The undemocratic and petro-dollar drooling monarchies in the region are collaborating with both the US and Israel in this war of control against the people of the Middle East and Palestinian people in particular.



The extraordinary political, social, and humanitarian catastrophe in the Middle East remains troubling. The situation in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya and Afghanistan, the ongoing occupation of Palestine is not improving because the policies and actions of imperialist countries, which are fomenting sectarian/ethnic divisions, are continuing unabated.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump managed to entice the Arab monarchies to soften their positions against Israeli and establish some kind of working relations. This is mainly driven by their collective animosity towards Iran. This has created a very toxic political atmosphere that is dangerous in the Middle East.

The Trump plan drew criticism and protests from Palestinians, who say the actions of Arab monarchies fails to offer any political solution and legitimises the occupation of Palestine by Israel. The federation should attempt to ensure that the Palestinian Solidarity campaign gains traction as part of our support of the Palestinian people.

We must link our campaign for a free Palestine to the global campaign against imperialism, for democracy and for justice and equality for all. This is not just a Palestinian problem, but one for all who suffer and suffered gross injustices, colonialism, racism, occupation and land dispossessions. Its our struggle too.

The Palestinian struggle is one of our major international solidarity campaigns and we need to analyse this shift in the Middle Eastern politics, including the attitude of the new American administration.

The struggle for solidarity with the Palestinian people requires that we intensify the fight against racism, colonialism, occupation, landlessness and rights of the indigenous peoples to dignity all over the world, including and in particular in Latin America and the Asia Pacific, Australia included.

On Latin America

We have witnessed a vicious suffocation of the Cuban people's revolution by imperialism during this horrible moment of the COVID 19 pandemic. We do not take for granted mixed feelings about the situation and how they express their rights and feelings on any issue, but its very inhumane for the US and western countries in general, to deny them the necessary infrastructure for medicinal and health needs. We must congratulate the Cuban people for their sterling work in developing their own vaccines, even as they have limited and strained resources. This is commendable and a source of inspiration for all developing countries, Africa in particular.

Towards this end, the US monopoly and domination of the hemispheric territory marking the Latin American and Caribbean region, which dates back to the years of the Transatlantic slave trade, is being reproduced and renewed as we recently saw in Haiti, as well as in Colombia and throughout the region.

Venezuela remains a major target in Latin America of the United States government US imperialism is spending large sums of money funding various reactionary groups that are opposed to the Bolivarian revolution.

US President Donald Trump withdrew from what he called a one-sided deal with Cuba. Since then, the offensive against Cuba has been intensified and the new Biden Administration is yet to articulate its position on the American-Cuba relations.

The great initiatives, such as the MERCUSOR, the Market of the South, the Bank of the south and towards cutting ties with the dollar dominance were amongst the most profound initiatives taken by the Latin American people and daily being disrupted by imperialism, US in particular.

These and the SAO PAOLO Forum are amongst the most profound and worthy of emulating by Africa in seeking to change the neo-colonial patterns of domination and unequal relations with our erstwhile colonialist and imperialism in general. Africa must set itself on a path of independent development, industrialisation and prioritisation of the African people in all spheres of our lives and development.



AFRICA

The SADC Region is in motion – The people are demanding change now!

The Southern African region is undergoing the most profound and thoroughgoing process of struggle, not seen in many years. In fact, since the end of colonialism and apartheid, we are witnessing serious political and economic changes that are shaking the power structure of the whole region.

From the momentous struggles for democracy in Zimbabwe that threatened the establishment, we have learnt that, even though the changes were not as profoundly deep as originally envisaged in class terms, but it demonstrated the urgency of change and democracy as an important condition for development.

Even more striking was the decisive struggles raging through eSwatini led by the people, which have been so remarkable than has been the case for years in that tiny kingdom. The rot of the royal family, gloating the greed and extravagance with such unashamed impunity, demonstrated that it was not sustainable and was bound to reach a dead end.

The SADC region has been tested by both the Zimbabwean and the eSwatini crisis, with the eSwatini situation exposing more the deeply fractured, incapable, incoherent and out of touch regional body, which is unable to be the pulse of its own people. It only could confirm the narrative that it's a leaders Club with no solution to offer the people of the region. The historic intentions and relevance of establishing SADCC (the predecessor of SADC), remain as relevant as they were then. But the incapability of the incumbent shows more drastically when the people need this regional body more.

The next SADC heads of states meeting is due in a few days time this month and Malawi is taking over the Chairpersonship from Botswana, while SA is taking over leadership of the Organ Troika on Defence, Politics and Security. What does this mean for us as COSATU and the alliance in general, in advancing a progressive regional agenda for democracy, transformation and development?

The African continent has become a playground for geopolitical contestations between the US, EU, China, Russia, UK and France. There has not been any hard-nosed imperialist military intervention since the assassination of the Libyan Colonel Gaddafi, but does not rule out such a possibility any time.

Israel has been bribing to building relations with Tunisia, Egypt, and Sudan under the diplomatic intervention of the United States. This dollar/check diplomacy has been same as that which Morocco used to return to the AU under mysterious conditions and disguises. In fact, Israel, assisted by the US, has been bribing several African states towards normalising or even having diplomatic relations that led to the AU Commission (AUC) arrogantly granting observer status to the AU for Israel, without due considerations and properly consultation with the AU member states, as previously done when the AU was advised by its own legal advisor that legally, it would be a controversial decision under international law.

Morocco re-joined the African union after 34 years and this spells disaster for Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR, also known as Western Sahara), which the Moroccan monarchy considers to be part of its territory, though international law has always been clear that it's a territory of the Saharawi people. This raises the question about the implications for the SADR's bid for recognition as an independent state and our struggle to support the Saharawi people for their sovereign right to self-determination.

Libya

The efforts to stabilise Libya by UN have so far failed to yield any significant results. Libya has become a haven for pirates, human smugglers and the enslavement of poor African migrants is rampant in the country.

The UN estimates there are about 20,000 foreign troops and mercenaries helping the opposing sides in Libya: The UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli and renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar in the east.



Turkey backs the GNA. It also has a military base in Al-Watiya on the border with Tunisia under a 2019 military accord. General Haftar has the backing of the UAE, France, Egypt and Russia.

But the Libyan situation has thrown on our faces, so many unanswered questions and challenges on the geopolitical interests, forces and influences involved in that battle, as well as the internal dynamics including subtle and overt racism against black Africans in that country. Through OATUU, we had engaged with the then trade unions of Libya, but not much could be claimed from that, as the war then raged onwards.

Mozambique

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) finally deployed troops to Mozambique to help it tackle escalating violence in the country's north – but offered little specific operational details at its launch. The SADC Standby Force will support Mozambique 'to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism' in Cabo Delgado province.

It should be noted that, Rwanda already sent in 1,000 soldiers last month to shore up Mozambican military forces that have been struggling to regain control over the northern Cabo Delgado province, which is home to one of Africa's biggest liquefied natural gas projects.

Mozambique has been struggling with an Islamic insurgency in its northern province of Cabo Delgado. In 2017, a group calling itself Ansar al-Sunna started carrying out attacks on government and civilian targets in Cabo Delgado, a province rich in rubies and oil and with a population that is 54% Muslim - whereas most of Mozambique is Christian.

Ansar al-Sunna want to establish an Islamic state in the region and claim the Islam practised in Mozambique has been corrupted and no longer follows Muhammad's teachings.

The group became increasingly violent since 2017 and was already calling for Sharia law across Mozambique, while it no longer recognises the government and has created hidden training camps to fight against the military.

Since March 2020, the violence has increased further and the insurgents have taken control of numerous villages, towns and districts, and the conflict has crossed the border into Tanzania.

The port town, from where the first rebel attacks were staged in October 2017, has since last year become the de facto headquarters of a rebel armed group, locally referred to as al-Shabab.

Mocimboa da Praia "was the last stronghold of the insurgents, marking the end of the first phase of counter-insurgency operations which is dislodging insurgents from the stronghold", Rwandan military forces said in a text message.

Through our IRC, we had been in touch with both the trade union movement in Mozambique, particularly OTM and less with CONSILMO, as well as other think tanks and social institutions in that country. As the incumbent Presidency, we have used SATUCC to continue raising the issues facing the sister peoples of eSwatini, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as well as Lesotho too.

Ethiopia

Fighting has now almost stopped after ravaging northern Ethiopia since early November when the government opened a military offensive against the ruling faction in the region of Tigray starting a conflict that has caused thousands of deaths and widespread destruction, displaced over 2 million people, and sent tens of thousands of refugees into neighbouring Sudan.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed ordered the offensive after he accused the regional ruling party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, of attacking a government military base and trying to steal artillery and other weapons.



This is happening at a time when Ethiopia and Egypt are also at odds over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which will be Africa's largest, is contentious because Egypt believes that Ethiopia is cutting it out of a vital water supply, that is the life of Egypt, the Nile River.

There is already cyberwarfare between the two countries with hackers attacking each other's infrastructure. If not properly managed, this can deteriorate into a military conflict.

We have been in touch, with very little contact, with the trade union movements of Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa itself, more with COTU Kenya, A bit with the Ethiopian, Eritrean, Ugandan, Sudanese and Somalian trade unions, as well as the Burundian workers on a number of issues. This we must intensify to solidify and build sustainable working relations on issues of mutual interests. Towards this end, we did welcome the historic Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea as an important step in rebuilding the continent and working class influence and conditions for peace and progress.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that was launched three years ago in February 2018, offers many opportunities for sustainable development and economic growth in the African economies. However, not all countries will benefit to the same extent, and the gain of welfare benefits also implicates relevant costs and commitments.

Most of the benefits of further trade integration (i.e. welfare benefits from lower import prices, production efficiency and increase in outputs, higher value-added jobs and exports, technological specialization, etc.) will materialize in the long term, while most of the associated costs of adjustment and integration (i.e. loss in trade tariff revenue, local SME's vanishing in front of stronger competition, adjusting unemployment, required investment in infrastructure, political and regulatory reforms, etc.) will be incurred in the short term.

A full Free Trade Agreement (FTA) eliminating all tariffs in the ACFTA could generate welfare gains of US\$ 16.1 billion, at the cost of US\$ 4.1 billion in trade revenue losses (representing 9.1% of current tariff revenues). GDP and employment are expected to grow by 0.97% and 1.17% respectively. Intra-African trade growth is estimated at 33% and the continent's trade deficit is expected to drop by 50.9%.

This though is dependent on the continent building its industrial capacity. If this is not addressed, the entire continent will become a huge warehouse of cheap goods from Asia. A significant number of African states, including South Africa are unfortunately willing to let go unchallenged, bitter Washington policy dictates on trade issues relating to AGOA preferential access to US markets for instance.

Strengthening the trade union movement is critical if the workers are to see any benefits from the African Continental Free Trade Area. But the overarching strategy should be to promote industrialisation, job creation, local procurement and targeted development on the continent.



PART TWO: ASSESSMENT OF THE DOMESTIC SITUATION AND FOCUS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE MOMENTUM TOWARDS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS:

2.1 The capitalist crisis manifest – How opportunism found fertile ground and the conditions that sparked looting, unrest and anarchy?

The current situation and recent events in the country have unmasked the extent to which the reality of many poor working class, youth and women face in their daily lives.

This is how it was described by the Foreign Policy Africa Brief of 21st July, 2021, “The looters, who didn’t even bother covering their faces from police or the cameras, were largely young, Black South Africans. This is the group most adversely affected by poverty and unemployment, both of which worsened during the pandemic. In the first quarter of 2020, unemployment had reached 30.1 percent; in the same period of 2021, it had again increased to 32.4 percent. Among South Africans ages 15 to 34, it was 46.2 percent. More than a third of middle-class homes fell into poverty during the pandemic”.

This lays bare the conditions produced by the reproduction of the apartheid spatial legacy and the structural fault-lines of the system we continue to persistently pursue or fail to transform.

However, this reality coincided with a season of bare opportunism and attempts to create deliberate anarchy on a grievance resulting from the judiciary and the rule of law, albeit judicial transformation is very slow and weak.

The majority of the people have a grievance against the crisis of poverty, unemployment and inequality and would use every opportunity to raise their frustrations, worsened by the COVID 19 demands and social configurations in communities.

This grievance and persisting struggle for basic needs is on going, though from time to time, it peaks depending on either pressing situations or moments of organising for one reason or the other.

COSATU has made it clear that we affirm the centrality of the Freedom Charter that “all shall be equal before the law” and that there shall be no first amongst equals. This is the profound expression of our yearn and struggle for true equality and justice in all respects.

As we advance the NDR struggle for transformation, we are simultaneously advancing the struggle for democratic, capable and just institutions of a new developmental state.

This state must be capable of attending to all the pressing matters of the people, from Gender Based Violence to racism and all and every form of abuse. It must deal with looting from the root or source to petty theft in its varying forms. It must be representative of the national demographics and diversity in a way that satisfies that pressing national, gender and class content of the society we are building.

The working class struggle is not about individuals, as it is not removed from the conditions of the people in concrete form. We must build and campaign consistently for a local government that strives to meet the basic needs of all the people.

This will help deal simultaneously with both real needs and frustrations, as well as elements that breed opportunism in the name of the people or even the NDR itself.

2.2 The NDR and the struggle for transformation

COSATU is undertaking this assessment of the obtaining conditions in the country as a whole, at a time when we are headed for Local Government elections in about 7 months time.

This CEC offers that opportune moment for a deeper reflection on the progress or lack of it, the challenges, the



pace and direction of the NDR and the general state of the conditions the working class is living under today. Marxism clearly points out that “The point of departure of human history is therefore living human beings, who seek to satisfy certain primary needs”. This is the essence of what our Manifestos, campaigns and struggles are about and how they are to be measured in relation to impact on those who need them most.

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, we have been consistently engaged with the masses before, during and after elections, as a process of thoroughgoing mass mobilisation anchored in our historical understanding that the people shall govern.

We do not take for granted that some believe “democracy means the struggle is over”, instead, we have chosen to intensify the struggle, because we understand it is a class struggle, whose essence can never be resolved by the liberal tenets of democracy, which are inherently limited by the designs of a capitalist society.

Admittedly, working-class influence has since declined. Since 1994, the Alliance has acknowledged that we were unable to fundamentally transform the apartheid economy in favour of the poor and working masses. In 2012- the ANC itself acknowledged that we needed radical economic transformation. There is consensus on the need for radical second phase. The key question is where the Second Phase of Economic Transformation and how far have we progressed?

The NDR is not just about the liberation of black people and Africans in particular narrowly. It is also about resolution of the three interrelated and mutually reinforcing antagonistic contradictions of national oppression, class exploitation and gender oppression. Notably, most often, the ANC sometimes sees the working class as a sector and not as a motive force. The ANC sometimes reduces the NDR into a national question.

2.2.1 The Radical Second phase of transformation

Trotsky in 1915, argued that, “*revolution is first and foremost a problem of power and not of the political form....but of the social content of power*”.

The 1994 democratic breakthrough came on the back of a fast changing world economy and in which the power relations were also dramatically changing. In that regard, an assessment of the balance of forces at the time indicated that, certain major policy shifts were not possible, in the main, the radical ones.

Towards that end, the ANC-led movement, decided that the first part of the democratic breakthrough should be about the consolidation of power, the development of the political architecture and the roll-out of an infrastructure for the transition to real ascendancy to power by the liberation forces.

In 1996, the year on which the new constitution was adopted, also saw the adoption of an economic policy that marked a disjuncture in the transformation process of the country. This is what COSATU and the SACP called the 1996 Class Project. Central to the 1996 class project was a two-fold strategic programme;

- The restoration of economic growth, inadvertently meaning the reproduction of the neo-colonial accumulation path, following a whole decade of economic crisis and decline, and;
- The promotion of a new capitalist stratum that would, in some way, co-own and co-manage the economy with established capital, presumably, as a condition for the attainment of the national democratic objectives

But that was to represent a fundamental departure with the core historical objectives of the NDR. The Freedom Charter called both for the abolition of racial limitations in economic and other spheres, at the same time, it subordinated this basic right to the restoration of the wealth of the country to the people as a whole. Creating a special stratum of blacks created a scenario by which, “others could accumulate on behalf of the rest of the oppressed”.

The 1996 class project contained within it many contradictions as it also elevated a supposed outcome of a democratisation process into a key strategic objective of the whole NDR itself.



This process went through different stages until the 2009 Global Economic Crisis, which shattered the trend and forced a real change in the game plan. The fall in the global commodity prices of key products, largely from developing countries, including south Africa, led to the contracting of the economy and reduced prospects of increased state intervention in the economy or development infrastructure roll out.

However, its noteworthy to say that government invested in Infrastructure, but big business was nowhere to be found, but, as usual, resorted to its investment strike and demanding ever more conditions for big profitability than contributing to the country's development. Since 2014, when government reduced spending, this led to a series of technical recessions. In this sense, big business does not see itself as a true development force, but as profit-raking and self-interested partner in the process of building the country.

The forces that drove the Polokwane changes in the ANC were not as united as perceived. On the one hand, COSATU, SACP and others within the ANC attempted to advance a systematic critique of the reformist policies of the 1996 class project. On the other hand, there were those whose critique of former President Mbeki was not based on policies than petty personal rivalries and self interest, including that the rule of law was seen as bent for others, but not sufficiently for them. These were characterised as the "new tendency". Theirs was, in the main, about creating conditions for their own personal accumulation using the state than transforming society or the state itself.

The ANC from Mangaung was very incoherent and divided. Corruption became endemic. The 2016 Local government elections showed a downward trend, when it came to election support, as per the provided and elaborated by the analysis herein.

This posed the question whether we destined for real radical economic transformation or radical economic looting spree. This is where most African revolutions have failed or engaged the reverse gear, aside imperialist interventions and sabotage.

2.2.2 The SACP and State Power

Alliance relations are cordial but there is no strategic shift, and the underlying problems still persist. This means that we are still susceptible to political rupture. The Party went to its Congress and resolved to embark on a broader consultation. COSATU needs to determine at its Central Committee whether the party is ready to contest elections, from our own analysis.

There are no easy answers. The conditions will never be perfect and therefore the idea that the party should wait maybe fine, but may equally, be problematic. The party should create these conditions. The SACP needs to understand that it will be competing against the ANC and COSATU, hence the imperative urgency that its Central Committee (CC) needs to talk to the possible blowback effects for it internally.

COSATU must honestly and robustly ascertain what would the meaning of the SACP standing in its own right mean and what should the federation prepare itself for that eventuality and what will be the implications for workers and organised workers in particular.

This also brings us closer to the question what will happen if the SACP does not consider standing for elections or contesting for state power in that sense and the ANC still does not change its current posture regarding stunted transformation.

2.2.3 The NASREC Moment and the aftermath

NASREC has positively influenced the events with State Capture and Corruption under the spotlight. There is radical potential but also the danger of the further marginalisation of the working class. This is where neoliberalism and parasitic, mostly primitive accumulation become the two vicious sides of the right-wing trajectory that threatens the NDR in our current situation.



While very radical positions were taken in NASREC on land, the SARB, overall Macro economic policy, Organisational Renewal and unity, etc, but there has tended to be a disjuncture between the Conference policy and the implementation on the ground. Factions, insufficient political will and lack of capacity in the state and general strategic confusion are some of the most pronounced factors accounting for this disjuncture.

The new era of artificial intelligence and robotics, as expressed by the rapid mechanisation, informalisation and automation in every workplace and part of our society have become entrenched even in government. This has affected the rate of unionisation and therefore, workers power. The trade union movement is not expanding but has become more aggressively competitive and sometimes to its own existential danger.

We need to adapt to these new conditions, but even more important, is the urgency of developing more sophisticated forms of organisation and working class power. The balances of forces are seriously in favour of the monopoly capital and explain the state of our revolutionary forces, the inability to advance radical transformation and change the conditions in favour of workers.

2.2.4 On the incremental progressive policy shift in Economic Policies and the back and forth

The immediate challenge facing COSATU is to ensure that we gain meaningful influence over the ANC government and also navigate the minefield that is the ANC politics post-54th Conference without deepening factionalism and dividing both the federation and the mass movement. There have been concerns from the workers over the last couple of years, on whether the working class has real influence within the ANC.

The deadlock over the public service wage negotiations and the overall offensive against collective bargaining is deeply worrying. The Austerity measures that have been gradually adopted since 2014 and the taxation system that has seen an increase in VAT and the fuel levy confirm this disturbing posture by the ANC government.

Despite all of this political gridlock and reactionary attitude, there has been some gradual movement in the economic policies. Some of this is happening because the ANC is assertive and some of it as a result of the work that the federation is doing at NEDLAC:

- Introduction of the National Minimum Wage.
- Adoption of the Eskom Social Compact
- Introduction of Free Education
- Formulation of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
- Gradual progress in the NHI and Comprehensive Social Security Discussions
- Engagements on the Amendment of Regulation 28 on Pension Funds and Impact Investments
- the exploration and research on the introduction of a State Bank.
- Commitment to the Amendment of Section 25 of the Constitution
- Legislative Progress (PIC, Debt Relief, Labour Amendments, etc)
- Principled convergence on the introduction of the Basic Income grant
- General Consensus on reviewing the mandate of the Reserve Bank.

These positive shifts are still being deeply contested and the working class needs to remember that nothing is promised and that there are powerful interests who also want to impose their agenda and hegemony over this government and the ANC as whole.

2.2.5 Supremacy of the Constitution and the struggle for judicial transformation

COSATU affirms the principle of the supremacy of the country's Constitution. The temptation by some to undermine and trample the Constitution is a slippery slope that should not be tolerated. While we admit that it



is an artificial and an imperfect document, it remains the supreme guiding document that has allowed some to serve in positions of authority. It is intolerable that people who have benefited to the powers that the constitution has preferred to them are now mobilising against it.

We have orderly ways of amending what we think is wrong with the Constitution but the federation should oppose any political opportunism and vandalism, especially within the ranks of the Alliance.

This has plunged many revolutions into chaos and have given birth to dictatorships.

Since the Mangaung Conference, we have seen more and more court interventions in political disputes. By allowing the courts to become an arbiter in many of these political disputes, this has unintentionally created an impression that they are political. Political ineptitude and factionalism has created this dangerous reliance on courts. This is not the fault of the courts and they cannot be blamed for a lack of political discipline by many structures and leaders of the movement.

In a factionalised political environment, where the judiciary is being used to outwit and defeat political opponents, there has been no talk of judicial transformation. While the need for judicial transformation is real, we reject political opportunism by some in the movement.

This undermining of the Constitution will create an environment where we play a game with no rules. The working class will be the biggest losers if this is allowed. We need to make a stand in defence of the Constitution and affirm its supremacy in the governing of this country.

2.3 The Path since the last Local Government elections for the ANC

The Constitution of South Africa places all elections and referendums in the country in all three spheres of government under the control of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), established in terms of the IEC Act, 1996 (Act 51 of 1996).

In that regard, elections are a critical part of the substantive gains we fought for and won in 1994 in defeating apartheid. The importance of this victory is that it gave workers and the poor a voice in the broader political and economic sphere, which allows us to influence the direction of the country's policy.

This is why for us, the issue of elections are about power and advancing the interests of workers and society, by contesting all critical spaces to advance working class interests in all sites of power. The structure of society is such that power is deployed in different spaces and workers have to wage struggles at different levels to transform it from serving the interests of a few towards serving the interests of society as a whole.

The centrality and importance of representation, participation and being in charge of our destiny as workers, both as a class and as individual persons and our communities demands our permanent vigilance and involvement.

The highest-ever voter turnout in local elections since 2000 was recorded in May 2011. The turnout was 57,54% of the estimated over 22,7 million eligible voters in the country. The number of councillors appointed from these elections increased by 12,3% and 8,5% from the 2000 and 2006 elections respectively.

However, there was drastic change during last Local Government elections which were held in 2016, in which the ANC produced a 32 page election manifesto titled, "titled **"Together advancing people's power in every community: Local government is in your hands"**. The ANC made the point in the manifesto that, "the ANC remains best placed, together with the people, to make qualitative change in people's lives".



The ANC Manifesto stated that;

1. The ANC will continue to be led by the Constitution, which also stipulates socioeconomic rights – mostly delivered by local government.
2. Communities will be involved in choosing councillors and they will be made to give regular feedback and sign performance agreements.
3. The ANC government has made progress in improving the lives of people since 2011, and will continue to expand electricity provision, water, sanitation, refuse removal as well as social grants and the expanded public works programme, health care, and basic and higher education.
4. Municipalities will be guided by the National Development Plan to respond to slow economic growth and unemployment, while at the national level the ANC is implementing a nine-point plan involving the ocean economy, agriculture, mining, energy, information and technology, water and sanitation, tourism, and more.
5. Municipalities will strengthen local economic development structures, and incorporate science and technology into this, while the ANC will continue to support the township and village economies by buying goods and services from them. Action against illegal trading will be stepped up.
6. To promote food security, the ANC will give residents information on sustainable agriculture and assist smallholder farmers to access municipal land for food production and agriculture. The party will also work with traditional leaders to make communal land available for development.
7. The ANC will expand broadband access in municipalities as well as free wi-fi areas.
8. The ANC will “discourage” municipalities from outsourcing basic services they should render themselves, or else develop “sound regulatory and monitoring mechanisms” for the outsourced services.
9. The ANC will work to establish “flexible shifts” that will give people better access to municipal services.
10. ANC municipalities will upgrade informal settlements and overhaul ageing infrastructure, while improving transport, roads and bridges. Sports and recreation facilities will also be upgraded.
11. The fight against crime, corruption and fraud will continue, and municipal officials and councillors and their families will be barred from doing business with municipalities. Corrupt municipal officials and councillors will be liable for losses incurred due to their actions. Community safety forums will be strengthened and street committees formed to fight crime, and in rural areas traditional leaders will be involved.
12. The ANC will establish and develop the municipal capacity to manage disaster risks that come from a changing climate.
13. The Back to Basics programme will continue adding engineering, project planning and financial management skills to municipalities.
14. The ANC will build long-term planning capacity as well as monitoring and evaluation in municipalities, including early warning mechanisms for problem areas.
15. The ANC will ensure bulk suppliers get paid and the money owed to municipalities by communities, government departments and businesses is recovered. It will also “address challenges related to billing systems” and step up the system to protect indigent households.

Almost five years down the line, we are here to assess where things are, how did they go and what has been achieved or not achieved, in order to ascertain what should be our next best step forward.

To start from the beginning, we may pose a baseline question on how important are local government elections. A thought-provoking reflection was made by the Harvard Political Review, November 4, 2020, “The stakes of



local elections might not be as widely reflected in the media as they are about the Presidential Election, but local elections have real consequences. Whether it is the guarantee of having healthy drinking water or the benefits of maintained streets and bridges, infrastructure is a concern that should remain on the forefront of voters' minds as they consider the candidates of a city-level election".

According to Political analysts, Professor Tinyiko Maluleke and Dr Sthembele Mbete, "If the previous local elections, during which there was no pandemic are anything to go by, the ANC is more likely to lose further ground, especially in the metros and municipalities it did not do well in previously,". In their analysis published by the Citizens Newspaper on the 6th January, 2021, they further warned that "public trust, poor communication and the looting of funds meant for COVID 19 could haunt the ANC in the coming local government elections". Though they did indicate that "government's initial response in March was properly communicated".

2.2 The centrality of the ANC as the leader of the NDR – From NASREC how far have we come?

The ANC is entrusted by history and the people of this country to lead the process of thorough-going transformation, otherwise known as the NDR.

The NDR is the profound process of struggle and building the new and democratic society, on the basis of a united, democratic, non-racial, non sexist and prosperous society. But the NDR is recognised to be beyond just the normalisation of a liberal democratic society, as it touches on the essence of the class, gender and racial contradictions in which we find ourselves. This means, it is a direct route to socialism.

It is for that reason that, we consistently take an active interest in the state of the ANC and the alliance as a whole. COSATU is placed in the workplace and also in a process of fundamental social change, with different social forces and the alliance, being the core rallying force for all the motive forces for the NDR.

The ANC Organisational/Secretariat Report to the 54th National Conference presented by the then Secretary General, Gwede Mantashe in December 2017 at NASREC, was itself a critical mirror of the state of affairs, particularly in the ANC and herein below are the extracts from the report;

It said, "The legitimacy of our movement as the standard bearer in society, and champion of its freedoms, is in serious threat. Not only is there a growing gap between the movement and the people, there also is an increase in the trust deficit. This trust deficit also arises out of a national and global environment where liberal democracies face a crisis, and a general mistrust for the ruling and business class. Central to the crisis is the adverse effect of global capital accumulation of wealth for a minority elite, against impoverishment of the majority, and the seeming – if not perceived, collaboration of politics or the state".

It went on to say, "The ANC's highest elections results were in 2004, when we achieved 69%. The lowest was in the 2016 Local Government elections where we gained 54%. It is critical to recognise that the movement reached a plateau in the 2004 national general elections; and started on a gradual decline since 2009, followed by 2014 where despite our 60% majority the numbers came down. The Local Government Elections in 2016, saw an accelerated decline, which is our lowest ever poll. This is the lowest we can ever be otherwise the threat of losing power is real. Of greatest concern is that in the successive elections we continued to decline systematically. This conference must factor this reality in all its work. We have an obligation to turn this graph up otherwise going under 50% will soon be reality. Our movement cannot take this for granted.

It then said, "The Elections Team in working on the local government election strategy set some objectives:

- To win majority seats in all municipalities we controlled.
- Increase ANC support where we are in opposition.
- Increase voter turnout in all municipalities, particularly in the ANC base areas.
- Win back the support lost in 2009, 2011 and 2014".



Finally, it said, **“None of the goals were achieved, instead we lost a further 8% of the support”**. This actually sums up how the scenario concluded and the rest is what we are seeking to answer here, why and what happened. The ANC, by its own admission, could not achieve the tasks set out during 2016 local elections. What does this mean for us as an alliance and our preparations for the next elections?

Even though the 2016 elections confirm the trend of declining ANC support at the time, but its poor showing is less a result of its supporters deserting it for an alternative, but rather just not coming out to vote.

Among ANC supporters there is deep disillusionment. This contrasted with the DA's better showing, which was as a result of their greater ability to bring out their supporters to vote and, to some extent, break into new areas. However, our initial analysis of the vote indicates that the DA's growth in so-called African townships is still quite modest.

The main beneficiaries for the falling support of the ANC were the DA and the EFF. The DA increased its vote by nearly 1 million votes, which translated into an increase of its share of the vote from 24 percent to 27 percent overall. In 2011, the DA received 3.18 million votes, and in the 2016 elections, it obtained 4 million votes. For the DA, this represents an almost 25 percent improvement in the number of people that voted for it and contradicts the idea of an electoral ceiling beyond which it cannot grow. It is also clear that the DA won real ground in several townships, which are historically and still dominantly, blacks.

The EFF received just over 1,2 million votes, which gave it over 8 percent of the vote and consolidated it as the third-largest party in the country. The outcome of the election placed the EFF in an even stronger position than its electoral showing, as it is positioned as potential kingmaker in several hung municipalities, not least the Nelson Mandela Bay, Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Tshwane metro areas.

The EFF only increased its vote since the 2014 national election by just over 100,000 votes, which is not as significant as one would have imagined given the time the EFF has had in building structures and its profile since the 2014 elections.

A breakdown of how the rest of the political parties performed. There were some smaller parties with socialist inclinations, such as the Bolshevik Party of South Africa, the African People's Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of Azania, etc. and the various affiliates of the NUMSA-supported United Front obtained less than 20,000 votes. Including the Azanian People's Organization, the Pan-African Congress and their various offshoots, the combined tally was estimated at around 80,000 votes or even less.

The left outside of the Alliance and outside of the EFF went into the elections disorganized and with splintered messages. The United Front had decided not to stand in the elections. Nevertheless, several affiliates registered either in the name of the “United Front” or under their own banner. In general, these organizations did very poorly and were not able to gain traction with the voters.

Outside of a few specific cases, local associations and independents did poorly, as the electorate responded more to national issues than to specific local concerns.

Nevertheless, there are some important exceptions. The Sterkspruit Civic Association obtained 23 percent of the vote and was second to the ANC in the Senqu municipality and has 8 seats out of a total of 34 seats. In Plettenberg Bay, the “United Front” is the kingmaker in the Bitou Municipality, even though it has just one seat—because the DA and ANC each obtained 6 seats. The “United Front” of the Eastern Cape obtained 7,248 ward votes and gained 1 seat in the Nelson Mandela Bay metro area.

2.3 Local Government is the pulse of the people and society as a whole

Local government is one of the three spheres of government established by our Constitution – the other two are national and provincial government. These three spheres are distinctive, but interdependent and interrelated. Local government is regulated by Chapter 7 of the Constitution and although it has the powers to make and enforce its own laws, local government is still supervised by national and provincial government.



Local government consists of municipalities, each of which is an organ of state with executive authority to administer its own affairs. Municipalities also have the authority to make their own legislation – such a piece of legislation is known as a by-law.

A municipality is more than simply a geographic area or the people who live in and work for the municipality. It consists of a municipal council made up of elected councillors, the administrative component of officials appointed and employed by the council, and the community of people and businesses based in the municipality.

Before 1994, South Africa had over 2 000 municipalities but today, with a population of approximately 56-million people, South Africa has about 278 municipalities with an average of 201 000 people per municipality.

Municipalities are divided into three categories: metropolitan, local and district municipalities. There are eight metropolitan municipalities, 226 local municipalities and 44 district municipalities in South Africa. Section 155 of the Constitution gives metropolitan municipalities exclusive authority over their jurisdictions, while local and district municipalities share authorities over their jurisdiction.

According to the Research Department of Statista, as per its 2016 survey, the top 10 largest municipalities by population are the following;

1. Johannesburg
2. The City of Cape Town
3. eThekweni
4. Ekurhuleni
5. Tshwane
6. Ehlanzeni
7. Bojanala
8. O.R.Tambo
9. Nkangala
10. Vhembe

Towards that end, the next Local Government elections, as did all previous ones, shall be fought and won, in the main, at these cities as jobs, economies, migration patterns, conditions of life dictate that, they have a sizeable activity of livelihood and other offers.

This is not to take for granted the many cities and towns that will be fierce sites of struggle for control by the political parties, but this was to give a glimpse of what the bulk of residents shall be likely about. In other words, what are the stakes?

This is an extract from the SAMWU National Congress Secretariat Report. December 2020

Municipal Audit outcomes

The regression in Municipal Audit outcome as presented by the Auditor General Kimi Makwetu for the last 3 financial years paints a picture of municipalities with a bleak future. The Auditor General noted that the 2018/18 were the worst outcomes in 15 years and that Local Government is at a state of extreme distress. Irregular expenditure has increased to R21.2 billion in the 2019 report and R32.6 billion in 2020.

Of great concern to us is that the country's municipalities have incurred over R1.3 billion in fruitless and wasteful expenditure in the 2019 report, an amount that ballooned to R3.6 in 2020. This is money which has essentially been lost, stolen or fraudulently used by municipalities.

This the much needed money that could have been used by municipalities to ensure that they fulfil their constitutional mandate of delivering basic services to South Africans while improving the quality of their lives.

The 2019 audit outcomes report indicated that only 21 of the country's 257 municipalities managed to get a clean audit. Whilst, 92% of the country's municipalities failed to achieve a clean audit, this is a clear indication of the challenges that are faced by municipalities.

In the 2020 report, there was another decline in the audit outcomes wherein only 20 or 8% of the country's municipalities received a clean audit. The use of consultants in preparing financial statements increased from R901 million in 2019 to R1.6 billion the following year.

Despite the fact that municipalities have Chief Financial Officers on their payrolls, they struggle to ensure that financial statements are presented to the AG for auditing purposes. This reality makes one question the need for municipalities to retain these individuals on their payroll, if they are qualified or have been capacitated to fully execute their duties.

The distress in municipalities has further been compounded by the failure to comply with recommendations made by the Auditor General. A change of trajectory is the fact that the AG is now empowered to issue binding remedial action while failure to adhere to this will result in a certificate of debt being issued to the accounting officer and members of the accounting team. This is a step in the right direction in fixing the rot in municipalities.

Municipalities in the Free State and North West Provinces require special attention, as per the AG, non-existent. This coupled with pronouncements by former COGTA Minister, Zweli Mkhize that only 7% of the country's municipalities are well functioning is a call for concern.

Despite the continued decline in municipal audit outcomes, COGTA and SALGA have been in the forefront of welcoming and congratulating municipalities on the audit outcomes, this essentially is praising a fish for swimming. Municipalities are constitutionally required to produce clean audits, anything other than a clean audit should be accompanied by consequences.

A quick overview of the perceptions, views, concerns, interests and voting patterns in these cities, shall go a long way in helping us determine possible projections.

IDASA in its submissions to the Parliamentary Public hearings on COGTA, stated that, "Local government is the least trusted of all public institutions in the country and that has been the case since the first elections in 2000¹. This is evidenced by the study undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council's Social Attitude Survey for 2003 which shows that only 43% of South Africans actually trust local government. This shows that while the post-apartheid system of local government has been established with genuine intentions to positively affect democracy and to bring about social and economic delivery to the people, the system has not live up to expectations".



The general feeling in the hotspots is that political leadership lack responsiveness to issues raised by communities, incompetent, prone to corruption and with high degree of disregard for the communities.

In a separate, but comparative case elsewhere to model our own situation, the International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 5 of September 2014 on Corruption and Service Delivery in Local Government System in Nigeria, indicated in its findings that, "regrettably, the realization of these objectives has been constrained by extreme corruption in Local Government. Corruption remains a major problem which has constrained local government especially in Nigeria from contributing meaningfully to the upliftment of the standard of living of the local people. This problem is manifest in almost every local government area in Nigeria. It is rife in the area of revenue declaration by collectors, to award of contracts, and embezzlement of local government funds by Chairmen, Councillors and other officials of local governments".

It went on to say, "Desta (2006) also view corruption as "outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other misappropriation of state property, nepotism and the granting of favour to personal acquaintances and the abuse of the public authority to exact payments and privileges".

This is a general, if not even more fitting also in local context regarding municipalities and local government elections.

Further, in a Paper on Local Government: Beacon of Hope for Service Delivery, delivered at the International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA) in November 2017, it was found that, "Since 1994, election manifestos and campaigns of political parties participating in the elections have shared a sequence of repeated themes such as addressing underperforming municipalities to defeat poor service delivery; improving service delivery; developing infrastructure and creating employment (Managa, 2012).

The themes are eye-catching and they directly address the most pressing issues that societies face on a daily basis. Hence, communities could be lured to vote for parties that could not fulfil their promises in the end. Once these promises are not delivered, communities could resort to protest".

The paper went on to say that, "The purpose of elections is to ensure that people's views are represented. By voting, people will be giving power to make important decisions on their behalf to certain individuals. A survey by Nkomo and Felton (2016) on local elections and people's perceptions found that: Less than half of South Africans believe that elections ensure that their views are represented (44%) or enable them to remove non-performing leaders from office (36%). Both measures have decreased from previous surveys".

It finally said, "Two-thirds say that elections guarantee they have genuine choices (68%) and that votes are "often" or "always" counted fairly (66%). Six of 10 South Africans (61%) disapprove of the way their local government councillors did their jobs over the previous 12 months. Support for the idea that it is voters' responsibility to make sure that councillors do their job is still a minority view (28%) but has doubled since 2008 (Nkomo & Felton, 2016).

Further, the paper said that, "Voting Trends Since the year 2000 in local government elections has never been stable. In the year 2000 the ANC received 59.4% of votes followed by the DA with 22.1%. However, in the local government elections that followed that is 2006 the ANC received 66.3% and the DA 14.8%. Apparently, the ANC gained and the DA dropped. A better explanation to this would be the quality services offered by ANC led municipalities would have led most of the people to vote for the party. This assumption is best supported by the 2016 Local government elections results in which the ANC lost the previously stronghold Metros to the DA.

The authors of the paper assert that in South Africa, service delivery has become a serious challenge. There are a plethora of causes which include dissatisfaction with the delivery of basic municipal services such as running water, electricity and toilets, especially in informal settlements and rampant corruption and nepotism within local government structures.



The authors concluded by saying that, such aspects are key to the weakening of the ANC in the 2016 local government elections.

According to a 2018 report of the Minister of COGTA, about 24 municipalities have been placed under administration, with 13 of these being placed under administration earlier.

This is according to the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), which provided an update of municipalities placed under administration

The problems found at the municipalities included negative audit outcomes as a result of quality and failure to implement post-audit action plan; lack of internal controls in place to prevent; detect and report unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure; and poor revenue collection which impacts on the ability to pay creditors (such as water boards and Eskom) on time amongst others.

According to business executive responsible for North West from the Auditor-General office, Success Maroto said irregular expenditure in North West municipalities has increased from R3.19 billion to R4.29 billion in the 2016-17 financial year.

Three municipalities that contributed to 55 percent - Rustenburg local municipality with R983.5 million, Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality with R827.8 million and Madibeng local municipality with R561.9 million.

The number of municipalities with financially unqualified opinion decreased from four to two, and a number with disclaimed opinions increased from six to eight.

In response to the request by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to conduct a survey prior to the final registration date for the 2006 local government elections, the Socio-Economic Surveys' division of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) conducted a nationally representative survey in October, 2005. The intention was to determine the state of political culture with respect to voting behaviour in South Africa. Such an assessment would, inter alia, allow for the identification of interventions that would foster an ethos of political participation. The survey would also determine the extent to which the IEC's primary objective is being achieved, namely, to strengthen constitutional democracy through the delivery of free and fair elections in which every voter is able to record his or her informed choice.

The most key of the findings was that , "A comparison of overall results of the last five democratic elections clearly reveals that the ANC has enjoyed overwhelming support from the electorate and that if this trend continues the party will dominate other political parties for years to come. This does not pose a major problem for democracy since many established democracies such as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and India have all endured extended periods of one-party dominance in executive and/or legislative elections¹ . It is however of concern when dominant governing parties see less and less need to respond to public opinion because they are assured of re-election in the face of weak opposition. Moreover, there is always the danger that governing parties with huge majorities in legislatures might become arrogant and less accountable to the electorate, especially in countries with a proportional representation system such as South Africa. Voter turnout is extremely high for the national and provincial elections but much lower for the municipal elections. Voter turnout in the last two municipal elections was 48% and 49% for 2000 and 1995/6 respectively. The voter turnout for the national and provincial elections was 76% (2004), 88% (1999) and 86% (1994). These results are consistent with many other democratic countries where the electorate seems to favour national and provincial elections over municipal or local elections".

Amongst the most interesting findings was that, "A higher proportion of males than females were interested in both national and municipal elections. These results are corroborated by the higher proportion of males than females who participated in both the national and municipal elections".

When questions relating to women in politics were posed to respondents a clear gender bias was found. Female respondents campaigned much more for women than did their male counterparts for the reason that most (63.0%) of women felt that their needs would be better addressed if there were more women in politics.



We now turn to examine South Africans evaluations of whether their personal life as well as that of fellow South Africans has improved over the last five years. We first asked respondents to assess the economic situation of most South Africans. The results showed that 56% felt that the lives of most South Africans has improved over the last 5 years, 25% indicated that it stayed about the same while 17% said it got worse. In this survey, in provinces that used to make up the old Cape Province (Western Cape, 40%; Northern Cape, 50%; the Eastern Cape, 49%), sentiment was least favourable in comparison with that expressed about the lives of people in Limpopo (70%); Mpumalanga (65%) and North West (64%) over the last five years.

Whereas more than seven out of ten (72%) people living in urban informal settlements thought that the economic situation of most South Africans had improved over the last five years, this view was less prevalent in tribal (65%), rural (56%) and urban formal (49%) contexts, where the opposite perception was proportionately higher. Younger people were more likely than their older counterparts to hold the view that the lives of South Africans have improved over the last five years.

2.4 The Cost of Corruption to Service Delivery, Jobs and Local development

Corruption has emerged as amongst the biggest threat to our hard-won democracy since the 1994 breakthrough. It is like cancer eating at the moral fibre of our society and eroding the moral standing of our revolution and the cause for which our people laid down their lives.

According to government figures in 2017, "Corruption costs the SA Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at least R27 billion annually, as well as the loss of 76 000 jobs that would otherwise have been created". This figure is now estimated at R30 billion by various researchers.

Illicit Financial Outflows: According to the State Security Agency, nearly R80 billion passes through the country's points of entry illegally every year, putting South Africa as one of the countries on the continent with high illicit financial movements. The South African economy has been affected negatively by decades of transfer pricing and other forms of illegal capital flight by multinational companies.

Collusion and Cartel Behaviour: A World Bank study on competition in SA noted, for instance, that in the case of four cartels in maize, wheat, poultry and pharmaceuticals - products which make up 15.6% of the consumption basket of the poorest 10% - conservative estimates indicate that around 200,000 people stood to be lifted above the poverty line by tackling cartel overcharges.

Currently, we are in the midst of a massive corruption storm in South Africa, triggered by the COVID 19 demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and the general social service and relief necessities of the people and the country during this period.

However, this does not mean corruption started with the COVID 19 procurement problems. It could only be a culmination of years of systemic corruption, abuse and deliberate weakening of public resource controls and the prioritisation of private interests over public goods and services in that regard.

The history and scale of corruption in South Africa is not without context. It is true that apartheid capitalism was a system based on chronic parasitism, legalised plunder and looting, the crude exploitation of black and women workers as cheap labour and the resultant massive destitution and suffering of the overwhelming majority of our people.

The recent developments have only served to prove that the deeply entrenched infrastructure of corruption and abuse of power was never defeated and destroyed after 1994. It only got renewed and inherited by some from our own ranks, who saw the ascendance of the ANC to state power as an ideal opportunity for "their time to eat".



Corruption is driven by very sophisticated operations and networks of patronage and abuse of power by both public and private sector officials. It is also true that, at times, it is a direct product of weak or non-existent controls and systems, inappropriate laws or regulations and even more, the problem of poor enforcement.

It is, in the main, a product of the unholy intersection between public officials and private sector interests or individuals with vested interests in making personal or private gains from influencing how certain transactions, goods and services are to be delivered and for whose benefit.

Both private and public sector officials and executives have been cited in massive corruption scandals that often evade the headlines or gets put under the carpet. These are worth billions, if not trillions in rand denominated value terms. They milk millions of jobs, tax, national and community development worth and livelihoods lost to greed, abuse of resources and under-declaration or no declaration of conflict of interests assets.

In July 2016, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report stated: "Between 2000 and 2014, under-invoicing of gold exports from South Africa amounted to \$78.2 billion, or 67% of total gold exports" and that this "does not appear to be a simple matter of undervaluation of the quantities of gold exported, but rather a case of pure smuggling of gold out of the country." The report asserted, among other things, that South African miners of silver, platinum group metals, gold and iron ore had systematically and fraudulently indulged in mis-invoicing in order to evade taxes and other legal obligations.

Amongst the reported scandals are those involving the following companies; Steinhoff, KPMG, Tongaat Hulett (the biggest Sugar Producing company in RSA), the US Consultancy McKinsey & Company, as well as the Gupta family which owned over 12 companies in South Africa - across various sectors, including Oakbay Investments, Sahara Computers and mining group Tegeta Exploration and Resources.

The South African Government adopted the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act (PRECCA), 2004 (Act No. 12 of 2004) to combat corruption. Further, South Africa ratified the UNCAC in November 2004 and became a State Party to the Convention. But this has not yet had much effect on the scourge of corruption and the state machinery does not seem capable of reining in corruption activities effectively.

According to Corruption Watch (CW), "In 2019, the organisation received an average of 10 reports a day, demonstrating the public's commitment to continue to expose those corrupt individuals who have sought to further their own private interests at the expense of ordinary people.

It went on to say, "These allegations of corruption have primarily featured bribery (17%), procurement corruption (16%) and mismanagement of funds (15%), all of which have impacted the delivery of services and denied people of their basic socio-economic rights".

The data from the CW findings indicate that 29% of corruption reports involve national government, a 2% increase from 2018, while local government counts for 26%, and provincial government 20%. A fifth of the reports, 19%, point a finger at the private sector. As in previous years, most reports were received from Gauteng (47%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal at 10%, and Limpopo at 9%, the latter featuring in the top three provinces for the second year in a row. It is not surprising that Gauteng remains in the lead as the highest populated province, the most economically active and where the seat of national government is located.

But, there are improvements in various areas, in areas such as households with access to water rising from 62% in 2002 to 74.8 % in 2018, access o electricity rose from 76% in 2002 to 84 % in 2018, sanitation from 61% in 2002 to 83% in 2018 and removal from 56% in 2002 to 64% in 2018 according to SALGA report, amongst others.



2.5 Towards Local Government Elections – Our options and mobilisation of workers class interests during this period

This assessment is meant to enhance the discussion envisaged by the 13th National Congress in asserting that our support for the ANC in National and Local Government elections shall be a product of continuous assessment of the performance and posture of the ANC and in the context of the alliance Reconfiguration momentum.

The Text of the COSATU resolution was that;

- a) “There is urgent need for the Reconfiguration of the Alliance to ensure its effectiveness and effective defence against the pushback of the enemy forces of the revolution.
- b) The Reconfiguration of the Alliance should include the fact that the Alliance has to be the political centre of power, where all Alliance partners are treated as equals.
- c) COSATU and the SACP should engage the ANC on establishing a minimum quota in its leadership structures for SACP and COSATU cadres at all levels, as a minimum requirement
- d) If the radical reconfiguration of the alliance fails, COSATU, shall beyond the 2019 elections work to deepen its work to strengthen the SACP as a political insurance of the working class and mobilise for its decisive electoral victory”

Towards this end, two scenarios require pondering about during the current situation and what are the options for COSATU;

1. The Alliance has not yet Reconfigured, in the manner envisaged by the resolution, despite that the document on the reconfiguration of the alliance has been finalised and adopted by the Alliance Political Council (APC)
2. The SACP has not yet formalised the position of contesting state power, in its own right and as an independent political party.

This leaves COSATU with the gap to ascertain what the spirit and letter of the resolution envisaged in such circumstances and what is in the best interest of workers and their aspirations.

Having done an assessment of the obtaining conditions and the balance of power in the current conjuncture, COSATU would then proceed to ascertain what is the best wayforward for the strengthening of workers voice in the broad political and local governance structures.

There are 3 possible scenarios in the circumstances as regards the on-coming Local government elections;

- Mobilising and Voting for the ANC and participating in the Manifesto processes to affirm a clear working class perspective as the running thread in the ANC and alliance **(been a precedent since 1994)**
- Persuading the SACP, which is less likely with the little time left, to consider standing and contesting as a party in its own right and COSATU mobilise for its electoral victory **(unprecedented as yet)**
- Deciding to allow individual members to vote on their own personal choices and consciences, without a COSATU political choice to assert a collective voice **(unprecedented as yet)**

The choices COSATU opt to make shall be ground-breaking or shall have been preceded by prior cases. Whichever way, it shall have short term and long term repercussions for workers and the country’s political and economic landscape. This is why it is important that it is well thought through and carefully explained to workers and society, as well as foresighted in what the long term implications shall be.



There are a few questions that the COSATU CEC must directly confront;

- In what way do our voting patterns or choices take workers interests forward?
- What are the actual and perceived feelings of our members at this critical moment?
- How do we ascertain if what we are doing is the best option in the current conjuncture and how does it take the NDR forward?
- Have we sufficiently satisfied ourselves that the performance indicators and balance sheet of evidence before us, is fully reflective of the overall picture necessary to help us make such a bold decision?

But what remains uncontested and certain is the act that working class mobilisation remains central and primary to whatever decision we make and beyond elections. It is the active and consistent mobilisation of workers that is the defining feature of our struggle.

With or without elections, workers as a class and in alliance with the rest of progressive society, must always take up and lead on issues affecting them and society, particularly the deepening crisis of Poverty, Inequalities and Unemployment. Linked to these triple crisis are the COVID 19 pandemic, Gender Based Violence and Corruption, Job losses and the sustained attacks on Collective Bargaining and workers rights. These are well articulated by COCC and our programme of action.

They are well captured by the 12 Priorities of the 2021 Workplan as a focussed directive on what should be done to build a new momentum and Popular Front against Neo-liberalism (Poverty, Unemployment and Inequalities) as manifested by the all-round crisis we face.



PART TWO: ORGANISATIONAL SECTION

Introduction

This section of the report covers our constitutional obligations including constitutional meetings, building organisation based on the four pillars as per the 13th National Congress deliberations and resolutions which was held in Gallagher Estate, Midrand on 17 -20 September 2018.

2.1 Constitutional Meetings

The federations have managed to hold all constitutional meetings, both at the national and provincial levels namely, the Central Executive Committee (CEC) and Provincial Executive Committees (PECs) including our last Central Committee meeting. The Provincial Congresses were held in 2019:

i. Gauteng

Provincial Congress

The following comrades were elected during the last Provincial Congress ;

1. Chairperson: Amos Vusi Monyela – NEHAWU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Thabang Sonyathi – DENOSA
3. Treasurer: Nomsa Mashaba
4. Provincial Secretary: Dumisani Dakile

Due to political deployment of then then Provincial Secretary, Dumisani Dakile to the Gauteng Provincial Legislature and the Provincial Treasurer Nomusa Mashaba was employed by SACTWU. By-elections were then held where Boitumelo Tlholo from NUM was elected as acting Provincial Treasurer and Louisah Modikwe was elected as acting Provincial Secretary.

The state of the locals is a mixed one with 10 functioning well, 7 with less office bearers and not function so well while 7 have totally collapsed. While other substructures are continuously meeting for example gender, young workers.

ii. Eastern Cape

Provincial Congress

The last Provincial Congress elected the following comrades;

1. Chairperson: Tabile Kunene – SADTU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Nomonde Mtembu - NUM
3. Treasurer: Sithembele Mhlana - SACCAWU
4. Secretary: Xolani Malamlela

After 2019 Elections the Provincial Secretary, Comrade Xolani Malamlela was deployed to Provincial Legislature as an MPL and subsequently resigned. Cde Nomonde Mtembu also resigned as she was no longer employed. By – elections were conducted and comrade Comrade Mkhawuleli Maleki was elected as an Acting Provincial Secretary and comrade Zodwa Gqirana from DENOSA was elected as an Acting Provincial Deputy Chairperson.



State of the locals

The state of Locals has been a concerning factor in the recent past. The number of active Locals has decreased, in most cases due to relocation of leaders stemming from either transfer or change in employment. There are incidents characterised by lack of commitment from elected leaders. The Provincial Office has consistently been providing support to Locals where a need is identified.

iii. Free State

Provincial Congress

The following comrades were elected in the last Provincial Congress;

1. Chairperson
2. Deputy Chairperson
3. Treasurer
4. Provincial Secretary

State of locals

There are 12 well-functioning locals while 13 have collapsed and 4 which are very weak.

iv. Limpopo

The last Provincial Congress elected the following comrades;

1. Chairperson: Essop Mokgonyana – NUM
2. Deputy Chairperson: Calvin Tshamano - NEHAWU
3. Treasurer: Phuthi Mahlaba – SATAWU
4. Provincial Secretary – Mkhomazi Twala

State of locals

The Province has 26 locals of which 24 are active

v. Northern Cape

Provincial Congress

The following comrades were elected at the last Provincial Congress;

1. Chairperson: Zamani Mathuso – POPCRU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Jacques Cupido – NEHAWU
3. Treasurer: Platinah Moletsane – SASBO
4. Provincial Secretary: Orapeleng Moraladi – NUM



State of Locals

vi. KwaZulu Natal

Provincial Congress

1. Chairperson: Sikhumbuzo Mdlalose – NEHAWU
2. Phumlani Duma – SADTU
3. Treasurer: Zodwa Mzindle- SACCAWU
4. Edwin Mkhize

vii. Western Cape

Provincial Congress

1. Chairperson: Motlatsi Tsubane – NEHAWU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Andile Ngqaneka - SACCAWU
3. Treasurer: Ingrid Leukes – SADTU
4. Malvern de Bruyn

Locals

We currently have 14 Locals in the Western Cape. Of the fourteen (14) Locals, one (1) Local is not active and another one is partially active. The rest remain relatively active.

viii. North West

Provincial Congress

1. Chairperson: Solly Lekhu – POPCRU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Mxolisi Bomvana – SADTU
3. Treasurer: Sankie Molefe – NUM
4. Job Dliso

Comrade Job Dliso was subsequently deployed to the Provincial legislature and by-election where conducted and Comrade Kopano Konopi was elected as Acting Provincial Secretary. Comrade Mxolisi has also resigned as the Deputy Provincial Chairperson.

Locals

There 23 locals of whom 23 are strong, while 5 are moderately working and 6 are very weak.



ix. Mpumalanga

Provincial Congress

1. Chairperson: Life Monini – POPCRU
2. Deputy Chairperson: Solomon Malatjie – NEHAWU
3. Treasurer - Happiness Mnisi – SACCAWU
4. Thabo Mokoena

Locals:

The province has 30 potential locals and out of the 30 locals 22 are active, 6 are dysfunctional and inactive and 2 have long collapsed.

2.2 COSATU Constitution

At the last National Congress some constitutional amendments were made and has helped the Federation a lot, particularly the powers given to the CEC to intervene in union internal matters, where such is required. The NOBs have noticed some gaps in the constitution and would urge unions to relook at the COSATU constitution, for example, there is no Notice period for the Central Committee. The urgent matter though, is the lack of a provision in the COSATU Constitution around the inability to convene or postpone a Provincial Congress as an example during extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances. Our Provincial Congresses were due around May to August but due to COVID 19 that obligation could not be honoured, and the constitution is silent on how long such Congress could be delayed and with what specifications or conditionalities would be required. The Central Committee should give direction regarding such conditions and the required measures .

2.3 Scope and Poaching a threat to the unity of workers

The Federation has adopted a posture that all those workers outside COSATU should be considered as unorganised and that COSATU is the home of all workers. In trying to bring all workers into the Federation, this reality has brought along challenges of bringing many unions who are in the main, small but organising in sectors where already there is an existing union covering such scope. The belief has been that over time, the new union would be integrated to the existing one, but our experience tells us otherwise. This has led to a open poaching among COSATU unions. This matter is unsustainable. Linked to this, is the old COSATU problem of overlapping scope. This problem is as old as the Federation itself. It is true that in some sectors we were able to address it, but in others we were not moving along the thought of cartels and super unions. Again, this has not delivered any results. Attempts on SADNU and DENOSA; NEHAWU and SAMWU; PAWUSA and SASAWU were promising but collapsed. Almost every union is complaining about another affiliate poaching members, but the CEC is not paying required attention to this matter. The changing nature of production and value chain adds to the challenges as the traditional sector demarcations are changing. COSATU is conducting a research through the University of Cape Town and had hope to get it concluded by the end of the year. However, the poaching is unabated and threatening the unity of the Federation. This is a matter of our constitutional work. This Central Committee should pay attention to this and maybe develop a detailed guide to what should be done to deal with this problem from the root in the federation.

2.4 Young Workers

The Congress resolution on the Young Workers Forum is not taken on board by all unions and there is no explanation regarding the reasons. This is worrisome because it allows unions to choose which resolutions to



implement or not. It also affects the working of this structure at both provincial and national level. At times where we are required to send young workers to serve on international bodies, including international training which becomes difficult without this structure. This Central Committee should remind us all about our commitment to implement our resolutions consistently.

The Pillars of COSATU Organisation Building Programme

This report also covers programme implemented as guided by the COSATU 2020 Integrated Annual Work-plan developed in the 2019 SIC Bosberaad, with input by NOBs and endorsed by the November CEC held in 2019.

The Four Pillars of 2018 Congress mandated the federation to call on the working class to stand up and fight for what is theirs were as follows;

Pillar one:

Organisation Building and development which also includes building unity within the Federation, within unions and with other federations.

Pillar two:

Back to basics campaign- building the fighting capacity of COSATU through campaigns and workplace struggles - Heightening the Struggle against Neo-liberalism.

Pillar three:

Heightening the Struggle against Neo-liberalism.

Pillar four:

Shaping the Battle of Ideas and Asserting the Hegemony of the Revolutionary Working-Class ideas making use of; Education, Organising and Media work.

This report also covers programmes implemented as guided by the COSATU 2020 Integrated Annual Work-plan developed in the 2019 SIC Bosberaad, with input by NOBs and endorsed by the November CEC held in 2019.

It reflects on how far we have gone with implementing resolutions taken at the Collective Bargaining, Organising and Campaigns Conference as well as programmes arising from decisions taken from time to time by the CEC meetings.

The Organising Department narrative report is a mid-term report on programmes and activities implemented by Organising, Campaigns and Gender department.

Structural meetings held as part of building the Federation:

2.2 Organisation Commission

The 13th National Congress took several resolutions which are directly speaking to the project of building the federation. There is a need to set up a task team that will systematically look at how these resolutions can be taken forward. In this regard we propose the process of setting up commissions should include the work of identifying comrades who can be ceased with the responsibility of mapping out a coherent programme for building the federation.

The Organisation Commission met on 30 July 2020 and developed a programme with an action plan for priority programmes that were to be implemented during the second half of 2020 leading to 2021. The programme included work under COVID-19 and noted the Coronavirus pandemic global attack that is unprecedented in recent history, which has ultimately changed the landscape of organisational operations including forced alteration of Union's normal operational methods.



Noted that since the experience of COVID-19 Pandemic in our Country the working conditions of our members have changed from bad to worse. The cases range from dismissals and retrenchments before the Lock down date, Companies not registered as essential services forcing workers to go and work, employers mostly, are not providing masks, sanitisers and not ensuring the observance of Social Distance. Further, Employers are refusing to apply for the COVID-19 TERS and general queries for their own failure to comply with certain legal requirements. Others are receiving TERS monies while workers such as in the security industry worked during lockdown. Workers have reported several employers defrauding the UIF fund.

COVID-19 has really exposed the inequalities faced by our members and the communities at large; from schooling system, public transport system, health, and social development our communities are suffering from the unjust and huge inequities of the system.

These inequalities and inequities are also glaring in our workplaces as are issues of poor public transport. Employers who are subjecting workers to work in hazardous and unsafe conditions. Workers are now more in need of protection than ever before. It is now clear that the system that was supposed to protect workers in the form of the Occupational Health and Safety Act has dismally failed to protect most of the workers.

- The federation should have zero tolerance towards companies and institutions failing to follow all set health and safety protocols.
- The federation should focus more on the protection of workers during this period and the following must be considered by the federation.
- Organising Department adjusted its programme, mainly to virtual meetings resulting from the pandemic situation and crises. With WhatsApp groups set up to keep communication between affiliates, organisers, and workers. Workers phoning in with complaints should be recruited into unions.
- Proposal to start online webinars in the place of workshops. Whilst this has affected consultations due to poor networks and lack of data provision. Nevertheless, it has shown that it is possible to conduct more organisational work through online platforms, which cuts down on travel and accommodation. However, it is important to recognise that we must be sensitive to childcare needs, nevertheless, keeping meetings short and at reasonable hours.
- COSATU should campaign for free data and negotiate data packages with service providers.
- COSATU should conduct research and assess the various forms of worker action in the last period. Even though Covid-19 limits the possibilities for collective action workers have found creative ways to protest and act especially on protection.
- COSATU should implement Apps in all Provinces to keep the Locals functioning.
- There are many lessons to be learnt from these experiences.

The other campaigns programmes deliberated on included Recruitment and Retention of members, Retrenchments and S189 notices, Fight against Corruption together with work under COVID 19 as the new norm.

COCC meetings

The COCC meetings continue to be held virtually as per the year planner and from time-to-time Special COCCs are held on instruction by the CEC. The activities for the first quarter in 2020 were realigned by the COCC meeting and were to be used as a build up to the 2020 May Day celebrations. Later in the year priorities were aligned accordingly and most coordination was done, in the main, virtually. A Summary of proposed work-plans by COCC guide the Organising and Campaigns activities implemented during the year and continue to be submitted to Secretariat, NOBs, and CEC after continuous assessment and improvements identified..



War Rooms at national and provincial levels as operated by officials deployed by unions were put in place to coordinate the campaigns under the guidance of the COCC meetings and CEC. The War Rooms have continued to coordinate the build-up programmes and mobilise for campaigns such as Recruitment, National Strike Actions, Election campaigns and May Day celebrations.

This year the War rooms are coordinating build up programmes for 2021 May Day celebrations and these Comrades will continue to meet for coordination of the COSATU Local Government Election (LGE) campaign programme. Build up programmes are running campaigns on the identified priority campaigns endorsed by the CEC which include.

- Job losses – Fight Retrenchments and job losses to end the Unemployment Crisis
- Corruption – Which leads to more job losses, more Poverty, and more Unemployment
- Collective Bargaining – Fighting the Attacks on Collective Bargaining and Workers Rights
- Gender Based Violence – Stop GBV, Femicide, Sexual Harassment in the Workplace & End the Wage Gap between men and women NOW
- Health and Safety – To work in conditions of health, safety and hygiene is a right for all workers
- Recruitment – New strategies to recruit the New & Young Workers

2.3 National Gender Coordinating Committee (NGCC) and National Gender Committee (NGC)

Likewise, the NGCC and NGC meetings continued to be held as per the year planner and, presently the meetings are held virtually to take forward programmes and activities for implementing Congress Resolutions. Below we account for policy work, programmes coordinated, and activities implemented by the NGC.

The COSATU Gender structure is active in all provinces coordinated by provincial gender structure though the structures are yet to be officially launched in terms of the constitution. As this Central Committee would remember the previous National Congress amended its constitution and included Gender as part of the constitutional structure of the Federation. This means that in all our constitutional meetings there would representatives of our Gender structure. This decision by the Federation has been hailed by many in the international trade union movement.

According to the national congress resolution in 2021 the federation would convene the inaugural provincial gender conferences where among others provincial leadership would be elected. This would pave a way for the inaugural national gender conference. The Covid-19 pandemic regulations on gathering pose challenges of convening these conferences but we hope that conditions would change for better to enable us to realise this constitutional obligation.

At the national level this structure is coordinated by the National Gender Coordinating Committee (NGCC) and meets regularly. During this period under review COSATU gender structure has undertaken a number of campaigns and research on various important activities among others:

- Campaign and support victims of gender based violence
- Dialogue with LGBTQ+ workers
- Gender and Collective bargaining
- COSATU Male Gender Champions
- Remembering and Celebration Fallen Women worker leaders
- Advancing the struggle against GBV and Sexual Harassment in the World of Work. Balance Life, Work and Family

The major activity that has been undertaken by this structure is the adoption of an international labour standard (ILS) at the ILO. COSATU team in collaboration with other international organization was instrumental in drafting



the ILO discussion document that led to the adoption of the ILO Convention 190 and Resolution 206 (R206) - Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. This is the first international instrument that protects workers against violence and harassment, and the Code is consciously inclusive, calling on member states to ensure that all workers, including formal, informal, and precarious workers, are covered. This was never a easy task which also required funding to enable participation. However, the adoption of an ILO Convention is not complete until a Member State ratify the Convention and re-align national laws with the objectives of the Convention and its application, by adopting an instrument and submit it to the ILO.

COSATU has been actively campaigning for the ratification of C190 by our government. There have been significant delays in the ratification process, and COSATU has had to campaign tirelessly to get the Convention ratified. It is almost 2 years of engagement. The delays are structural and legislative particularly the cabinet and the parliament. We have been assured by the President that South Africa would ratify the Convention.

The following comrades were identified to form the COSATU delegation to the NEDLAC task team that is negotiating the Code:

- Gertrude Mtsweni (COSATU Gender Coordinator)
- Patricia Nyman (SACCAWU)
- Bonita Loubser (SACTWU)
- Matshediso Sebatana (POPCRU)
- Liesl Orr (NALEDI)

The stated aims of the Code are to:

- Align SA existing labour laws with the ILO Convention 190, and its Recommendation.
- Provide a framework on the interpretation and implementation of EEA pertaining to violence and harassment, including gender-based violence in world of work; and
- Provide guidelines to employers, employees, employers organisations and unions on how to deal with violence and harassment in the world of work.

COSATU NGCC members sought legal advice on the Code and some pointed to the following:

- In future it would be best to have all Codes under the LRA as the Code can then refer to various pieces of legislation
- It would have been ideal for this Code to be under the LRA to expand provisions regarding violence
- Advised that we to continue to negotiate the Code under EEA since this expands on existing provisions, and the process is already underway, noting that government is concerned that the Code has already gone for public comment
- Explore the further negotiation of provisions on violence and harassment related to the OHSA
- It is important that labour engages in a longer-term process of pushing for labour legislation amendments to expand the scope to ensure that all workers are protected this requires a concerted campaign by labour.



The Central Committee should urge unions to start training shop stewards, officials on the ILO C190 and R206 in anticipation of the ratification and towards the implementation of the Convention.

2.4 COSATU National Young Workers Forum (CNYWF):

The CNYWF participate in the COCC and Campaigns meetings. They submit reports on their programmes and meetings to these structures. We still have a challenge of coordination, funding for the CNYWF to hold meetings and implementing programmes for the Young Workers. NEDCOM and the Education Department would need to take up the issue of educating students on trade union issues as agreed to in the past.

2.5 Assessment of Programmes and implementation of Congress Resolutions:

Guided by the 2018, 13th National Congress that said "All this is like a clear writing on the political wall that the working class must stand up and lead society out of the dark alley of economic hopelessness and despair informed by Amilcar Cabral's warning that "Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children".

The working class will have no festive season to enjoy; a family of a retrenched worker is a family with hungry and empty stomachs which cannot enjoy Christmas!

The federation must mobilise all workers including those who are not members of COSATU unions to prepare for war in defence of that which belongs to them. On the 27th of November COSATU will be giving a warning shot that anyone standing on our way sizomgandaya! 2019 will be a year of fighting relentlessly for that which belongs to the working class and taking war to our class enemies!

COSATU has no choice to respond to the call to fight consistently, because, if we fold our arms, no one will ever stand up for the working class. We will continue to face the rising cost of living. Today it is retrenchments in the private sector and tomorrow it will be in the public sector. Today it is the VAT increases, the increasing fuel prices tomorrow it will be the increases in electricity prices, in food prices, in transport prices until the working class sinks to conditions of further impoverishment, grinding hunger and squalor".

In 2019 COSATU began the year on a high note with a vigorous programme to implement the Congress Resolutions. The year started with a Strike Action on 13th February and our programme were guided by the following areas of work;

1. **Strengthen the organisational machinery of COSATU**, continue to build and assert the fighting capacity of the federation at all levels, into a radical, militant, and uncompromising class oriented left trade union organisation.
2. **Unite the working class** including through working with progressive civil society formations behind a programme for a second more radical phase of our transition and make COSATU a home for all workers in South Africa.
3. **Take war to our class enemies** through declaring an open and frontal combat against neo liberal policies, the emerging right-wing tendencies and its ideologues operating both inside and outside our movement who shout our fiery slogans and camouflaged themselves in our colours.
4. **Mobilise for the victory of the ANC in the 2019 elections** based on an understanding that there is no "blank cheque" and that the electoral platform (in particular the manifesto commitments) should be based mainly on working class demands.



5. **Fight for the reconfiguration of the Alliance** on the ground, build the ANC and strengthen the SACP on the ground and if anyone stalls the reconfiguration the Alliance, prepare the ground to support the SACP in the post 2019 elections.
6. **Intensify and heighten our international solidarity** campaigns in Cuba, Venezuela, Palestine; Western Sahara and Swaziland based on the clarion "Workers of the World, Unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains!"

In 2020 we started where we left of in 2019 and ended the year on a low note as we were fighting the pandemic and the job loss blood bath with restrictions under COVID19 lock down, but we still managed to mobilise workers for a ground-breaking Strike Action on 07 October World Day for Decent Work. Subsequently provinces followed up with Pickets and Demonstrations to Institutions and Workplaces where memorandum were presented to seek responses to the demands submitted to the employers.

- As already indicated, during 2020, things took a new turn due to the Covid -19 epidemic and the fact that on March 15 a State of Disaster was already declared by President Ramaphosa, which led to the lock-down implemented by the South African government which began on 27 March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic which led to the country's lock down, our work was affected and some of the campaigns could not be implemented as planned.
- Organising Department developed a workplan and schedule that we followed during the lockdown period and during the various levels of the lockdown. Our work improved as we responded by holding several virtual coordination meetings and organised Webinars. The Department is now back to work, operating almost as normal as per the work plan schedule submitted to HR and approved by NOBs.
- The Department programme for 2020 and 2021 is guided by the Core Priorities of 2020, further developed after the COCC and Joint Organisation and Political Commissions meetings. The deliberations and considerations regarding some outstanding areas of work not implemented after COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic attack.
- The programme also attempted to do an alignment of campaigns arising from the other Departments through highlighting the programmatic focus into Five Key Themes; 1. Building Organisation through building the Engines, 2. Integrated Campaigns Programme, 3. Comprehensive Socio-Economic Campaigns, 4. Celebration of National Days and International Solidarity Campaigns and Gender Programmes. These Key themes are followed by programme areas as sub-themes and activities for implementation.
- The Organising Department programme of action for July to December 2020 was developed after the Organisation Commission meeting deliberations and considers some outstanding areas of work not implemented after COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic attack.

For 2021 the Organising Department programme was developed in line with COSATU adopted consolidated 12 Priorities by the November 2020 CEC.

- It has been acknowledged that the year 2021 shall go down in history as a momentous one for various reasons, key amongst them being COSATU becoming 35 years inspirational lifespan and the unprecedented magnitude and impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in our history as COSATU and the changes and or impact it imposes upon society and workers.
- Whilst at the beginning of this year organisational programmes were put together by unions for the year, same had to be put on hold immediately or adjusted following the emergence of the pandemic third wave to focus our energies and resources to continue the fight the challenges brought about by the pandemic and unscrupulous employers, with COVID UIF TERS, etc.
- Trade unions and communities have a crucial role to play in organising and supporting workers during this time. Trade union organisers struggled to access workers and workplaces that operated under lockdown, making it difficult to respond to retrenchments, safety, and other pressing issues. Some unions were slow to establish response teams to respond to the crises in workplaces. Trade union officials, leaders and shop stewards have been working under enormous pressure and have also faced risks to their own health.



- It is critical that trade unions protect the health of their employees and provide the same safety provisions that we struggle for in all workplaces, including protective equipment, physical distancing, self-isolation, or quarantine in cases of exposure and potential symptoms, as well as risk assessments for those with co-morbidities and after workers are tested positive.

The last part of this report provides an update summary report on implementation of the Congress Resolutions through programme and activities and after each activity outstanding work and proposals for an Action Plan is highlighted moving forward, although we continue to be affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

2.6 Organisation Building and Development

For 2021 our focus is Building COSATU through Organisational Renewal to build and support our unions and their capacity to recruit and service workers. Activities implemented include.

• Building and revival of Locals

Implemented by Provinces through launching locals and revival of non-functioning ones. The expected outcome to having well-functioning COSATU machinery is implemented by locals through COSATU campaigns.

- ☞ Provinces continue to build COSATU Locals based on best practice
- ☞ Induction of newly elected provincial leaders, political education and building capacity for Organisers and Leaders at all levels to continue

The CEC declared 2021 as the year for the local but our work towards completing relaunch and revival of local has been hampered by COVID19 restriction (limitation on gatherings) as it meant that meeting could not be convened. All outstanding local launches will continue once the restrictions allowing huge gatherings.

Outstanding is reports from some Provinces to develop Apps to keep in contact with the locals.

• Working with Unions

Organising has attended some Union meetings convened by Secretariat and NOBs. To continue giving background support when NOBs meet with identified unions and practically give support to agreed programmes which among others include recruitment, organising and mobilising for solidarity.

- ☞ Supporting Industrial Unions is still of importance. Various strategies have been put forward for the work of directly strengthening industrial unions and supporting their work in this sector of the economy.

• Unity of Workers

- ☞ Unity of the working class\unity of workers. As one of the Federation fundamental principles, the NOB's have started engaging with the other two federation at NEDLAC (FEDUSA and NACTU) starting with collaboration on common matters affecting workers as build-up towards unity of workers and broadly the working class, this include a meeting with SAFTU and regarding AMCU, dates are being awaited for the envisaged meetings.+



• **New Unions for affiliation**

We process responses of applications for affiliation by new unions wanting to join COSATU.

SAEPU, AFADWU and NTM have been accepted as new unions in COSATU.

An Induction workshop for new unions was held on January 2021 for SAEPU, AFADWU, NTM and included TUMSA and SATDWU.

Outstanding is implementation of the agreed Way forward from the Induction workshop

• **Workers Complaints**

Organising continues attending to workers complaints by directly engaging employers and where such queries require the union intervention the union the department interact with the unions and agree on a way forward for the benefit of the worker/s in keeping with the spirit of servicing workers and retention of membership.

- ☞ Supporting unions facing internal organisational challenges through engaging with leadership and members directly.

2.7 Organisation Building Commission

Convene an Organisation Building Commission to concretise a workplan on unions needing critical support and for Renewal work in general. To Build strong unions in all sectors.

- ☞ Future work to implement resolutions from the Collective Bargaining Conference that include supporting unions facing internal organisational challenges through engaging leadership and members directly.
- ☞ Acting to stop poaching and implementing the resolution on mergers.
- ☞ Engage in the battle of ideas/ideological struggles and Communication strategy

• **Back to Basics Campaigns**

- ☞ Continued Workplace programmes with recruitment and service to members in the provinces with visits by all affiliate NOBs and deployed CEC members have taken place. Closed Social Distance between leaders and worker has improved.
- ☞ Coordination of solidarity support programmes for affiliates under attack and service to members is work ongoing. Solidarity and unity amongst unions and workers is in process.

Recruitment, Retention and Service Campaign

- The Corona virus that was first discovered in the country in early 2020 has had an impact in the manner of which we run with organisational programmes, including recruitment. However the same pandemic has assisted in mobilising workers to join unions. Workers who have not been interested in joining unions found themselves having to face employers who unilaterally change their working conditions and cut their salaries without consultation, introduced short time without consultation and many other unfair practices.
- Organising is continuing to implement the COSATU Recruitment Strategy workshop outcomes identified for Growth in the Federation to meet the set target of 459,371 by Sept 2020 to bring the federation to the 2 million membership target.
- The date for the set target has since been amended as per proposal below.



Provinces convened recruitment workshop to make sure that there is understanding and buy-in to the Federation recruitment strategy, so that we can achieve the desired outcomes.

Proposals made by COCC meeting:

- a. *To relook at the recruitment strategy set dates of August 2019 to September 2020 to be extended to 2021 because the campaign was affected by levels 5 and 4 of the Coronavirus regulations.*
- b. *The newly affiliated unions; AFADWU and NTM have since been included in the recruitment strategy table with target figures to ensure the unions growth. IT unit has added AFADWU and NTM to the COSATU website.*
- c. *Find new ways of recruiting young workers into the unions using fun ways of playing and relaxing like sports and culture that attracts them to join and support unions.*

Organisational service and improving service to members is the best way to recruit. One happy member will speak to the others to join the union. Also use the POPCRU way of recruiting by setting targets and giving tokens to officials and shop stewards who excel in bringing in new members and given money or leave or find different ways.

- d. *Improve on public media strategies for unions like use of media in the public discourse, linked to programmes, selling the union brand but not for popularism.*
 - e. *Use the prioritised campaigns as an organising tool.*
 - f. *Unity talks programme to continue and schedule for reports on attempts made to unite workers and grow the schedule.*
- *The following are the monthly targets set as per the recruitment strategy workshop of the federation from August 2019 to September 2021 (as amended after the pandemic) and includes the table with new recruitment by affiliates.*

Recruitment update:

The COSATU Recruitment Strategy was developed in order for the Federation to meet the set target of 459,371 by 2021 to bring the federation to the 2 million membership target.



The following are the monthly targets set as per the recruitment strategy.

	Affiliate	Membership	National Target	National Target per month	Provincial monthly target
01	AFADWU	13,000	4,000	445	50
02	CEPPWAWU	48 000	17 400	1 934	214
03	CWU	13 898	4 158	462	52
04	DENOSA	80 647	26 192	2 910	323
05	LIMUSA	8 195	2 457	273	31
06	NEHAWU	275 083	87 508	9 724	1 080
07	NTM	50 200	21 000	2 333	259
08	NUM	167 259	53 675	5 964	663
09	PAWUSA	8 637	3 589	399	45
10	POPCRU	157 754	6 731	748	84
11	SACCAWU	120 352	42 105	4 678	519
12	SACTWU	91 003	31 300	3 478	387
13	SADTU	250 882	78 764	8 752	973
14	SAEPU	2 103	649	73	9
15	SAMA	7 697	2 807	311	35
16	SAMWU	136 700	44 010	4 890	543
17	SASBO	71 961	24 588	2 732	304
18	SATAWU	101 458	33 438	3 715	413
	TOTAL	1 603 829	484 371	53 821	5 984



Below are figures received from affiliates and Provinces on membership recruited for the period of 2020 and 2021. We will be adding newly recruited members as we receive information.

Affiliate	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Nov	Dec	Total
01 AFADWU			369									369
02 CEPPWAWU												
03 CWU			182			204						386
04 DENOSA												
05 LIMUSA					156	82						238
06 NEHAWU	1 073	1 139	704	27	67							3,010
07 NTM												
08 NUM						252						252
09 PAWUSA	54	132	0	31	12	45						274
10 POPCRU	76	199	631	246	130	212						1,494
11 SACCWU			2865	734	287	8,485						12,371
12 SACTWU				851	389	1,298						2,538
13 SADTU					791	157						948
14 SAEPU						58						58
15 SAMA												
16 SAMWU												
17 SASBO	359	803	635	56	289	283						2,425
18 SATAWU				1,718	456	821						2,995
TOTAL	1562	2273	1970	3663	2577	11897						27358

The total number of newly recruited members between 2020 and 2021 is 27358, this is the figure we have received from COSATU Provinces and Affiliates, but some Affiliates have not submitted their newly recruited figures as expected. We are also not sure if these newly recruited members are now paid-up members as the recent paid-up membership received from finance department reflect a decline of membership which could be because of job losses bloodbath.



Our proposed Action Plan on Recruitment and Retention are as following:

- a. Develop a template to consolidate and track the new members recruited into unions also showing membership losses (making use of the ILO Dashboard and information to be shared with IT to secure our information).
- b. Revive the COSATU Recruitment Fridays where we have teams of Affiliates Organisers (accompanied by NOBs when possible) visits to identified workplaces for recruitment purposes and membership service.
- c. To resuscitate our decision on the establishment of call centres to enable workers to report their frustrations, which will be referred to relevant affiliates.
- d. COSATU Young workers forum should have a campaign on social media, encouraging young workers to join our unions and this campaign must be monitored by a special task team to ensure its success but also to consider complementing it with the workplace visits.
- e. Affiliates should develop Face book recruitment posts that could be used to encourage workers to join. The Face book walls to be visited by members for information.
- f. Affiliates to upgrade their On-line systems (Websites) with application forms for workers to register and join unions.
- g. We propose that all unions to submit their joining forms to COSATU and they be availed in the Federation Web site for ease of access. COSATU IT unit to develop an On-line system for submitting joining forms electronically.
- h. Set up SMS / WhatsApp systems for information to members. Every informed member is an organiser to recruit using the On-line system making it easier to speak to unorganised workers.
- i. COSATU provinces working with unions, should identify targeted companies to be physically visited every week for recruitment and [provinces should form task teams with the DOL to collate data on non-compliance and develop a joint programme for enforcement of Health and safety regulations/protocol.

Way forward

The recruitment plan could not be fully implemented due to COVID19 restriction especial because physical contact with workers could not continue.

The war-room discussed the challenges brough about by the pandemic and resolved those other creative methods of recruitment should be developed as our conventional recruitment methods are currently not practically possible to effect.

SASBO shared their innovative recruitment strategy using social media, such strategy has been circulated to all Affiliates for consideration and adaption.

Outstanding

The campaign against the high cost of living through a campaign against fuel, electricity increases, and VAT are still to be taken forward. Reduction of fuel tax, electricity and reversal of VAT increase was not successfully implemented, and we must place it back and develop strategies to drive an action plan.



2.8 May Day Celebrations

The COSATU May Day celebrations are linked to the building of the organisation, ear on the ground campaign and closing the social distance with members. The CEC has long decided that our May Day activities should be participatory, educational and promote networking among workers, in which case, workers involvement should be key. Such activities would not be a one day event but a build-up to May Day hence the question of marches, demonstration and pickets moving away from the traditional rallies and long speeches. Also raised was that activities should encapsulate the notion of decentralisation of May Day activities meaning bringing May Day to workers. In this way the CEC believes more workers and their families would be able to participate.

The 2019 May Day celebration was the last one we held physically or face-to-face with members. However, the 2020 was held virtually while the 2021 was a hybrid with a limited, albeit small activities in the form of protest actions, pickets and motorcades with the COSATU President being joined by the ANC President and the SACP General Secretary delivering message of support in one major platform and widely broadcast on Mainstream Media.

The COCC meetings had discussed how to have a successful May Day and made a number of recommendations. This was done after an in-depth analysis of our activities. The challenges identified centred around the following:

- Lack of affiliates mobilising programme
- Slow pace in deployment
- Lack of resources both human and financial
- Lack of provision of transport
- Lack of mobilisation materials like poster, pamphlets, engagement with media.

2.9 Rallies and Strike Actions

Marikana rally 17th November 2019 at Wonder Kop stadium

- The CEC which took place in August 2019 took a resolution to convene a rally in Marikana in October 2019 based on the fact that COSATU has never had a major activity in Marikana since the Marikana massacre in August 2012 and the need to assure workers of COSATU support and their rights to freely organise.
- Marikana has been declared a no-go area for the alliance with special focus on COSATU and its affiliate NUM and all other parties who are not part of the congress movement have been using Marikana as their hunting ground while the alliance has been closed out.
- In the month of September and the first half of October there was no work done to prepare for the rally and this was due to several reasons and amongst them was the fact that NUM had convened a Special National Congress within the same period.
- The work of preparing for the rally started when an extended COCC meeting was convened on the 18th and 19th October 2019 which resolved, based on several reasons presented in the meeting, that the timing was not right to have a rally that year in Marikana.
- The COCC meeting resolved that it will be suicidal not to have the rally sooner though. To note the Political implications of not going to Marikana that year. The task team to do thorough work of engagement and assessment of the proposal. Collected all information for security with the NUM team in Rustenburg. Reported to the CEC on preparations for a decision on the way forward and NUM to come out clearly on a date.



- After that a task team meeting was convened on the 22nd of October by COSATU NOBs to look at the decisions of the COCC and to map a way forward. This meeting was attended by all COSATU NOBs, the NUM president and regional office bearers from the Rustenburg region. After assessing the report from COCC the NOBs made the following observations:
- The rally in Marikana has been postponed for several times
- The failure to have a rally in Marikana this year has political implication more so that the CEC has pronounced that this activity must take place in this year
- The failure to have a rally in this year will give our detractors an upper hand in the area as they will perceive us as cowards
- After thorough deliberation the task team meeting concluded as follows:
- The rally was to take place on the 17th of November 2019 at Wonder Kop stadium
- A national task team must be established to work on the preparation for the rally and the province must form part of that task team
- COSATU and NUM must develop a mobilisation program for the rally
- There must be work done in the area to prepare for the rally
- The police to support us in terms of safety and security
- The Marikana rally must be made an alliance project
- The NUM will be responsible for the logistic of the preparation of the rally and the rally itself
- COSATU will provide posters for the rally
- The Regional Chairperson of NUM must anchor the Rally and the Provincial Secretary must handle the administration.
- The Provincial Secretary of COSATU must liaise with the alliance and the provincial government
- After the task meeting convened by the NOBs several meetings were convened in the province to prepare for the activity and most of the meeting were attended by comrades from the province and few meetings had national representative. The only national representatives who attended most of the meetings are the DGS of COSATU and the Deputy President of NUM and Campaigns Coordinator.
- On the 1st of November 2019 comrade Kaiser Madiba was brutally killed in Marikana and this led the task team to arrive at a recommendation to request the NOBs to postpone the rally as they felt that the area is not safe, and rather convene a community march to the police station to demand safety and speedy resolutions of the cases opened in Marikana; but the NOBs indicated that this is a scare tactic and it will always happens every time we announce the date of the rally therefore it was concluded that the rally will continue as planned then everyone started to work towards.

Venue

- It was agreed that the venue for the rally will be, and NUM will engage the management of the mine to avail it for us to use but the management made it clear from the onset that they will not allow us to use the stadium. Several options were considered and most of the venues in Wonder Kop were not availed for various reasons and at the end we had to settle for the hall in Marikana west community hall which is about 10km from Wonder Kop.



- We can indicate that we had believed that the venue was big enough given the attitude of the comrades when it comes to Marikana, but this was proven to be wrong as the hall and the overflow tent were full.
- We should also indicate that the venue was confirmed on the 12th of November 2019 five days before the rally, and this had an impact on the preparation for the rally.

Mobilisation

- Mobilisation was done on ad-hoc basis as there was no clear mobilisation program we were not confident that the rally will go ahead as there were lots of logistical challenges in preparation for the rally.
- The RC of NUM in Rustenburg and the political school of NUM in Matlosana are the only formal mobilisation activities recorded.
- The comrades who are residing in the local area of Marikana did their own mobilisation in the neighbourhood.
- Role of the media
- The media became central in our mobilisation as they were sceptical about the rally going ahead and that they had anticipated that there might be some confrontation between us and our rivals in preparation for the rally.
- We had radio and television interviews from 13th November up to the day of the rally and it was broadcasted live by the SABC news. There was also live crossing done by SABC with the Provincial Secretary and DGS of COSATU and another live crossing by ENCA with the Regional Secretary of NUM.
- We can also indicate that due to the fact that we were going there for the first time since the Marikana massacre we had drawn a lot of media interest.
- The media continued to do assessment post the rally and they wanted our view and how do we feel after rally and whether we have achieved what we expected and whether we will be able to recruit all the members back to the national union of mine workers within a specified time frame.

Materials

- COSATU Head Office produced 500 posters which were posted in the Rustenburg CBD and the Marikana area. The mobilisation poster produced was circulated to all social media platforms. NUM produced 12000 T-shirts which were distributed in the rally. We should commend the team which was given the responsibility of posterage as they executed this work diligently. The t-shirts produced were of great use because we painted the area red with the NUM logo visible which gave confidence to the workers and community.
- We have estimated the attendance to the rally to have been about 6000 or more. We can confidently conclude that the ground in Marikana is now fertile for COSATU and NUM to go back there to recruit workers.

What is required now is for the COSATU province and the NUM Rustenburg region to develop a program to sustain the momentum that has been created in the area

Jobs Strike Action 13 February 2019

COSATU National Jobs strike held on 13 February 2019 kicked off with workers gathered all at City Centres in the 8 Provinces. Some started with speeches before the marches and proceeded to handover memorandums to different companies and Government departments.

Overall conclusion is that we had successful marches with very good attendance by workers from all affiliates. At the same time, we cannot say the same about the strike because it was business as usual in most companies.

National Strike on Job losses held on 13 February 2021 was a build up for the successful May Days.

Mobilisation of the communities was done with the Alliance partners.

Awareness and education of members was done on the NMW, 40 Hour Working Week and Paid Public



Holidays.

National Strike / Stayaway 07 October 2020

On 07 October 2020 as part of World Day for Decent Work the federation called on workers to unite and embark on a National Strike Action by Staying Away from work and to attend Motorcades, Marches and Pickets targeting identified Institutions of Government and Business. Workers heeded the call and marked a decisive moment in the history and struggle of the working class in our country and beyond.

Indeed, as usual workers gathered throughout the country in the City Centres and Towns to express, on behalf of millions of workers and ordinary people; anger, frustration and united solidarity against the horrifying conditions workers are all faced with. This action went ahead besides the pandemic and after having lost wages during the Lockdown called by the President of the Republic.

Considering that we had not planned for the huge numbers because of COVID-19 protocols we under-estimated the anger of workers who turned up in uncontrollable masses. This led to some Provinces having to abandon the Motorcades and after consultation amongst the leadership in these areas resorted to marching to hand over the memorandums.

The National War Room team who was monitoring the Strike from early morning till the end of the day made an observation the Strike was successful. This is confirmed by the figures received from Comrades on the ground and verified by the deployed leaders. The available data received from the different Provinces is made available in a table format.

The CEC recognised that our programme of action was ground-breaking from a political point of view, as it brought together for the first-time workers across trade union federation which is important for the unity of workers. Workers heeded the call and marked a decisive moment in the history and struggle of the working class in our country and beyond. We received solidarity messages from both local and international organisations.

Recommendations.

- *Importance of all COSATU Departments working together in the War Room proved that the Strike was an organisational campaign and not left to Organising Department which demoralizes Comrades deployed by Affiliates to the War Room.*
 - ☞ *War Rooms to stay in operation and keep workers mobilised for a feedback after the 14 Days response given in memorandum. To continue with the Recruitment programmes to keep in touch with the Locals.*
- *Continuous reports provided to the COCC meetings where their leadership can provide direction and take decisions where some challenges arise.*
 - ☞ *The General Secretaries meeting resolved on detailed reports to be submitted by Affiliates on workplaces Stay Away.*
 - ☞ *National War room proposed that a Special COCC meeting to follow soon to finalise the Assessment of the Strike*
- *It is clear that the vast majority off affiliates do not have any form of strike monitoring system.*
 - ☞ *COSATU should assist to develop a generic monitoring system, which affiliates can than adapt for their own circumstances.*
 - ☞ *In future this type of event must be communicated early in detail to the media with meeting points, time, employees and target places to hand over the memorandums.*
- *CEC Deployees arrival to Provinces to be improved.*
 - ☞ *Deployees to arrive at least 3 days before the event to receive a full briefing on issues affecting workers in the area.*
 - ☞ *Address the challenge of deployees not turning up in the Provinces where deployed.*
- *One area we missed out is the hashtag when twitting and posting. When Comrades post on social media*



the posts are not sharable which makes trending difficult. Most Affiliates are still not present on both Facebook and twitter, and we must encourage them to make use of their young workers to assist.

- *The rival Federation messages did not disturb our programme because COSATU messaging and presence on social media drowned them.*
- *The general assertion that motorcades did not work is factually wrong as observed in the SACTWU report. It worked very well in some provinces (e.g., in the Western Cape, they planned for 50 cars, but more than 200 turned up, and it had an impact on the way to handing over the memorandums.*
 - ☞ Consider upgrading the Sound Systems used.
 - ☞ Finance to check the costs of hiring the sound systems in the provinces and look at an option of purchasing COSATU's own equipment.
 - ☞ Decentralised approach should be emphasized in building locals.
- *Social Media and Recommendations.*
 - ☞ COSATU must complete a Baseline Assessment on Social Media penetration within all provinces; How many provinces have Social Media accounts e.g., Facebook and who is managing the page; Twitter and who manages the handle; How is the page or handle helping or has helped Mobilisation.
 - ☞ The following provinces have Facebook pages which are active: COSATU Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo, Western Cape, Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal.
 - ☞ The following Provinces cannot be located through a search engine: COSATU Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Northwest.
 - ☞ The following provinces have Twitter handles: COSATU KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape (POBs), Limpopo (POBs), Western Cape (POBs), Gauteng (POBs)
 - ☞ The following provinces cannot be located on Twitter: COSATU Free State, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, Northwest (unless their accounts are held in nicknames or other names)
 - ☞ That province must synergize their social media pages or handles to assist in Mobilization or organizing work at the coalface of the organization.
 - ☞ That all POBs be encouraged to open Provincial Twitter handles to assist on spreading of information and for educative material shared on such a platform
- *Comment on Utilization of social media during the National Strike*
 - ☞ There is a remarkable improvement as previously comrades relied on WhatsApp(ing) pictures which does not go to media houses or journalists to display prominence which helps us to trend
 - ☞ Affiliated trade unions prefer Facebook as compared to Twitter and the reason is that there are more members on Facebook than Twitter
 - ☞ Affiliated trade unions normally cover their own members unlike COSATU Social Media platforms where we cover all affiliated trade unions
 - ☞ The following trade unions have active Twitter Handles: DENOSA, SAMWU, SADTU, NEHAWU, POPCRU, SAEPU, SAMA, NUM, SACTWU
 - ☞ The following trade unions have handles though they share less material: CEPPWAWU, SACCAWU, CWU
 - ☞ The following trade unions cannot be traced on Twitter unless they use a different name: SASBO, AFADWU, SAMATU, PAWUSA.
- *On Media coverage*
 - ☞ Media coverage has been tremendous based on pictures shared freely by media houses or journalists who were using the hashtag #cosatunationalstrike, #cosatustrike and the pictures display a Provincial footprint with provinces such as Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Limpopo, Northwest, and others featuring.
 - ☞ We must applaud ordinary members and workers who have consistently shared organizing footage from their personal Facebook and Twitter pages or handles.
 - ☞ COSATU provinces must consistently establish and manage media relations in the provinces though offering media network sessions has been minimal due to budget constraints

Corruption and Parasitism



The issue of corruption is a real problem for the country, and it has been a problem for some time. We never thought that it will go to the point where even during these trying times comrades will continue with the looting.

Corruption happens in our spaces and is done by people we live with, as such we allow it to thrive, this will stop if we take a stand against the perpetrators.

COSATU must stand bold and say enough is enough and starting with already identified areas e.g., the Eastern Cape Health MEC we must call for her sacking, this must include those councillors who have stolen the food parcel and corruption taking place in all Provinces.

COSATU is presently implementing the following proposals from the Organisation Commission endorsed by CEC.

- a. COSATU continues to demand immediate establishment of special courts during this period to speedily deal with corruption cases just like it was done during 2010 world cup.
- b. We need to quantify the money stolen to the jobs lost. As while stealing, a worker lost a job. (Request NALEDI to urgently pull together figures to assist our campaign against corruption)
- c. Revive the Proudly South Africa campaign for Buying Local Products e.g., PPEs must be made locally.
- d. Already available information on TERS corruption to be reported and cases must open where we have evidence.
- e. Unions should compile information for submission of instances of corruption in all areas where they organise.
- f. The Federation should join forces with progressive organisations against corruption e.g., corruption watch – consider their current x-ray report on COVID-19 corruption and act on it practically.
- g. COSATU should consider establishing its own toll-free corruption line for workers to us.



- h. COSATU to work with the Alliance partners on campaigns against corruption with weekly information and campaigns activities to keep workers informed and mobilised.
- i. To begin with Pickets and open cases at Police Stations in all Provinces.
- j. Affiliates and Provinces to release media statements twice a week condemning the corruption and looting. Raise the amount already spent on the Zondo Commission while people are losing jobs.
- k. Target the Commissioners and NPA offices for Pickets and Demonstrations.
- l. Private Sector unions to provide information for target companies involved in Corruption.

The Federation joined forces with progressive organisations in the fight against corruption. We participated in the Orange Mask campaign against corruption with pickets held on Fridays led by Ahmed Kathrada Foundation and the SACC. Agreed that this network should convene early in 2021 to discuss how best to take forward action against corruption and capture. In this regard, the **call by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba** that 2021 be the year that we all 'stand up to corruption' is significant.

Presently the broad civil society network is running a vaccine campaign to educate the public and to address the myths by providing scientific information.

COSATU has endorsed the Campaign in Defence of our Democracy and in support of the Zondo Commission.

The Special CEC was resolute in calling upon our movement, the ANC, to be more decisive against the scourge of corruption and parasitism in our country. This is a real pandemic alongside COVID19 and Gender-Based-Violence in the manner it is eroding the gains made since 1994 by workers. This is coupled with the reality of desperation, hunger, and crime in our communities.

COSATU will continue to contest all sites of power and influence, including elections towards advancing leaders who stand firm on matters affecting workers and the poor, such as joblessness, poverty, hunger, women, and children abuse, corruption and disrespect for institutions of our democracy and justice. We affirm our perspectives of a revolutionary, democratic, and transformative NDR based on the fundamentals of the Freedom Charter.

Attacks on Collective Bargaining in South Africa:

Our trade union movement has now reached a politically decisive conjuncture in which it is required to consciously maintain its militant traditions to sustain its organisational integrity that has been built on solidarity as well as strategic and ideological clarity. This includes maintaining and strengthening our revolutionary consciousness that is rooted in a socialist vision. Without this appreciation the present crisis can only produce worse results for the working class.

- The attacks on collective bargaining and suppression of the trade union activity in this instance must not be read as an isolated incident but must be read as the emergence of a taste within the state apparatus for suppression and breaking of trade unions and suffocation of their activity. It's a class struggle
- Central to the government austerity program is the attack to the right of workers to strike and collective bargaining. These attacks are evident both in the public and private sector. However, the fact that it is a democratic government led by a liberation movement that is part of our own alliance perpetrating these attacks, makes the case even more shameful. These rights are codified by the ILO as convention 87 (convention on the right to strike) and convention 98, (the right to organise and collective bargaining convention) as an international mechanism of preserving them.
- We must remind the ANC government that the right to engage in collective bargaining is enshrined in the country's Constitution and the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter states that: "There shall be Work and Security". Right to bargain and strike nullified by Business and Government and reversing workers gains.



- Both the public and private sector employers have been dragging their feet in implementing the ILO principle of equal wages for work of equal value and Section 27 of the Employment Equity Act in terms of income differentials and unfair discrimination based on differences in terms and conditions of employment.
- New austerity measures include companies wanting to cut salaries of workers by 10% in some sectors.

Proposed Action Plan:

Rooting ourselves on the ground at the workplace amongst our members has turned out to be an important organisational practice of ensuring that the federation and her affiliates attends to the vital interests of members - an effective weapon in waging the struggle against the bosses, in winning public propaganda and in building a militant orientation of the trade union movement to the workplace. Therefore, we shall immediately undertake the following steps in defence of collective bargaining and the right to strike, linked to intensify a fight against corruption:

- COSATU demanded that the government of South Africa must comply with all ILO conventions. In this regard the CEC directed the NOBs to immediately write to the ILO urging it to urgently register a protest with the South African government's breach of Convention 154, the Right to organize and Collective Bargaining Convention and Convention 87. The ILO must demand some level of accountability from the South African government.
- Provinces to continued holding Demonstrations and Lunch-time Pickets at the departments, institutions, and workplaces where memorandums were submitted
- The CEC lead a protest action/sit inn at the union buildings on the 4th of December 2020, to demand response from the Presidency on the memorandum submitted on the
- 7th October 2020. This included the call for government to lead by example by complying with ILO conventions and respect collective bargaining.
- PECs to also lead protest actions/sit inns at Premiers offices in all Provinces on 4th December.
- The CEC mandate COCC to develop a campaign program in line with the Collective Bargaining Conference outcomes that was to start in February 2021 across sectors.
- Protest Actions to include BUSA and Chamber of Mines.
- Include the demand against precarious work and for 40-hour week.
- After the November CEC we developed an action plan against the Attack on Collective Bargaining. A statement was released. The S77 Notice to NEDLAC is still in process.
- We have liaised with the ILO Office in Pretoria on how to lodge a complaint. Christina Holmgren (ILO Labour Standards expert) is providing assistance and advise on the issue. She has brought to our attention South Africa Government has not ratified Convention 151 and will request the ILO legal adviser to also assist.

Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) Steering Committee meetings

- Organising Department has continued to participate in the DWCP Steering Committee meetings at NEDLAC which reports to the Labour Market Chamber (LMC). We have participated in the Task Team to rework the priorities for 2020 – 2021 DWCP.
- We are in the process of implementing the Two-Year Decent Work Country Programme proposed at NEDLAC including the discussions on the future of work.
- We continue participating in the Recommendation 204 (R204) National Task Team meetings as per terms of reference agreed to for formalisation of the Informal Economy.
- Hold Vulnerable Workers Workshop to report on the Plan of Action on transitioning from the Informal to the Formal economy and implementation of R204.



Practical Recommendations:

As has been clearly outlined, the purpose of the Webinar Series on the Future of Work was for social partners to gain an improved understanding of the future of work, its potential negative and positive impacts and to identify possible interventions to mitigate the negative impacts and take advantage of the positive impacts.

The discussions revealed that the four drivers identified were intricately intertwined and shared common impacts. It should be clear that the important issue is creating threads, so that shared solutions are taken forward. The table below is an outline of the impacts, condensed.

IDENTIFIED IMPACT	WHAT IT MEANS	ENVISAGED INTERVENTION
<p>1. Literacy</p> <p>While computers don't communicate in a language, the code they use is largely in English. This could be a barrier given the limitations we face in South Africa in terms of literacy.</p>	<p>There is a need to find innovative ways to bridge the literacy gaps in young people, from primary school kids to high school.</p> <p>Further, adult literacy will need further engaging, especially in communities which bear historical disadvantage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must find a way to look at incorporating national languages within new technologies and skills. This could be done through legislation governing technology adoption as is the case in medicine for example. • Develop better pathways for improving literacy outside the school system. • Social partners should work together to improve technology reach in remote areas and communities.
<p>2. Skills Mismatch</p> <p>The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, as well as the adoption of new and disruptive technologies will lead to some jobs disappearing and new jobs being created.</p>	<p>The transition in energy and technology means we may face a mismatch in skills, and thus many be losers and or people left behind.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of skills database to inform training institutions and work seekers. This would mean the need for mapping out of those jobs affected immediately and over time. • Through SETAs and Sector Skills Planning, there should be mapping out of new competencies required in new jobs as a basis to inform and foster retraining and reskilling. • This could be achieved through collaboration by social partners and institutions of higher learning.
<p>3. Wage declines</p> <p>The different jobs being lost and being created in the transition, from technology to energy, attract varied wages and salaries.</p> <p>For example, jobs in the coal sector pay more, in general, than jobs in renewable energy sector can be expected to pay.</p>	<p>There is potential for the transition to lead to lower wages and thus lower standards of living for some, thus negatively impacting decent work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring transparency from business in terms of wages and salaries in the new jobs or industries. • Create supportive frameworks for those who will be losers in the transition. This may include wage support where declines are expected or experienced.

<p>4. Technology dumping</p> <p>This has been defined as mass exporting of technologies from developed nations to developing countries like South Africa.</p>	<p>These new technologies developed outside or imported have had the effect of destroying local industry, including technology platforms used in various sectors. Some of the technologies are seen not to contribute to local development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in research and development for localized production of technological innovations is needed; making sure it is provided cheaply for the whole population. • Regulating technologies to make sure that they are appropriate for local needs rather than diminishing. • Government to play a role in closing the infrastructure gap and strengthen South Africa’s innovation systems.
<p>5. Casualisation of workers</p> <p>The growth in divers’ forms of work, where workers or labour is engaged through platforms like Uber rather and thus have no real employers. This is seen from transport, to food, to manufacturing.</p>	<p>This means growing casualisation of workers through these platforms, eroding decent work gains over times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform workers need to be integrated into the labour market. Social partners should work together on this. • These platforms have a lot of information on prices, margins, and payments to workers. This can be used in developing regulatory frameworks and protecting workers.
<p>6. Migration</p> <p>Migration within and across countries has increased over time</p>	<p>There are sectors where migrants have displaced local workers, causing tensions and social conflict. Further, this has been seen from the perspective of exploitation of migrant workers, raising concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government must play its important role of inspection and enforcement. • Proactive approaches between labour unions across countries to manage issues of common concern in terms of migration. • Government to table the draft National Labour Migration Policy for social partner engagement to address inflows of migrants, including undocumented migrants in the South African labour force.
<p>7. Gender gap</p> <p>Women have been outside of the labour market, and doing unpaid work resulting from gender roles, as well as care work.</p>	<p>Climate change means different impacts for women, especially those providing care work resulting from effects of climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be provision for payment of care work by establishing funds that pay women who are caregivers, especially from the effects of industry, such as sicknesses that come from work hazards.
<p>8. Youth dynamic</p> <p>South Africa’s youth demographic has distinct differences amongst the population groups. The various population groups in youth face different challenges.</p>	<p>There is a need to segment the youth appropriately to deal with the different challenges within the various segments, rather than a uniform “youth approach”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop differentiated approaches which speak to the specific needs for youth, especially the rural poor.



<p>9. Effects of Covid-19</p> <p>The lockdown has led to a change in the way we work, accelerating transition towards technology for example.</p>	<p>The lockdowns have revealed the vulnerability of workers, especially those in informal sectors. Further, workers have been displaced in various ways as companies change their business models. However, there have been emerging opportunities for flexible work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing flexibility in work contracting while preserving rights of workers so that workers can supplement their incomes where necessary without losing their rights and benefits. • Social partners must develop programs to help workers understand the changes they are facing, and psychologically prepare them to transition.
<p>10. Labour supply vs. Demand</p> <p>South Africa’s labour supply outstrips demand</p>	<p>While discussion on the just transition is important, there is also an issue of the high supply of labour with limited demand. So, skills and competency must be met with demand side interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government must develop a National Employment Policy that deals with the creation of mass employment programs • Government must invest in supportive infrastructure, especially in terms of new or emerging industries.

Work of the DWCP to be taken over by the newly appointed Labour Market Coordinator includes.

Labour Priorities.

- Submit to LMC document from the Future of Work Webinar Sessions that took place in November 2020.
- Sensitization of labour federations on their reporting obligations on labour standards including on the comments of the ILO supervisory bodies on ratified Conventions.
- Continued training and awareness raising activities on social security principles and methods, to support the engagement of constituents in the process of tripartite consultations at NEDLAC.
- Support towards the analysis of the impact of different benefits design and social assistance schemes such as the Basic Income Grant.
- Support to the Community Constituency to build the capacity of members on the NHI and to develop a position paper on the NHI policy proposals.
- Support for the development of a Code of Good Practice for the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.
- R204 sub-committee to collaborate with the South African Law Reform Commission in a policy and legislative reform process aimed at facilitating the transition of the informal economy towards formalization.
- Implementation of the Revised Road Map on Transitioning from the Informal to the Formal Economy and the one-year priority programme on Formalisation of the Informal Economy.

2.10 Elections

COSATU 2019 National and Provincial Elections Campaign

Background:



COSATU's approach towards the 2019 National Elections was guided by the two 13th National Congress resolutions, the one on elections and the one on the reconfiguration of the alliance.

It says that going to the 2019 election, COSATU will mobilise for the victory of ANC whilst working with the SACP to ensure the reconfiguration of the Alliance. But if the radical reconfiguration of the alliance fails, COSATU, shall beyond the 2019 elections work to deepen its work to strengthen the SACP as a political insurance of the working class and mobilize for its decisive electoral victory.

In this context COSATU was represented in all strategic committees towards the 2019 elections. This included the Manifesto Team, National Election Team and List Committee. At the same time, the federation has made its submission on its proposals towards a reconfigured Alliance. The Alliance Political Council sat on the 10th of December 2018 to receive various reports and proposals including proposals on the reconfiguration of the Alliance.

COSATU's approach on the 2019 National Elections is captured in two resolutions of the 13th National Congress held on 17 to 20 September 2018, the one on elections and the one on the reconfiguration of the alliance.

COSATU 2019 National Election Campaign:

The COSATU 2019 Election Strategy reaffirmed our 2015 Plan for the elections campaign. We developed a balance sheet based on our vision of what was achieved, what still needs to be done and setbacks. On that basis a framework for what should constitute an electoral platform was produced. This analysis informed our contribution towards the development of the Election Manifesto for COSATU input into the processes.

We further reaffirmed our resolution to support the ANC during the 2019 National / Provincial Government Elections. We supported the SACP state power contestation, however it was not feasible for the 2019 election. The CEC agreed to continue engagement on the reconfiguration of the alliance.

The CEC held on 26 to 28 November 2018 reaffirmed the 13th National Congress Resolution to Support the ANC in the forthcoming national general elections. In this regard most of COSATU affiliates made resources available towards a successful campaign as per the Document on the Reconfiguration of the Alliance adopted by the APC.

This included ensuring that workers' demands find expression into the ANC election manifesto. The CEC also insisted that the campaign for the victory of the ANC will happen simultaneously with the campaign for the reconfiguration of the Alliance.

The COSATU 2019 Elections campaign was guided by Congress resolutions and decisions of CEC which resolved on support for the ANC and a COSATU elections campaigns mobilisation programme to ensure the ANC Victory.

COSATU elections mobilisation programme was since the workers of this country will Vote for the ANC because they can point out to the tangible gains won and secured under the ANC government.

The Federation concluded that there are many qualitative changes which have been affected by the ANC government that has benefited the working class. A summary of these gains was listed in the brochure on "Why Workers should Vote ANC".

The COSATU election mobilisation and messaging programme focused on workplace meetings to engage workers to vote ANC for an overwhelming victory on 8 May 2018. Our workplace programme included.

- ☞ Affiliates General meetings in workplaces, structural and Industrial area meetings.
- ☞ Local and Cluster meetings
- ☞ Memorial Lectures



Mobilisation:

The COSATU 2019 Elections campaign was run concurrently with all the programmes that took place in 2019. Mobilisation programmes for the 2019 May Day celebrations and the National Elections were integrated and focused on workplace mobilisation with Hot Spot Provinces such as KZN, Northwest, Western Cape, Limpopo and Eastern Cape identified for focused work and deployment.

Through the COSATU DGS we participated and in the List processes and contributed to defending names of COSATU Comrades to be included in the List. CEC Delegates and some COSATU staff attended the Alliance List Conferences and the Elections Strategy Workshops held at Saint Georges Hotel. This was after we had made inputs into the Manifesto represented by COSATU Policy unit.

COSATU participated in KZN mobilisation for the January 08 Statement and the Cutting of the ANC birthday cake in Durban. We deployed leaders a week before January 08, who visited workplaces and distributed ANC election materials.

We also mobilised and participated in the Manifesto Launch on 12 January which was a positive aspect of implementing our Phase Three campaign, where we saw a huge participation by Comrades in KZN with the Madiba Stadium filled. Our Programme of Action for the Section 77 Jobs Strike of 13 February 2019 and the May Days plan to mobilise for ANC led to our victory in the 2019 General Elections.

The Federation also mobilized workers to participate during the Voter Registration dates with the final registrations held on 26 and 27 January 2019. Provinces identified their Hot Spot areas for target during voter registrations and social media was the strongest mode used to reach out to workers particularly young workers.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the leadership shown by affiliate NOBs who sacrificed their holidays and time with their families to attend the workplace mobilisation programmes throughout the elections campaign.

We therefore wish to extend our gratitude to the Volunteers who worked relentlessly on the ground and joined in the Door-to-Door programmes. Some affiliates released these Volunteers on full time basis with resources provided to go out mobilising the public through blitzing and distributing materials on why it was important to Vote for the ANC.



Overall, the ANC came out victorious with an achievement of 56 % victory, winning 8 provinces, even though it was during a very difficult period with elections run stifled by the huge divisions that existed in the movement.

It is important to note that out of a total of 2 608 460 registered population, only 1 470 222 (56.36% turned out to vote, which is the lowest experienced in the country and lower than the national average of 65.99%) people voted. This effectively means that 1 138 238 voters did not vote.

Therefore, the need to ensure that future elections day, May Day and Freedom Day are legislated as non-trading holidays, this demand has also to be brought back into sharp focus as many vulnerable workers who are in the precarious employment were forced to be at work due to scrupulous employers mainly in the retail, hospitality, and farms. These workers were denied their constitutional right to exercise their right to vote on these important public holidays.

COSATU 2021 Local Government Election (LGE) Campaign

Background:

The COSATU 2021 Local Government Election (LGE) Campaign programme is guided by the Special CEC held on 6 to 7 April 2021 that discussed COSATU's perspective and approach to the upcoming Local Government Elections in the light of the crisis faced by workers because of the deepening crisis of capitalism and the intensification of austerity attacks on the working class and living conditions of the poor.

The current tensions between workers and the ANC government over the ongoing budget cuts and attacks on collective bargaining are a manifestation of the deep-seated and systemic crisis workers are facing, in all sectors.

This periodical exercise of assessing the state of the Alliance is done every time before any round of elections because our vote for the ANC is not guaranteed and workers do not give the ANC a blank cheque.

The Special CEC reiterated its position that the postponement of local government elections will mean the prolongation of the ongoing corruption and the indirect endorsement of mismanagement of municipalities. After robust and fraternal debates, the meeting concluded that the problems facing workers are mainly driven by political choices and decision-making by those in government and other sites of power. This, therefore, means that the federation needs to also combine mass mobilisation with a clear political programme to resolve and undo them.

The meeting concluded that workers do not have the luxury to indulge in political abstentionism in the face of deepening class contestations of both the ANC and the State. This will also be a fallacy of composition, where we end up dismissing an entire party as rotten on the grounds of one or two components we do not agree with.

COSATU's political programme comes from the fact that we are not a gumboots federation but a transformative organisation that links its shopfloor struggles with community struggles. We will continue to engage and mobilise to resolve the identified frustrations and serious disagreements that have poisoned relations with government.

The meeting concluded that despite the challenges facing the working class and the current tensions, the Federation will not boycott the elections and will implement its resolution of supporting the African National Congress in the upcoming Local Government Elections, while also contesting its direction.

We are not abandoning the ANC yet because as part of the Alliance, we do not want to open a political vacuum that will see the organisation hijacked by the reactionary and criminal elements who have been attempting to capture it since the 1994 democratic breakthrough. The Central Committee will continue to assess the state of the Alliance and its reconfiguration, taking into consideration the offensive against the working class.

What will complicate this year's campaign for local government elections is that COSATU will also be having a parallel campaign to defend collective bargaining. There is a real possibility that workers in the public service



and the public sector, in general, will be on strike fighting the wage freeze and retrenchments during elections. We will not compromise on this campaign, and we are encouraging all our unions to mobilise and fight back against retrenchments and Job losses.

The COSATU 2021 Local Govt. Election Mobilisation Programme.

- Develop the COSATU Election Campaigns programme with Four Phases in line with the ANC election campaign Strategy
 - ☞ Participate in the ANC Election Structures at National, Provincial and Local levels
 - ☞ Input into Manifesto by participating in the manifesto drafting task team meetings
 - ☞ Input in the Candidate Selection
 - ☞ Representation in the Electoral Committee
 - ☞ Use social media, local forums, and company/institutional general meetings to mobilise members to participate in the local government elections.
- Develop advocacy materials outlining history and reasons of workers support for the ANC and outlining workers victories / achievements made with ANC government whilst acknowledging the challenges.
 - ☞ Develop Mobilisation and media programmes (Social Media posters, COSATU booklet / Pamphlet on gains and victories since the last elections)
 - ☞ Develop advocacy materials outlining history and reasons of workers support for the ANC and outlining workers victories / achievements made with ANC government whilst acknowledging the challenges.
 - ☞ Update and amend the existing booklet / pamphlet that was already developed and not circulated.
 - ☞ Mobilize for by elections in April and May
- Mobilise workers to go and Vote ANC on Elections Day Outcomes expected is to mobilize and convince members and communities to vote for ANC candidates and to achieve an overwhelming ANC victory).
 - ☞ Celebrate the ANC victory
 - ☞ Follow up on promises made during the campaign

1. Support to Young Workers:

- We have done work with the CNYW Forum to implement their program.
- Assist with coordination for establishment of the structure in Affiliates and Provinces which have not yet launched.
 - ☞ We coordinated the CNYWF Part II Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop on the ILO core International Labour Standards held on 26 to 28 November 2019.
 - ☞ Young Workers developed a programme to mobilise the Youth NYA – YCYL, SASCO, COSAS and ANC YL to support and participate in the COSATU Strike.
 - ☞ Presently holding Webinars in support of the students demands
 - ☞ Developed social media posters and pamphlets in line with the Organising programme to support unions facing retrenchments and job losses.
 - ☞ Young workers are running a campaign on the Right to Work.
- Research Training for young workers (focus on young women and young male gender champions)
 - ☞ This is a National Skills Fund (NSF) Project in collaboration with the Wits History and Naledi, targeting COSATU young workers with the special focus of young women and Part of the women’s workers activism project.
 - ☞ Postponed from March due to lockdown.
 - ☞ 2-3 online workshops with young workers, with activities and mentorship in between, 1st workshop on the 21st of October 2020.
 - ☞ The first two workshops are scheduled for October and November, and the third would take place early in 2021. The shift from in-person to virtual allowed us to expand the work to include three 4-hour sessions.
 - ☞ Wits History will bring students on board to assist.



- ☞ Priorities under DWCP - Capacity support to the implementation of the Young Cosatu Workers Action Plan developed in 2019.
- ☞ Empowering gender activists, young workers, and leaders on the research skills in collaboration with the Wits History Project.
- 19 June 2020 Young Workers forum
 - ☞ Discussion on the implications of violence and harassment in the workplace. the importance of Ratifying the C190 on violence and harassment in the world of work.
 - ☞ GBV impact to young women workers.
 - ☞ Joe Slovo Foundation on the White Ribbon Workplace campaign linking it with the C190
- 30th June 2020 Western Cape Young women workers discussions on Advancing the struggle against GBV and Sexual Harassment in the World of Work. Balance Life, Work and Family
 - ☞ Promoting the Right and Welfare of women and children amid Covid-19 and beyond
 - ☞ Putting emphasis on the importance of the ratification of the two ILO instruments
 - ☞ ILO C190 on ending violence and harassment
 - ☞ ILO C183 on Maternity Protection deals with issues of childcare facilities
 - ☞ Ensure determination and resilient amongst young women to dismantle patriarchy
 - ☞ Collaboration with other organisations to build the leadership of young women
 - ☞ Ensure maximum participation of young women in economic development’.

2.13 HR and Administration

The report will cover the HR issues from 2018-2021 and will cover the following:

1. Staff Complement and Departments
2. Resignations and retirements
3. New recruits in the last 3years
4. Staff Developments
5. COVID Protocols
6. Human Resource Committee
7. Staff Committee
8. Challenges with Head Office

Staff Complement and Departments

We have staff complement of 61 full time staff members in the Federation as we speak with 8 Departments based in the Head Office, Parliamentary office and 9 Provincial Offices. Below is the current status of the Federation Nationally and Provincially.

Department	Secretariat Department	Vacant	Total
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2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECTION

Socio-Economic Report to the Central Committee 2021

1. Nedlac Covid-19 Rapid Response Task Team

A Nedlac Rapid Response Task Team was established at the beginning of the lockdown.

It met virtually daily since March and has been able to make numerous interventions during the lockdown.

These engagements and sub-committees are dealing with a wide variety of engagements. These include:

- **UIF**

Ensuring that the UIF upgraded its systems to manage the massive increase in applications, attending to the many crises it has faced, ensuring that it releases as much funds as sustainably possibly to assist workers etc. By the end of the August period it is likely to have released over R53 billion to more than 7 million workers. This has helped to ensure workers have money to buy their essential goods to take care of their families and to prevent retrenchments.

It is critical for unions to make sure all workers are registered for the UIF and employers are paying their dues.

The UIF Covid-19 reached over 4 million individual workers. It is likely to exceed R60 billion in payments. This has taken the UIF from R154 billion before the lockdown to R110 billion. R60 billion of the R110 billion is liquid and accessible.

The UIF Covid-19 TERS ended on 16 October despite workers over 60 years or with co-morbidities or from shut down or restricted industries barred from working e.g. liquor and tourism industries.

This has condemned hundreds of thousands of workers to absolute poverty, no wages, retrenchments and threatened the collapse of these industries.

Government has refused to provide any relief for these workers and industries.

COSATU has raised with government and the ANC the need for socio-economic relief measures to be extended to affected workers and businesses. These include extending the UIF Covid-19 TERS, the R350 unemployment grant, the Loan Guarantee Scheme, tax relief, bank loan relief and sectoral relief.

The NEC Lekgotla agreed on the need to extend the R350 grant for 3 months and revamp the Loan Guarantee Scheme. It also agreed on the need to engage on extending the UIF Covid-19 TERS and other relief for affected workers and businesses and that these engagements need to take place at Nedlac. COSATU will need to increase the pressure on government to meaningfully engage, compromise and agree to provide relief to affected workers, businesses and sectors.

- **Health and Safety Measures**

COSATU and the Nedlac RR Task Team meet fortnightly with government's Nat. Joints to engage on the various health and safety measures put in place to manage the fight against Covid-19. These range from the wearing of masks, sanitisation requirements, curfews, restrictions on social gatherings and liquor.

- **Work Place Safety**

Ensuring that workplace safety directions are in place to help protect workers' lives. This includes what measures are needed e.g. social distancing, sanitising, deep cleansing, isolation etc. It includes what assistance workers can receive from the Compensation Fund when infected at work.



It is critical for unions to make sure all workers are trained on their rights and all work places are compliant and that all workers are registered for and up to date with the Compensation Fund.

- **Vaccine Roll Out**

COSATU is participating in government's Vaccines JSOC. Progress has been made increasing in the daily vaccination rate from 15 000 to over 200 000. Efforts are being to increase this to over 300 000 daily and in particular over weekends.

These will help to ensure South Africa meets the 67% population immunity levels by the end of 2021.

More work needs to be done to mobilise all adults to register and to vaccinate.

Work has been done to vaccinate key exposed economic and workplace sectors, e.g. mining, education, SAPS, SANDF, DCS. These sectors are being expanded.

More workplace vaccination sites are being rolled out in both the public and private sectors. SACTWU has led a bargaining council approach with great success.

- **Transport**

Extensive engagements have taken place to deal with health and safety plans for public transport e.g. taxis, busses and trains.

COSATU supports the R1.1 billion relief measures for the taxi industry. However, the Federation has stated that this cannot be a blank cheque. It must be conditional upon the sector becoming compliant with all laws but in particular the UIF, COIDA, BCEA, tax and traffic laws. Government has however been woefully weak and buckled to pressure from the sector abandon social distancing in taxis.

COSATU has met with SANTACO and the Taxi Driver's Association. Follow up engagements will take place to find a resolution to this crisis.

- **PPEs**

COSATU and affiliates have held numerous engagements on PPEs with government, the Solidarity Fund and business.

These engagements were to ensure that sufficient supply exists and is procured, that such supplies must be locally made and that workers receive them.

A joint task team was set up between DTIC, industry and COSATU. It has 6 working streams focused on cloth masks, medical textiles, sanitisers, plastic screens, rubber gloves, medical kits and ventilators. This has helped to ramp up local production. This has resulted in a shift in PPEs procurement by the Solidarity Fund from over 90% imports to over 75% locally produced.

SACTWU has undertaken extensive investigations in government and the private sector to monitor local procurement and compliance with Treasury regulations.

NEHAWU has undertaken a comprehensive inspection programme of the distribution of PPEs and conditions at public healthcare institutions.

SADTU conducted detailed research on school readiness.

These have formed the basis for COSATU engagements with Parliament for their intervention into the national PPEs scandals.

It is critical for all affiliates to undertake such proactive work.



- **Education**

Nedlac repeatedly attempted to engage the Department of Basic Education on its plans to ensure the safety of learners and staff.

The responsiveness of the Department was underwhelming and an indication of why schools are frequently not ready to reopen.

- **Alcohol**

COSATU has supported the need to tackle the abuse of alcohol and the massive burden it has placed on healthcare institutions.

It is critical that such measures are ramped up. Industry must play its part in reducing the abuse of alcohol. But equally consumers have to accept responsibility as adults.

Engagements are taking place on what measures industry and government can put in place to reduce the widespread abuse of alcohol. A draft social compact has been developed and will soon be finalised.

It includes a ban on drinking and driving, reductions in when alcohol can be sold and how much consumers can buy, consumer education, restrictions in advertising and the industry contributing towards government's healthcare infrastructure.

Additional support is needed from government and the private sector to help sectors badly affected by the ban e.g. agriculture, alcohol, bottlers, retailers, restaurants etc. This includes tax deferrals, credit access and loan holidays.

- **Retail and Tourism**

Similar engagements will take place to see what measures can be put in place by government and the private sector to assist retail and tourism to recover and in particular to protect workers' wages and jobs.

2. KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng Violence Disaster Relief Fund Proposals

In the immediate aftermath COSATU tabled the below package at Nedlac to form the basis for a national disaster relief fund to assist workers, their families, communities and the economy to begin the processes of rebuilding:

- Food parcels for affected communities who now have no money or place to buy food.
- Reinstatement of the R350 Covid-19 Grant for all unemployed persons across the country.
- Insurance relief from insurance companies and SASRIA for destroyed businesses and property.
- Relief from government for those not covered by insurance.
- Unemployment Insurance Fund's Covid-19 TERS relief for workers from KZN and GP who will lose wages and jobs as their workplaces have been destroyed.
- Pension withdrawal relief for workers who have lost wages or are struggling.
- Tax and municipal rates relief for affected businesses.
- A revamped Loan Guarantee Scheme to assist companies to rebuild.
- Bank loan and insurance policy payment holidays for affected workers and businesses.
- Tripling the Presidential Employment Programme's budget from R11 billion to R33 billion so that it can create at least 2 million jobs.
- A moratorium on retrenchments by employers in both the private and private sector.
- Mobilisation of donations to the Solidarity Fund to provide help to the indigent.
- Practical actions by government and businesses to ramp up local procurement to help save countless



companies and jobs.

- A massive ramping up of the vaccine roll out programme so that the economy can emerge safely as soon as possible.

3. Presidential Jobs Summit

The President Jobs' Summit's implementation was overseen by the Presidential Working Committee met on the first Monday of each month. It was chaired by the President and included Ministers, the leadership of business and labour.

It was a strategic and critical venue to push key interventions with regards to the implementation of the Jobs Summit Agreement.

COSATU was able to fast track interventions in such key areas as the Eskom Social Compact, Scrap Metal Export Levy, Public Procurement Bill, water licensing, the UIF's Temporary Employment Relief Scheme amongst others.

Other areas needing further pressure include digital spectrum, the scarce skills regime of the Immigration Act, the pledged but yet to be seen R100 billion commitment by business for new companies etc.

Since the implementation of the lockdown it has not met. Its set meetings have been repeatedly postponed by government.

It has now been integrated into the 3 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) structures.

These are meetings with the President every other month and his relevant ministers, in particular the economic cluster with the leadership of social partners.

There are monthly meetings of the 7 a side ERRP Leadership Team. Under it are 4 and possibly later 6 working streams. The 4 working streams are currently focused on energy security and the Eskom Social Compact, the transport sector, SMMEs and state capacitation.

COSATU engaged extensively with social partners at Nedlac on what elements are needed in the economic recovery strategy. Significant areas of consensus were achieved.

These include on the need for:

- Impact investments;
- A massive infrastructure programme that targets ports, rail, energy, agriculture, water, housing etc;
- Fixing Eskom and other key SOEs;
- A mass employment programme;
- Fast tracking the roll out of the digital economy;
- Fixing the ports and Transnet so exports can reach their destinations; and
- Fixing Metro Rail so workers can get to work on time.

Business tried to raise labour market reforms. Whilst business denies this is an attempt to undermine workers' rights, it was intended to weaken the labour laws. COSATU was able to block this and instead raise the need to strengthen the labour market institutions and address the existing gaps in the legislation.

The Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (ERRP) was adopted by Cabinet and tabled at Parliament in October 2020. A copy of the Plan is attached as an appendix to this report. A more detailed analysis will be developed for the CEC, including commitments by social partners and organised labour.

Further engagements need to be held on medium and long term interventions with government and business at Nedlac.

4. Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan

The Economic Recovery Leadership Task Team at NEDLAC has engaged on an implementation framework. The meeting agreed to focus on the commitments in the following four critical areas for the recovery of the economy:

- Freight and public transport;
- Energy security;
- Localisation; and
- Enabling a supportive ecosystem for SMMEs.

Additional work streams may need to be added.

Energy Security Work stream

The overall objective of this work stream is to ensure energy security for economic recovery and growth through policy coherence, collaboration between all social partners and increased accountability. It's work is based upon the Eskom Social Compact and Implementation Plan tabled by COSATU and endorsed by government and social partners.

The work stream has agreed to focus on:

- a) Fit for purpose energy institutions and infrastructure centred upon Eskom;
- b) Financial sustainability including in respect of:
 - i. Tariff management;
 - ii. Addressing corruption and illegal and illicit activity;
 - iii. Debt recovery/payment for services (a revived Masakhane campaign); and
 - iv. A balance sheet solution.
- c) Increasing electrical generation capacity including through:
 - v. Self-generation e.g. for mining industry to protect mining sector jobs; and
 - vi. Enabling the production of alternative sources of energy, e.g. ensuring that Eskom enters renewable energy as an owner and generator of renewable energy capacity and not merely as a procurer.
- d) Developing a just transition road map in terms of energy with all relevant parties, .e.g. to extend the life span of power stations and coal mines where possible, where it is not possible to extend then to convert to other energy generation or alternative economic activities e.g. production of renewable energy technology.

Localisation work stream

The localisation work stream agreed on seven focus areas in respect of setting and achieving localisation targets

The following areas are being prioritised:

- a) Report backs on business targets, e.g. large procurers such as the mining sector and key sectoral targets e.g. cooking oil for the fast food industry, cement for construction etc;
- b) Labour and Community will develop an implementation framework detailing their localisation commitments; investment vehicles; identified champions and targets;
- c) Social partners will consider how best to expand capacity with having due regard to the lack of industrial capacity, value chains, deepening aggregate localisation and small business development support;



- d) SARS will participate in the localisation work stream in the context of curbing of the illicit economy through resource mobilisation;
- e) The fast-tracking of the Public Procurement Bill which is on the medium-term agenda; and
- f) Proudly SA will engage with social partners in relation to additional efforts to bolster the buy local marketing campaign.

Enabling a supportive ecosystem for SMMEs work stream

The SMME work stream has prioritised two short term interventions:

- a) The identification and warring of unnecessarily stringent license and permit requirements; and
- b) Mechanisms to assist SMMEs negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Freight and public transport

The freight and public transport workstream agreed to prioritise the following for short term interventions:

- a) Reducing congestions at wet and dry ports and improving freight efficiency;
- b) Addressing vandalism of transport infrastructure especially Metro Rail;
- c) Passenger rail modernization;
- d) Road infrastructure investment and delivery including job creation; and
- e) Minibus taxi transformation, e.g. formalisation of the sector, ensuring taxi drivers enjoy their legal rights, protections and benefits.

Economic Recovery Action Plan Commitments for Reporting Energy Security (Including the Social Compact to support Eskom)

Area	Commitments from the ERAP		Responsible Constituency
Energy security	1 (a)	Implementation of Eskom Social Compact	All
	1 (b)	Self-generation projects	All

Localization

Area	Commitments from the ERAP		Responsible Constituency
Localisation (to integrate work from Job Summit and TIC Chamber	4 (e)	Organised labour commitments to buy local & invest in local manufacturing	Labour

Enabling Reforms and employment

Area	ERAP commitments		Responsible Constituency
Corruption and efficient govt spending	9 (f) & (g)	Business organisations, civil society and trade unions actions	Business Labour Community

Mobilization of Financial and human resources

Areas	Commitments		Responsible Constituency
Mobilisation of financial resources	11 (a)	Joint initiative to mobilise financial resources	All Social Partners
	11 (b)	Input into MTBS	All Social Partners
Social partners compliance and will	11 (e)	Tax compliance	All Social Partners
	11 (f)	Statutory and contractual obligations	All Social Partners
	14 (g)	Reinforce ethical culture	All Social Partners
Mobilisation of technical & human resources	11 (i)	Mobilise technical and human resources in areas of govt weakness	Business Labour Community

2.1 Country Investment Presidential Council and Technical Advisory Panel

These structures have been established under the Presidency to oversee the government’s investment drive to spur economic growth. Two Presidential Investment Summits have been successfully held. The majority of their committed investments have been met. However, they have not had their desired impact on the economy, to spur economic growth and reduce unemployment.

COSATU President Zingiswa Losi has been appointed to the Presidential Council and COSATU Parliamentary Coordinator Matthew Parks to the Technical Advisory Panel. These are work in progress.

2.2 Eskom Social Compact

COSATU welcomed the signing of the Eskom Social Compact and its Implementation Plan by the leadership of government, business, labour and community at Nedlac on 8 December 2020.

This was an historic moment where government and social partners have come together to agree on a social compact to resolve a crisis bedeviling the entire nation.

COSATU developed the Eskom Social Compact as the many challenges facing the Eskom are a threat not only to workers at Eskom itself but in fact workers across the nation. The economy needs reliable and affordable energy for it to recover. Continued uncontrolled load shedding is a risk to jobs and the economy.

COSATU was pleased that Nedlac partners have endorsed the Eskom Social Compact. It presents a comprehensive plan with 35 key intervention areas to stabilise and rebuild Eskom. Key components include:

- Ensuring the security of workers’ jobs;
- Tackling corruption and wasteful expenditure and holding the culprits to account;



- Reducing a bloated management and their exorbitant perks;
- Reviewing all contracts with Eskom to ensure that they are legal and affordable;
- Establishing clear control systems to ensure quality coal is supplied to Eskom;
- Compelling Eskom to enter the renewable energy generation space as an owner of generation capacity;
- Putting in place clear just transition processes to ensure that coal power stations and mines reaching the end of their life span are extended, converted to other energy generation or alternative economic activities. This is critical to ensure that workers are not retrenched, and communities not devastated.
- A clear debt recovery plan for all debtors, municipalities, government departments, State Owned Enterprises, businesses and other large defaulters.
- Ramping up investment in expanding energy generation capacity;
- Placing Eskom on a sustainable debt trajectory so that it can prioritise investment in maintenance and generation expansion and thus reducing load shedding;
- Locally producing renewable energy technology, in areas where jobs are at risk; and
- Producing electric and hydro energy vehicles locally.

The Federation is confident that if the progressive objectives of the Eskom Social Compact are implemented in full by Eskom, government, business and community, not only can we end the days of Eskom being a burden to the state and an obstacle to economic growth, but in fact the energy sector can become a source of job creation, export and manufacturing opportunities. It can drive the recovery of South Africa's economy and the region's industrialisation. It can enable South Africa to exceed its climate change targets.

A dedicated task team has been established and is working at Nedlac to monitor its implementation and hold all parties accountable. Workers cannot rely simply upon good wishes. Neither can the nation afford for Eskom to fail.

5. SOEs Presidential Commission

A Presidential Commission has been established to oversee the SOEs and to ensure that they are saved. Many are in varying degrees of collapse e.g. Eskom, Transnet, PRASA, SABC, DENEL, RAF, SAA Group. Others e.g. SA Express have died.

New models need to be developed to ensure their revival and sustainability. These existing models are dying, and workers are made to pay the price with wages, pensions and job losses.

The 1st Deputy President of COSATU Mike Shingange and COSATU Deputy Parliamentary Coordinator, Tony Ehrenreich are representing COSATU on it.

Ongoing engagements with affected Affiliates are needed to develop clear plans to ensure these SOEs are saved.

5.1 SOEs Shareholder Management Bill

This Bill has been delayed for many years. It is now said to be being revived. It is meant to provide clear powers for the shareholder, namely government, to intervene timeously in the event of SOEs not performing as they should or in the event of malfeasance.

COSATU needs to ensure this Bill is prioritised and tabled at Parliament as a matter of urgency.



6. Public Investment Corporation Amendment Act and PIC Commission of Enquiry

The Act was passed by Parliament in 2019 in the face of severe resistance from the Minister for Finance and Treasury. It has now been signed into law by the President at COSATU's insistence.

COSATU was central to its drafting and passage by Parliament. It provides for worker representation on the PIC Board, pro-worker investment guidelines and transparency and mandating provisions.

COSATU now has 2 seats on the PIC Board and FEDUSA 1 seat.

COSATU participated in the PIC Commission of Enquiry and welcomed its reports on corrupt activities. The NPA must now act upon the report's anti-corruption recommendations.

However, the PIC Commission has called for the rejection of the PIC Amendment Bill and its provision for worker representation and pro-worker investment guidelines. It has recommended that the PIC be allowed to appoint its own board and chairperson. This is in direct violation of the PFMA governing all public entities and is tantamount to privatisation.

6.1 Edcon

In November 2018, Edcon approached SACTWU, SACCAWU and COSATU and the PIC for assistance to prevent its possible liquidation. It was struggling for a variety of reasons, and in particular to an unmanageable debt burden. It was on the verge of collapse if urgent assistance was not provided.

Edcon working together with its funders, the banks, landlords, SACTWU, SACCAWU and COSATU developed a turn around plan. This was then taken to the UIF and the PIC for support.

This was agreed to after much effort by all involved. This helped to save 40 000 direct and 100 000 indirect jobs in the retail and clothing sectors. Unfortunately, Covid-19 came a year later and collapsed much of the turn around strategy that was being successfully implemented. Edcon was then compelled to seek new owners and to be broken up. Whilst Edcon as a holding company ceased to exist, large parts of it were bought by other companies, and many jobs though not all were saved.

7. Labour Market

7.1 Unemployment Insurance and Labour Laws Amendment Acts

It was supported by COSATU passed by Parliament and came into effect in 2019. The key changes to the UIF include:

- Increase UIF benefits from 8 to 12 months.
- Increase maternity leave benefits from 54% to 66% of salary within the thresholds.
- Allow the Minister to increase maternity leave payments up to certain limits if enough funds are available without amending the act.
- Allow still born births and third trimester miscarriages to qualify for maternity leave.
- Separate maternity leave credits from UIF credits.
- Provide for reduced time workers under full time UIF benefits.
- Cover learnerships under the UIF.
- Deceased' beneficiaries will be entitled to the deceased's remaining benefits.
- Reduce time needed to accumulate UIF.
- Allow the Minister to issue regulations for domestic and SMME workers if needs be.
- Includes public service employees who would now be covered, e.g. if they are dismissed. Their inclusion



will also significantly boost the UIF and provide space to increase further access to it by unemployed workers or mothers on maternity leave.

Once the Covid-19 pandemic has passed and the UIF's finances recover, the next round of UIF expansion negotiations will take place at Nedlac to see how resignations, informal sector and self-employed workers can be included.

UIF Covid-19 Temporary Employment Relief Scheme

R40 billion was set aside by the UIF to assist workers retrenched or placed on unpaid leave for a 3 month period. This is separate from the normal UIF benefits that workers are entitled to. By March 2021 R60 billion had been paid to over 5.5 million workers across all sectors of the economy.

The Covid-19 TERS was resuscitated in July and backdated to March 2021 to cover vulnerable workers who are not able to work safely from work or home due to age or co-morbidities as well as sectors of the economy restricted from fully or partially operating e.g. the liquor, tourism, hospitality, restaurants, hotels, cinemas, bars, sports and events value chains.

Many challenges have been experienced with the UIF. It was not built for a shutdown of the entire economy and subsequently is unable to deal with the disbursements of Millions of Rands on a daily basis. COSATU has engaged with the UIF on a daily basis to reinforce its capacity and address gaps in the system.

This resulted in a new toll-free hotline being established with its staffing having been increased from 55 to over 600 to answer questions pertaining to the disaster relief fund.

The online systems have been reinforced to allow for employers and workers to apply online and to check on the status of their applications. The system was increased to process over 450 000 applications and payments a day. It has been linked to the banks to help verify bank account details.

Many challenges were experienced in the UIF's communications plan. These are being addressed with advertisements now being placed on various media platforms.

Employers were compelled by the Ministerial Directive to apply on behalf of workers to help ease the burden on the UIF systems. This has helped increase the uptake of UIF applications. However, there are some employers who have refused to apply. Often because they had never registered their workers with the UIF or had fraudulently failed to pay their UIF levies to the UIF.

Problems arose with some employers not paying the workers the UIF funds due to them. The UIF is paying funds directly into workers' accounts.

Bargaining Councils were encouraged to apply on behalf of their sectors too to ease the burden upon workers and the UIF. This was done by the Clothing and Textile Bargaining Councils. It is now being done by two bargaining councils in the passenger and transport sectors. Many other bargaining councils declined to do so due to insufficient capacity on their part.

The Covid-19 pandemic points to a number of gaps in the unemployment insurance fund with the exclusion of public sector workers, informal workers as well as freelance workers from contributions has left particularly freelance as well as informal sector workers vulnerable and without income protection for the duration of the lockdown. COSATU and its affiliate must grapple with the possibility of including groups of workers that would normally not be a part of the unemployment insurance fund.

Unions must develop and implement education awareness programmes and audits of their sectors to ensure that all employers needing to have applied to the UIF and that these monies have been paid to workers.

Unions should develop programmes to help workers struggling to receive their UIF monies. Unions should link these activities to a membership recruitment drive.



7.2 Labour Laws Amendment Act

This Act was a Private Member's Bill, drafted by a former ACDP Member of Parliament in response to COSATU's call for paid parental leave. It was driven through Parliament by COSATU.

Parental leave came into effect on 1 January 2020. All fathers are now entitled to 10 days parental leave when their children are born. Mothers who had a child born from a surrogacy pregnancy or are in a same sex partnership are also included.

All employers are required to provide 10 days parental leave. Workers can claim this once a year. Additional leave will have to be claimed under annual leave. Employers are entitled to ask for a copy of the birth certificate confirming the birth and parentage of the child.

It is critical for all unions to make sure workers are aware of their new right and that employers too are aware and abide by this.

This includes PSCBC unions. There have been many complaints from workers of employers, both public and private, refusing to provide for parental leave.

The amendments to the UI and LLA Acts have come into effect, with the exception of paid parental and adoption leave for public servants as well as the inclusion of public servants under the protection of the UIF.

DPSA has failed to announce when they will be implemented and to undertake the necessary administrative action. To date members of the public service are not covered by the UIF in the event of dismissal nor are they entitled to 10 days parental leave. This has impacted upon hundreds of public servants who feel aggrieved by their illegal exclusion.

Treasury has refused to contribute to and public servants' contributions to the UIF due to cost constraints. It has instead offered to reimburse the UIF when public servants claim from it.

Government's refusal to support the UIF sends a message to private sector employers that UIF compliance is not important. It also denies the UIF badly needed injections of approximately R400 million per month that could have then been used to increase unemployment benefits.

This matter was taken up with the President and the Ministers for Employment and Labour, DPSA and Treasury in December. It needs to be followed up and taken up as well by the PSCBC.

7.3 National Minimum Wage and Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Acts

The NMW Act came into effect on 1 January 2019. It was a long-standing demand and campaign of COSATU in addition to being a key commitment of the Freedom Charter and the ANC's 2014 national elections manifesto.

Key aspects of the National Minimum Wage Act when it came into effect in 2019 included:

- All workers to be paid at least R20 per hour.
- Farm and domestic workers to be pegged at 90% and 75% of the NMW for the first two years and then to be at 100% of the NMW.
- EPWP and CWP workers to be pegged at 55% of the NMW.
- A NMW Commission to be established to monitor the enforcement and impacts of the NMW and to review and increase it annually.
- The NMW Commission to take over the functions of the Employment Conditions Commission and to include representatives of labour, government, business and community.
- The annual review of the NMW to take into account inflation, the cost of living, wage inequality and poverty.



- Employers who cannot afford to pay a NMW must apply to the DOL for exemptions. Regulations will provide the criteria for such applications e.g. financial disclosures, the extent and length of the exemption etc.
- Employers who fraudulently receive exemptions or fail to pay the NMW will be fined and required to pay the monies due to workers, including the fines.

In March 2020 the NMW and its pegged levels were adjusted for inflationary linked increases. In March 2021 under pressure from COSATU they were increased by CPI plus 1.5%. Farm workers were also equalised with the NMW and domestic workers were increased to 88% of the NMW. Domestic workers should be equalised to the NMW in 2022.

The COSATU Deputy General Secretary, Solly Phetoe, represents COSATU on the NMW Commission.

7.4 Labour Relations Amendment Act

As part of the NMW engagements, amendments were made to the LRA. Attempts were made by business to hinder the right to strike. These were blocked by COSATU at Nedlac. Key aspects of the Labour Relations Amendment Act include:

- Clarifying that the balloting of members before embarking on strikes by unions are secret ballots. This has been in the LRA since 1995 and is the practise of most unions.
- Providing for a transition period for those unions that don't have balloting clauses in their constitutions. Again, this has been in the LRA since 1995. Both clauses also apply to employers' organisations before embarking upon lock outs.
- An attempt by business to require balloting of offers made during negotiations was defeated by COSATU.
- Allows the CCMA to provide advisory arbitration when violence has occurred during strikes, constitutional rights of people are threatened or in the absence of the complete collapse of collective bargaining. This is an advisory arbitration and not binding. Parties can reject the proposed settlements. However, they are required to consult members and to indicate their decisions within 7 or if needed 12 days. Balloting is not required for this process. An attempt by business to require the suspension of strikes during this process was defeated by COSATU.
- Allowing the Minister of Labour to extend collective agreements where parties are sufficiently representative. This will assist unions struggling to reach 51% majority thresholds due to the rise of labour broking. It will also cover outsourced workers with the collective agreements reached by unions. This is a major victory in the fight against labour brokers and outsourcing.
- Allowing default picketing rules to be set through engagements between government, labour and business at Nedlac. This will help protect the rights of workers to picket when rogue employers attempt to intimidate and block them.

Contrary to media hype by SAFTU etc. these Acts mark a victory and not a defeat for workers. 6.4 million workers or 47% of the work force will see their wages rise. Workers' rights to strike have been protected. Collective bargaining has been extended to cover additional workers where unions are sufficiently representative.

7.5 Employment Equity Amendment Bill

The Employment Equity Amendment Bill was tabled at Parliament in 2020. It is expected to be passed by the National Assembly, by the end of 2021, the NCOP in mid-2022 and to come into effect by the end of 2022. It will help accelerate employment equity.

The Employment Equity Amendment Bill provides badly needed interventions to strengthen government's ability to hold employers accountable for their role and failures to adhere to the Employment Equity Act. Key progressive provisions in the Bill include:

- Requiring employers in their EE Annual Reports to provide confirmation that they have paid all their workers at or above the National Minimum Wage;
- Expanding the definition of disability to include intellectual and sensory, a long overdue correction;
- Empowering the Minister to set economic sectoral, sub-sectoral, regional, sub-regional and occupation specific targets; enabling more precise targets for sectors, occupations and regions that are notorious for their failures to reflect South Africa's demographics;
- Allowing for regional and sub-regional variations, critical given the diversity of South Africa's population found in different provinces etc;
- Requiring employers to consult trade unions on employment equity targets, helping to foster a more inclusive approach to meeting targets and supporting collective bargaining;
- Empowering labour inspectors to inspect and ensure compliance with the EE Act;
- Empowering the Minister to issue compliance certificates to employers in good standing with the EE Act and to require such certificates for companies applying for government contracts.
- This provision is a welcome step forward requiring employers doing business with the state to be in compliance with labour laws and acting in a way that supports good labour practises. Workers' hard-earned taxes should not be used to reward abusive employers.

7.6 Compensation of Injury on Duty Amendment Bill

The Compensation of Injury on Duty Amendment Bill was tabled at Parliament in 2020. It is expected to be passed by the National Assembly, by the end of 2021, the NCOP in mid-2022 and to come into effect by the end of 2022. It will help ensure domestic workers are covered and help to modernise the Compensation Fund.

COSATU welcomes the progressive provisions of the COIDA Bill. It is long overdue and will extend cover and relief to millions of workers, in particular women. COSATU's support is based upon the following critical interventions included in the COIDA Bill:

- Domestic workers will now be covered, benefiting almost a million largely women workers who had been unconstitutionally excluded;
- An expanded definition of workers' dependents and beneficiaries to include their spouse(s), children, siblings, parents and grandparents, thus reflecting South Africa's cultural norms;
- Diseases and post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from the workplace will now be included, providing relief for millions of workers in the mining, security and other sectors, and women;
- Introducing a no-fault rule, to replace practises in the past that have been abused in the past to deny relief to workers;
- Providing for stiff penalties for non-compliant employers;
- Providing incentives for compliant employers;
- Empowering labour inspectors to ensure compliance by employers;
- Allowing courts to place caps on the exorbitant fees claimed by lawyers;
- Extending the time frame for submitting claims from 1 to 3 years; and
- Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of employers, contractors and sub-contractors; thus, protecting millions of workers who otherwise fall through the cracks.

Whilst COSATU welcomes the progressive thrust of the Bill, it needs to be further strengthened to:

- Uplift rehabilitation from optional to a right, this is critical to prevent employers retrenching injured workers when they should be ensuring their rehabilitation and return to work; and
- Setting clear oversight mechanisms for insurance and compensation funds, e.g. that workers constitute 50% of their boards, they are held to account by the Minister and clear appeal mechanisms exist for workers denied their claims.



7.7 Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Bill

The OHSA seeks to address many gaps in the Act. However, it has been delayed by several years in the Department. It left Nedlac in 2016 and has yet to be tabled at Parliament. It has only recently been advertised for public comment.

It is hoped that it will be tabled at Parliament at the end of 2021 so that it could be passed in 2022 and come into effect in 2023.

COSATU will be requesting that an additional provision be inserted to provide for workers to refuse to work in unsafe conditions and to be protected from victimisation when doing so. This is based upon the experience of many workers in the pandemic who were forced to work in dangerous conditions. COSATU negotiated with the Department to issue Ministerial Directives providing workers such rights and protections.

7.8 International Labour Organisation - Convention 190 on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

Convention 190 is aimed at tackling sexual harassment and violence at the workplace. It was adopted by the ILO in 2019. Cabinet announced its support for it in November 2020. It is currently before Parliament where both the Portfolio and Select Committees on Employment and Labour have recommended its ratification. It is expected to be approved by Parliament by September 2021.

COSATU has been at the forefront leading the campaign for South Africa to ratify this crucial ILO Convention. We have done so as part of our gender program of action, which includes taking a firm and unwavering stand against gender-based violence.

It is symbolically significant that ratification come before December, during the 16 Days of No Violence Against Women & Children Campaign. December is the festive month. COSATU says that there is nothing festive about the scourge of gender-based violence. Cabinet and Parliament's approval is an important confirmation of our position.

While we are of the view that the ratification process could have been done quicker, we are pleased that there is now no turning back from converting this progressive tool in the fight against workplace harassment and violence to a central pillar of our employment law regime.

Its eventual and now inevitable ratification will be a critical boost in the fight against the pandemic of Gender Based Violence that women are subject to across countless workplaces.

The gender-based violence challenges facing South Africa require speed and diligence from the state, not endless shuffling of papers or sleeping on the job.

Parallel to the Parliamentary process towards ratification, the Department of Employment and Labour needs to immediately begin engaging Organised Labour at Nedlac on a review of our labour and criminal legislation to ensure that they are in compliance with the progressive provisions of Convention 190 and where amendments are needed, to fast track these.

7.9 Scarce Skills Policy

The Departments of Employment and Labour as well as Higher Education and Training have committed to tabling a comprehensive and updated list of proposed scarce skills at Nedlac for engagement with social partners.

This is critical as the existing scarce skills regime is outdated. Implementation is equally critical as many low skilled jobs are given to migrant labour when local unemployed workers should be targeted to fill such jobs. This is particularly prevalent in the restaurants, fuel, domestic and agricultural sectors.



Concerns have been raised with regards to the initial draft list of scarce skills by government as many of the professions identified cannot be said to be scarce nor unavailable in South Africa.

7.10 CCMA

The protection and promotion of fair labour rights in South Africa is enshrined in the Constitution. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), the entity that is mandated by law to oversee labour disputes is under imminent threat as a result of the drastic cuts to its funding in the 2021/22 budget as well as over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

Organised Labour in Nedlac (COSATU, FEDUSA & NACTU) submitted a memorandum to Cabinet through the Minister of Employment and Labour to explain Organised Labour's call for the immediate reversal of these draconian budget cuts to the CCMA in the interest of protecting workers' hard won labour rights.

The R300 million budget cuts to the CCMA's budget over the next three years is already having a devastating impact on the working class. Over two million South Africans lost their jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic. This number is likely to grow with the trimming of the CCMA budget as workers fall victim to procedurally and substantively unfair dismissals, practices and wage cuts.

The decision to withdraw much needed funds from the CCMA is a reversal of workers' hard-won rights to fair labour practices.

The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the precarity of workers as employer make use of this period to exploit and abuse vulnerable workers. Workers will be left to fall through the cracks of the budget cuts as the CCMA is under resourced and thus unable to handle disputes.

The CCMA has been the worst affected labour market institution with regards to budget cuts as the CCMA grapples with the overwhelming caseloads.

Even though the CCMA is currently doing everything possible to function under these crippling conditions, it is workers who will suffer the most as employers make use of the CCMA's weaknesses to exploit and unfairly dismiss workers. Financial resources are vital for the success of the CCMA to satisfactorily provide conciliation, mediation and arbitration. The budget cuts on the CCMA are seen by Organised Labour and other unions and workers as a new wave of attacks on worker's rights to labour protection.

Since the 1st December 2020, the CCMA has reduced the services of the part-time commissioners and has only been functioning with full time commissioners. These excessive cuts are forcing the CCMA to reduce the number of Commissioners employed, thus not only contributing to the ranks of the unemployed directly, but lengthening delays in workers' cases being heard by the CCMA. These delays will result in thousands of workers giving up and simply walking away and accepting the loss of their jobs and rights.

The CCMA has already been forced to cancel conciliation services, the first step to resolve workplace disputes in a manner that seeks to preserve and restore the relationship between employer and employee. The CCMA has also been compelled to reduce walk in services disadvantaging thousands of workers.

These cuts to the CCMA's budget and capacity come as the CCMA battles to cope with a flood of workers seeking help as millions face abuses, lost wages and their jobs. The rights of workers are silently being reversed through the implementation of such budget cuts.

COSATU is engaging the Minister and the Alliance to reverse the budgets cuts to the CCMA. COSATU has requested Cabinet and Treasury to develop a task team with organised labour and business to investigate alternative sources of funding for the CCMA. These may come from the SETAs and other possible sources.



8. Budgets

COSATU continues to present its submissions to the Parliamentary budget public hearings where they enjoyed widespread support from MPs across party lines.

Whilst appreciating the fiscal, economic and other constraints facing government, the federation was not able to support many key aspects of the budget.

Key concerns with regards to the budget included:

- The midnight unilateral withdrawal by government from the 2020/21 public service wage agreement.
- Not slashing the bloated cabinet and management structures sufficiently.
- Not increasing taxes upon the wealthy.
- The failure to present a plan to deal concretely with corruption and wasteful expenditure.
- Not accounting for departments failures to meet key service delivery targets e.g. sanitation and infrastructure by the Department of Basic Education.
- Not sufficiently resourcing the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition industrial plans.
- Lack of a clear plan to turn the economy around.
- Lack of clear plans to save embattled SOEs and entities e.g. Eskom, SAA Group, SA Express, Transnet, Metro Rail, SABC, DENEL, RAF.

8.1 2020/21 Supplementary Budget and Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement

A supplementary budget was tabled at Parliament in June and the MTBPS in October 2021. It largely contained the various social and economic relief measures that were announced by the President in April.

This include the rapid rolling out of an expected R53 billion in UIF Covid-19 TERS, increasing social grants for 6 months, a long-term unemployed grant of R350 for 6 months, a R200 billion credit guarantee loan for businesses etc.

However, it did not include any further stimulus funding. COSATU stated that this is the biggest failure of the supplementary budget. The economy needs to be stimulated to inject growth, save and create jobs, protect fragile industries and sectors and ensure revenue for the state.

Treasury has instead indicated its preference to begin reducing state expenditure, central to which is its abandonment of the 2020 public service wage agreement and the imposition of a further 3-year wage freeze.

It has subsequently called upon SALGA and its Bargaining Council to abandon the 2020 municipal wage agreement.

The other major failures of the supplementary budget are the inability of the state to decisively tackle corruption and wasteful expenditure which consume on average 10% of the budget every year according to the Auditor-General's reports. This amounts to approximately R150 billion per annum. That alone is equal to the amount Treasury seeks to cut from the public service wage bill. The budgets offered no plan on how to stem this tide or to recapacitate the state.

8.2 2021/22 Budget

The 2021/22 budget includes crucially the implementation of the 2020/1 wage freeze and the additional 3-year wage freeze until 2024.

There was a lower revenue shortfall from the projected R310 billion to R230 billion due to higher gold, platinum and other mineral prices and thus better tax collections.



However, this is unlikely to persuade Treasury to retreat from its wage freeze imposition.

Drastic budget cuts to key entities and departments e.g. CCMA and DTIC are likely to continue.

The key challenge for COSATU and affiliates is to intensify our response to the wage freeze as well as other budgetary cuts that will have a negative impact upon workers. This will need to include mobilising workers, public engagements, presenting alternatives etc.

8.3 VAT increase

VAT was increased from 14% to 15% in 2018 to address an R13 billion shortfall that arose largely from the increased funding for NSFAS in 2017. Whilst COSATU was not able to stop or reverse this increase, Treasury did concede to add additional essential items to the VAT exempt products. These included sanitary pads, white bread and cake flour. Additional proposals to exempt school supplies was rejected by Treasury.

Parliament supported COSATU's proposal that the impact of the VAT increase be monitored and reported to Parliament by Treasury. This has not happened.

COSATU needs to continue to push its other demand be implemented, namely ensuring that all indigent households receive the free electricity and water allocations they are entitled too and that these allocations be increased.

8.4 Pension Funds Amendment Bill

In May 2020, COSATU and SACTWU made proposals to Treasury and Parliament on the need to allow workers who have lost wages to access a portion of their pension funds.

Several engagements have taken place between COSATU and Treasury to discuss this. However, it took months for Treasury to respond and agree to these engagements.

COSATU made two proposed options on how this could be done e.g. through a Ministerial Direction allowing access for emergency purposes or through an expansion of the existing home loan option for pension fund holders.

Treasury initially indicated that it is opposed to COSATU's proposal on the basis that it does not believe it is necessary, that workers can seek relief from the UIF and that it undermines the sustainability of pension funds. Treasury had initially stated that it does not believe that either option proposed by COSATU is legally possible.

Workers are likely to ask why government and the private sector are allowed to benefit from workers' pension funds and how they are invested, but when workers and unions ask that they be invested and utilised to benefit workers, then they are told no.

A Private Member's Bill has since been drafted by a DA Member of Parliament in response to and in support of COSATU's pension funds proposal.

COSATU should continue to support the Private Member's Bill as it addresses COSATU's proposals to allow workers to access a portion of their pension funds. It is already before Parliament.

Subsequently Treasury has engaged COSATU and agreed to our proposals. They committed to tabling an amendment bill with the budget at February in Parliament. This bill will provide for workers to be able to withdraw limited portions of their pension funds as an economic relief measure. COSATU has proposed that workers be allowed to choose cash withdrawals as well as loan options.

The agreement with Treasury is that this bill should be prioritised and passed by Parliament by June so that it can come into effect on 1 October 2021. However, this has not happened. Treasury has continuously delayed



and given mixed signals on it.

It does not matter whether the Private Member or Treasury's bill is passed in the end, as long as one is passed, and it contains COSATU's proposals and it comes into effect in 2022.

9. National Health Insurance Towards Universal Health Care

The South African health system is in urgent need of an overhaul in terms of its financing arrangements, management and the ability to deliver quality healthcare services. There is consensus that the health system is dysfunctional, and that the quality of the health services is poor. Access to quality health services often depends on one's geographic location, race, employment status, income level, gender, and where the healthcare services are delivered: public or private health sector. The inequality in the financing and provision of health services between public and private sectors as well as provincial and district variation has detrimental impact in terms of the well-being of the population.

The unequal distribution of health spent in South Africa and the deteriorating state of public health care necessitates the implementation of the NHI. Ours is a society that has no option but to muster courage, to make resources available, to develop institutions and technical capacity and to mobilize the masses of the people to confront our four concurrent epidemics comprising poverty-related illnesses such as infectious diseases (including HIV/AIDS and TB), maternal and child deaths, non-communicable diseases and violence and injury.

COSATU together with like-minded organisations have on an ongoing basis called for the speedy implementation of the NHI as a step closer towards the realisation of quality health care for many vulnerable groups. Unfortunately, a few organisations with very deep pockets continue to fund the narrative that the NHI is a threat to economic growth and jobs, this narrative unfortunately takes us backwards and deny the poor and the working class of their fundamental right to quality health care.

The findings of the health market Inquiry report confirm COSATU's fierce opposition to the commercialisation of health and its consequence on both quality and access to healthcare.

The outcomes of the report necessitate the implementation of the national health insurance which will create a single public health system for South Africa. The speedy and efficient roll-out of the NHI will ensure that we achieve better health outcomes for all South Africans. We view the finding of the inquiry as one of the crucial processes in affirming our beliefs that privatisation and commercialisation of essential services produces negative socio-economic effects.

The COSATU 13th National congress has resolved to condemn the undesirable state of the health infrastructure in the country. In reiterating the 12th Congress resolution, the 13th Congress provides the broad framework of the COSATU perspective on the NHI as well as the transformation of the healthcare system in general including COSATU health campaigns. The South African health system is in crucial need of an overhaul in relation to its financing arrangements, management as well as the ability to deliver quality healthcare services. There is agreement that the health system is dysfunctional, and that the quality of the health services is poor.

It is essential that we continue to establish education programmes for our affiliates and members so to promote the NHI in the broader working class, in so doing we will be establishing campaigns and coalitions with progressive mass organisations. The evolving and developing of district level campaigns is critical so to ensure the democratisation and involvement of working-class communities in hospital boards, clinic-based health committees and improvements in the management and operations of health institutions.

The mobilisation of our members is crucial in fighting against the extreme exploiting of the private health industry, rising premiums and declining benefits. We need to defend and secure the implementation of the NHI. It is critical and essential that we defend against any attacks on the NHI in attempts to derail or undermine its implementation, this should be prioritised. The fight for the professionalization of the health workforce, should include improving health care worker pay, benefits, other conditions of work as well as morale to guarantee and defend the working class and rural poor in ensuring they receive better service.

We denounce all attempts by the ministry to de-professionalise certain health care workers in the profession and sector. It is essential that we campaign against incompetent and corrupt management of the institutions to ensure that the public hospitals and clinics progressively improve their performance to comply with the mandatory standards of the NHI. This campaign is also to make provision and support the strengthening and advancement of the State-Owned pharmaceutical company. State buildings must adhere to occupational health standards.

The implementation date of the NHI (2026) should not be deferred in order to see the implementation of the NHI in our lifetime. There should not be any retrenchments or loss of jobs during the implementation of the NHI. It is critical that the nursing campaign is advanced and so to enhance primary health care. The emphasis on the urgency in the implementation of the NHI is in the face of the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality, which should be prioritised.

To date COSATU has made submissions to parliament and NEDLAC in support of the NHI Bill. In partnership with the Department of Health shop steward training was conducted in all nine provinces. Shop steward training allowed the participation of all COSATU regions and locals to participate in the NHI public hearings.

10. Expropriation Bill and Section 25 Constitutional Amendment Bill

Progress is being made with regards to amending Section 25 of the Constitution to provide for expropriation without compensation. However, the previous committee dealing with Section 25 lapsed and to be revived.

COSATU has participated in support of these amendments at Parliament (Section 25) and at Nedlac (Expropriation Bill). Public hearings are being held. There are some wording matters that must still be addressed but the draft wording is largely in alignment with COSATU's key demands.

The amendment should be concluded during 2022 given the delays due to the shutdown.

The Expropriation Bill was agreed to by Nedlac. It will replace the apartheid era Act of 1975 and the various existing laws providing expropriation.

There will now be one single law providing clear processes, timeframes, rights, procedures, requires for and purposes of expropriation, the Valuer General to determine compensation, judicial processes of appeal and how matters of compensation will be determined.

It includes criteria for when full, partial and nil compensation will be paid.

The Section 25 Amendment Bill may not be passed due to deep divisions between the ANC versus the EFF versus the DA on it. This Bill requires a two thirds majority which the ANC does not have and needs the support of either the EFF or the DA. This seems unlikely. If this is not possible, then the ANC will proceed with the Expropriation Bill only. It too provides for expropriation without compensation in support of land reform. It should be passed by Parliament in 2022 and come into effect in 2023.

11. Local Government Elections

11.1 Local Government Elections Application to Postpone to February 2022

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) appointed Judge Dikgang Moseneke to investigate the possibilities of holding the 2021 local government elections in the midst of the pandemic and disaster management restrictions.

Judge Moseneke was been tasked with engaging key stakeholders, including organised labour at Nedlac as well as inviting public submission in this regard by 18 June.



Judge Moseneke engaged COSATU and other social partners on their views on whether free and fair elections can and should be held during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The question of whether to continue with local elections in October or for the IEC to submit a request to the Constitutional Court for permission to postpone them to early 2022 is an important matter for the entire country.

It speaks to the:

- Constitutional requirements to hold elections no later than 90 days of the 5th anniversary of the previous elections;
- Bill of Rights' call to government to preserve lives of all South Africans; and
- Need to hold local accountable to the electorate.

The CEC has discussed these matters and stated the need to abide by the Constitution, to hold local government accountable, to hold elections timeously and also to save lives and livelihoods.

There are pros and cons to proceeding with local elections in October or to requesting the Constitutional Court to condone a postponement.

Option A: Proceed with October 2021 Local Elections:

Pros include the needs to:

- Abide by very clear Constitutional requirements to hold elections within 90 days of the 5th anniversary of the last elections.
- Avoid undermining the Constitution and setting a precedent.
- Need to hold municipalities and political parties accountable.
- Need to replace corrupt and incompetent Mayors and councillors.
- Need to rebuild collapsing, corrupt and dysfunctional municipalities and restore basic services.
- Some countries have held their elections, e.g. America, India.

Cons include:

- It will undermine the Bill of Rights' very clear conjunction on the need to preserve lives above all else.
- It will undermine the need to save lives and livelihoods by minimising social interaction, the main vector of the pandemic.
- The vaccine roll out programme at its current rate will at best have vaccinated under 40% of the target population by the October election date and more realistically around 30% of the population.
 - ☞ To date only 2% of adults have been vaccinated. The current weekly vaccination rate is 1% of the target population. Government intends to double this to 2% a week.
 - ☞ Countless obstacles have been and continue to be experienced in the roll out.
- Pfizer vaccines require a second dose and all vaccines take about 3 weeks to reach full efficacy in the recipients' bodies.
- Elections by their nature are social events, e.g. from door to door, ward and community meetings, rallies and most critically on election day when more than 20 million persons will stand in long queues for hours, especially in townships and informal areas where voting stations are usually poorly prepared and resourced.
- Countries that held their elections such as the US and India have subsequently experienced infection surges that dwarfed South Africa's and overwhelmed their much larger healthcare infrastructure. South Africa's would likely collapse in such a scenario. Indian hospitals ran out of the most basic supplies e.g. beds, oxygen etc and were forced to choose which patients to save and which to let die. The US has a hybrid electoral model where more than 70 million could vote early or by post.



- A 4th wave at the level of the US or India infection rates would compel government to reinstate a level 5 or 4 lockdown which would devastate the economy. Government and the UIF do not have the resources to provide relief at the level done in 2020.
- Government e.g. Ministers, senior officials etc. become distracted by elections and struggle to multi-task, e.g. local elections would distract them from focusing on rolling out the vaccines, reinforcing health and safety measures and infrastructure and rebuilding the economy etc.

Option B: Request the IEC to apply for condonation to the Constitutional Court to postpone the 2021 Local Elections until the 1st quarter of 2022:

Pros include the needs to:

- Abide by the Bill of Rights' very clear requirement to save lives;
- This would not be a violation of the Constitution as what matters are its principles and not literal interpretations, e.g. what would be asked for is a simple delay of 4 months to allow vaccines to be rolled, to reach full efficacy and for the 67% plus population immunity level to be achieved and not a cancellation of the elections.
- Precedence exists. Local elections were postponed in the Western Cape in 1995 when government was not ready to proceed. More critically was that all local government by-elections were postponed in 2020 during the lockdown to save lives. The constitutional requirement principles and legal necessities are the same for by-elections, e.g. they must be held within 90 days of a vacancy being declared by the IEC.
- Allow government and society to focus on ensuring the rapid roll out of the vaccines to enable society and the economy to remerge.
- Avoid sparking an unmanageable surge that would collapse healthcare infrastructure, cause unnecessary deaths, provoke a harsh lockdown, shatter the economy, collapse companies and see millions lose wages, pensions and jobs.
- Avoid further depleting the UIF and fiscus and the consequences therein.

Cons include:

- What if government does not achieve the 67% vaccination target by early 2022?
- Will a precedent be created where unpopular politicians will seek to postpone elections they may lose and search for crises to cite?
- Will the value of the Constitution be eroded by politicians routinely amending the Constitution or simply ignoring it?

COSATU made its submission to Justice Moseneke. Justice Moseneke's recommendation to the IEC was in line with COSATU's position, namely that whilst it is desirable to proceed with the local elections scheduled for October 2021, this is no longer possible in a manner that will not threaten lives and contribute to a devastating 4th wave or guarantee free and fair elections given the Covid-19 disaster management restrictions on social gatherings.

Justice Moseneke recommended that the IEC urgently apply to the Constitutional Court for condonation to postpone the elections until February 23 2022. This should allow for the vaccine roll out to reach 67% herd immunity before then. This will hopefully help ensure that lives will be protected and that free and fair elections may be held.

This matter is now before the Constitutional Court. A decision is expected shortly given the urgency of the matter and tight timeframes.



11.2 ANC Local Government Elections Manifesto

The ANC is planning to launch its elections manifesto by the beginning of August at the latest. It is critical that the key demands of COSATU and workers are addressed in it. The second draft of the ANC's manifesto is due this week.

Issues that COSATU has initially raised with the ANC that need to be included in the manifesto include the following:

- The need for a thorough and honest assessment of the implementation of the 2016 local and 2019 national and provincial elections manifestos.
 - ☞ Voters expect the ANC to account and show self-introspection.
- What are the proposed interventions to address the dismal state and at times collapse of local government? E.g.
 - ☞ Measures to tackle corruption and wasteful expenditure?
 - ☞ Measures to improve the quality of and deal with the bad behaviour of Councillors?
 - ☞ Restore basic service delivery, in particular water, sewerage, electricity (including free) and roads.
 - ☞ The transition to the District Model as the current 259 municipalities are not sustainable and in many cases are simply too small and should rather be converted to municipal service points of larger municipalities.
 - ☞ The reinstatement of municipal workers dismissed for exposing corruption or victims of factional battles.
 - ☞ The failure of many municipalities to pay workers on time, including their PAYE and pension payments.
 - ☞ Outsourcing of municipal work to the EPWP and CWP.
- The manifesto needs to include reference to the commitments of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, e.g.
 - ☞ Eskom Social Compact;
 - ☞ Presidential Infrastructure Programme;
 - ☞ Presidential Employment Programme;
 - ☞ Ramping up local procurement at all levels; and
 - ☞ Accelerating the development and implementation of the 15 industrial sectoral master plans.
- The need for government (national and local) to respect collective bargaining in both the SALGA Bargaining Council but also the PSCBC.

12. Climate Change and a Just Transition to a low carbon economy

Background

The COSATU 2009 Congress resolved that “climate change is one of the greatest threats to our plant and our people” further resolving that the working class, poor and developing countries will be most affected by climate change which is a leading factor to the access of electricity, job security and the just transition.

In addition to this the COSATU 13th National Congress has noted that there is a need for renewable energy so to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, including coal. Noting the establishment of IPPs by government which is informed by the National Energy Act 2008 and the Electricity Regulation Act (ERA) 2006, there should have clear rules and the guidelines of establishment and the regulation of the IPPs. The Act gives expression to the development of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) which specify the rules and the regulations of the IPP's. The IRP was established by the Department of Energy (DoE) in 2010. The IRP intends to set out the new generation capacity per technology.

It is imperative that through the recognition of climate change and the need for a just transition as well as access to electricity we ensure that the accumulation of wealth through the causes of excessive greenhouse gas emissions, global warming and climate change is eliminated forming a low carbon development path which



will be established to address unemployment and create decent jobs. Therefore, ensuring that all workers are afforded the right to clean and affordable energy.

The COSATU 13th National Congress resolved that there is an urgent need for an energy mix policy which is central for energy security and the main sources of energy need to play a role specifically gas, nuclear, coal and renewables.

In so saying, a transition to a low carbon economy must be a just transition and requires that government allows for the inclusion of workers in the discussion of the just transition as well as allow for an energy policy that ensures that ownership of renewable energy is state owned and controlled where the state motivates for a renewable energy transition.

In decreasing the use of coal in the energy mix, the just transition should consider and take to regard the securing of workers in the coal sector as well as the reskilling and skilling of workers which essential centres the securing of jobs and livelihoods of the workers in the sector. The introduction of renewable energy should not in any way undermine the number of jobs in the country and should not benefit foreign companies.

The just transition for workers

The question of jobs in the transition to a green economy is informed by the Million Climate Jobs campaign that calculated that more than three million new “climate jobs” could be created. There are few accurate statistics on the number of jobs that could be under threat in the transition to a low-carbon economy. But the number of new jobs which could be created in a just transition is likely to far exceed any possible job losses. There are opportunities for local manufacturers. Production processes which are more environmentally friendly tend to be more labour intensive, using people rather than machines or chemicals to do the work. The Central Committee of COSATU endorsed the Million Climate Jobs Campaign in June 2011.

The unfortunate reality is that in the planning of a transition so far, the planning for jobs has lagged, leaving thousands of workers behind in the transition to a green economy. The famous case in point is the plight of the workers in the coal-fired power stations, whom after the announcement of decommissioning have not been prepared to take up jobs in the green economy.

The just transition to a low carbon economy cannot take place without workers and people at the centre of the transition, as they stand a chance to be most affected by the transition. However, in practice the transition has overtaken South African workers losing the essence of a transition that is just. Now, South African workers urgently need a Just Transition. They are currently experiencing multiple impacts from climate change and responses to it. Sectors in mining and energy, agriculture and transport require just transition plans to prepare workers to adapt to net zero in 2050. Below is and in-depth scenario analysis of each sector.

Mining and Energy

Like all other countries South Africa needs to reduce its CO₂ emissions and has committed to do so. Most of South Africa’s emissions come from coal-fired power, which today fuels 90% of South Africa’s electricity via Eskom. Eskom, the power sector, and power prices are essential components in employment and competitiveness in other sectors, particularly minerals, mining, and manufacturing.

Eskom is in deep financial and operational trouble. The government has threatened to split Eskom up, with likely job losses in the process. Privatization of the unbundled utility is also possible. The SA government has promised workers a Just Transition, but getting it is going to be challenging. Eskom is already closing its older coal-fired power stations with no social or economic plans in place.

Eskom employs 48 628 workers directly, while the coal mining sector has 82 248 direct employees. In addition to Eskom’s direct employees, it has several contract employees and outsourced jobs, as well as workers employed in its supply chain. Not all coal miners are in Eskom’s supply chain, as SA exports 28% of its coal production.



The value of today's jobs in coal mining and Eskom must be seen considering apartheid's economic legacy: High levels of structural unemployment, poverty, and inequality, and an economy that still does not produce enough decent blue-collar jobs for black South Africans. Workers made redundant at Eskom or in the coal mines are very likely to go straight into unemployment and poverty.

The South African government has committed to reducing emissions from the power sector. However, so far it has relied on tenders to the private sector to develop renewable energy supply. Eskom is prohibited from competing for these tenders. Regulations also limit the ability of municipalities, communities and companies to build renewable energy projects for their own use.

COSATU rejects privatization of electricity generation, because private interest prioritizes profit maximization above the meeting of social needs, in this case the provision of affordable energy supply for the mass of our people. Privatized renewable energy projects so far have received very favorable contracts from government relative to the costs of coal-fired power. At the same time these projects have produced few and poor-quality local jobs.

Agriculture

South Africa's agriculture sector is comprised of 30 000 commercial farms which employ 750 000 workers. Prolonged droughts related to climate change have affected employment in the sector and have knock-on effects for working class and poor households in the form of higher food prices. For example, the 2015-2016 drought saw a 10% decline in agricultural production in real terms. From 2015 food prices increased by 6% for goods and services, and in 2016 food prices increased at the same rate as non-food inflation. There is an urgent need for labour market and other policies to maintain jobs in agriculture, improve their quality, and make the sector more resilient to climate impacts such as drought.

Transport

The South African auto manufacturing industry employs 100 000 people directly, with another 400 000 people working in auto retail and repairs. South Africa only produces petroleum-based vehicles, though several companies plan to introduce electric cars soon. The sector depends on imported inputs. 40% of auto inputs are local products, with most being structural rather than technological components. Employment will be affected by efforts to reduce petroleum use, including electrification.

The just transition blueprint for workers

COSATU is producing a "Just Transition Blueprint for Workers". With this project, COSATU seeks to build on its previous climate change policy (2011) that began identifying the broad principles of a just transition for workers. The project will lead a panel of experts to deliver a policy blueprint and toolkit for the just transition, particularly for workers in power/mining, transport, and agriculture. The blueprint and toolkit will include examples, best practices, and concrete policy proposals. The Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) has been requested to produce this blueprint, in its full form, as per the framework shared by COSATU, as well as a summarised version that will be printed and distributed to workers.

As part of the research process, COSATU has established a panel of experts that will assist to ensure the quality of the just transition blueprint. The panel is composed of the affiliates of COSATU, the COSATU research unit NALEDI, the just transition centre as well as various pro-worker academics.

13. Funding of Higher education: Free education

Funding principles

The funding of higher education must be informed by the following principles.

1. Democracy and accountability,
2. Equal access to quality education and
3. Decent work for those working in the sector
4. Debt free funding model
5. Higher education is a public good which must be publicly provided by the state and everyone must have access to it and not be excluded.
6. Social solidarity and cross subsidization are critical to ensure that those who can afford can pay more through taxes to fund the poor.
7. A progressive introduction of universal free education, including FET and first-degree university levels.
8. The practice of outsourcing, casualisation and the use of labour brokers by higher education institutions in the provision of support services must end.
9. Students should not be denied access based on financial ability (only academic ability).²

Constitutional requirement to fund free education

10. Although limited, access to higher education is a right and not a privilege. Section 29 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 1996 provides that “everyone has the right - (a) to basic education, including adult basic education. (b) to further education, which the state through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible”.
11. The debate about funding higher education is old. The Freedom Charter promises free education. “Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit.”
12. Throughout the world education is funded through loans, fees, grants, and bursaries. The source of funding can be the state, private sector and NGO’s or a mixture of state and private funding.

Colonial legacy

13. One of the legacies of apartheid is that white or Europeans as they were called were encouraged to be educated and to occupy skilled positions whilst non-European; coloured Indians and blacks were discouraged from obtaining educational skills. This has resulted in low enrolment by blacks and where there has been enrolment such has been accompanied by high dropout levels amongst blacks and coloured. One of the main reasons is lack of funding of students from poor backgrounds.

Labour Market

14. The labour market has become more skills intensive and less labour intensive. As a result, those who do not have skills higher education are paid little compared to those who possess qualifications that are less than matric.

² At 123.



15. The emphasis is more on degree courses and less on technical work that is supposed to contribute to economic development. The funding is also biased in favour of universities than TVET.
16. The cost of funding higher education must be addressed by considering the above specific historical and contemporary needs.

Cost sharing model: loan system

17. Since 1994 government has applied the cost sharing model whereby the cost of obtaining education is shared between the student and government through payment of fees and subsidies to the institutions. After the 2015 #Fees Must Fall Campaign, this model has been discredited.
18. The basis of the cost sharing model is correctly based on the view that since education results in public benefits and private benefits the beneficiaries thereof should contribute. However, this logic cannot apply in a society characterised by huge levels of poverty and inequalities.
19. The key disadvantages of the loan system include the following;
20. Whilst education is provided by the state the consumption thereof is paid for the student. This means that students must incur debt to obtain education. This is a problem for those who do not have the financial means and violates the right to education.
21. Universities rely on fee income as a source of income and rising costs mainly because of private sector management style of higher education institutions, these institutions must exclude students from accessing education or supply education at a high cost through high tuition fees. Furthermore, there has been a decline in funding for higher education.

Demand for free education

22. Fees charged by institutions for obtaining education became an issue first with Rhodes must fall movement which resulted in the removal of Rhodes statute at the university and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) announcement of a fee increase of 10.5%. The #Fees Must Fall spread to other universities and resulted in students' injuries in certain instances, death, expulsion, suspension, debarring and imprisonment of certain students.
23. In response to free education demands the government has implemented a national bursary scheme which was introduced during 2018 to support students from families earning a gross annual income of up to R350 000 per annum, aimed at covering their full tuition costs, support for learning materials and providing subsidies to assist with accommodation, living expenses and transport costs, where appropriate.

The missing middle

24. The missing middle currently refers to those students from households with incomes between R350 000 and R600 000. An estimated size of the missing middle in 2019 of 343 000 students out of a total PSET population of 1.4 m.
25. The cost of funding full bursaries for all these students at 2019 prices is estimated at R19.2 bn. If a sliding scale of support is introduced, the total cost falls to R11.4 bn.
26. There is a need to expand the missing middle.

The Heher commission report into the possibility of free tertiary education made the following findings and recommendations.

27. That Fee free include full cost of study (food, accommodation, transport, books, computers/tools/ equipment, internet connectivity, health care and in many instances, family support) at the time of applying and for the academically acceptable period of their studies³
28. The provision of fee-free higher education is feasible.
29. Fee-free education at the point of access with an Income Contingent Loan (ICL).
30. The need for public/private partnership through the involvement of the private financial sector in the provision of the full cost of education (to the extent that such is required) by granting student loans on favourable terms without a means test or provision of security.
31. The purchase by the state of any such loan indebtedness.
32. The loan shall only be payable when the (former) student earns a specific income, with repayments increasing as income increases. The income levels shall be fixed to avoid oppression of the debtor.
33. The collection and recovery of the loan debt by SARS.
34. The repayment of the amount of each loan (plus interest) to the lender by the state on a date not earlier than five years from advance of each loan.
35. Free-higher education with no loan obligation for TVET's.
36. Fee-free education at the point of access with an ICL.
37. In an ICL scheme the primary responsibly for funding the scheme will lie with the lenders i.e., the commercial banks using commercial rates and conditions.
38. Government must work towards funding universities with 1% of GDP.

Historic debt

39. Some students may face problems if they do not comply with the criterion of satisfactory academic performance.
40. It is recommended that students with debt, who have since graduated, be offered income-contingent loans as well.
41. Application and registration fees should be scrapped across the board.

Our recommendations

42. The task team should have a meeting (as a matter of urgency) with the Minister of Higher Education and look at alternative funding by tapping into the Seta's to fund NEFSAS. Some SETA's could not implement their programmes in 2020 due to Covid-19 and the savings / surplus can be utilised to fund NEFSAS.
43. The struggle for a free education system, extending to the first degree, needs to be escalated to ensure that South Africa produces the required numbers of skilled workers to sustain economic development
44. A developing fund for postgraduate poor and working class
45. An end to registration and application fee

³ At 105



46. An end to university autonomy on the fee structure
47. Scrapping of historical debts of poor and working class (including missing middle)
48. End to private/public partnerships especially on Institutional Accommodation
49. An end to fee increases
50. Free education means exempted from paying tuition fees, accommodation and being provided with tools for studying by the State.
51. The threshold for the definition of the poor should be increased to cover as many students as possible within the scope of free education.
52. Students with outstanding debts should only be required to pay their fees once they have completed their studies and found a job. There should be no interest on this debt.
53. Students should not be discriminated against because they have an outstanding debt.⁴
54. Higher education institutions must not be allowed to blacklist students, enter acknowledgement of debts deny registration and release of certificates.
55. Whilst SETAS are meant to provide workplace training they should be used to fund free education specifically at the TVET colleges.
56. Insourcing so called non-core staff, cleaning, and security.
57. We reject the use of the UIF unclaimed pension benefits as these funds are meant to cater for specific purposes.
58. We reject the participation of banks as this might entrench the commodification of education and make funding of education expensive.
59. We should discourage the role of banks in funding higher education.
60. A study to compute the cost of free education.
61. Indebted students should not be denied their degree certificates and results and they should not be blacklisted or discriminated against in any way.
62. There should be special taxes on corporates to fund education.
63. Develop a new institution which will be well developed to accept student's application, vet them, and allocate the money straight to student accounts – removing the FUNDI and Universities as the third parties or middleman.
64. Mobilize funds from SOE's and public and private sectors which will increase the budget allocation of student funding.

⁴ L Arendse: The Obligation to Provide Free Basic Education in South Africa: An International Law Perspective [2011] PER 34 <http://www.saflii.org.za/za/journals/PER/2011/34.html>.



14. Transport

The state of Public transport in South Africa is steadily declining due to mismanagement, corruption and vandalism and looting. The following modes of transport are reflected on in the report with a reflection of the challenges and the possible areas of intervention.

The Trains System

Public Transport – Prasa

This mode of transport has seen an underinvestment in infrastructure over the last 30 years, which has led to frequent breakdowns and delays in the service. The Management has reduced the inventory, and this has led to an inability to repair breakdowns, due to long parts order lead times. This reduction in reliability has led to many commuters deserting Prasa in favour of other modes of transport. This has in turn led to a reduction in the number of commuters using trains and the loss of income from commuter fees, which caused a funding crisis. The vandalism and looting of the train system has seen the cabling, trains and infrastructure functioning, significantly negatively impacted upon. The levels of overcrowding on the trains were at close to 80% in the last census that was done in 2010. Management and the Board has been implicated in the corruption taking place in Prasa. The Industrial relations and Human resource challenges has led to the service being dysfunctional and the workers reduced to tenuous insecure employment conditions.

SATAWU needs to coordinate their interventions in the SOC more effectively, to ensure that the restructuring of the service deals with both service delivery and conditions of employment.

Freight Rail

This has been one of the few areas that the Department of Transport has been able to keep the services functional. This is mainly in respect of the iron ore and mining sector, where minerals are transported to the coast for export. The rest of the Freight services are also in decline which has seen a move of freight onto the roads, with the resultant economic cost. The Government has now embarked on a road to rail strategy, to reduce the impact of truck transport on the road infrastructure. This programme is however struggling to advance due to the infrastructure collapse and resultant unreliability in the rail service.

Long distance trains and Busses

The cross-country travel has devolved to mainly TAXI travel and there is an urgent need to ensure that long distance Bus and Trains are restored, to ensure safe travel across the Country. This would mean significant investment in the Infrastructure required to provide the services safely and effectively.

Bus services

The historical subsidized Bus services has been complimented by the introduction of the new bus services modeled on the Bogota. These services have led to an improvement of the Bus services to workers, but the routes targeted for new services, has not always prioritized the working-class communities where the transport needs are greatest. There continues to be a constant tension between buses and Taxi, due to competition for commuters, which has manifested in violence and killings.

SATAWU is well organized in many of the companies, but there are many smaller Unions that are making inroads into the sector, and undermining SATAWU historical hegemony in the Sector.



Taxi services

The Taxi services has historically emerged to fill a lack of public transport for workers from new community areas. This service was not subsidized and means that workers had to cover the entire cost of the Apartheid geographic divide, which put them far from workplaces. The Taxi Industry is largely untaxed, and the regulations are akin to voluntary measures, which are often not complied with. This has led to lots of tensions and violence in the Industry, which manifest in intra taxi violence over routes and control of the Industry. The conflict between Taxi and Bus and Train services, has seen a sabotaging of train services and damaging of busses. The present situation related to Covid-19 has seen the occupancy levels of 100% posing a significant risk to workers traveling to and from work. The rights of workers are routinely disregarded and there is an urgent need to organize these workers into SATAWU.

Plane travel

The national carrier has partially been sold to a consortium, with the State retaining a 49% stake in the SAA. This has seen significant threats to the viability of the SAA in the long run, with the impact on tourism and the trade regime of inputs into our economy and Industrial sectors. Whilst it is not central to working class transport, it is a significant employer and status symbol of the South Africa and an important means with which to link to the rest of the continent, with Continental trade agreement unfolding. SATAWU had historically been the majority Union and a concerted effort should be made to restore the membership in SAA, so we are able to play a more active role in the restructuring of the SOC.

General reflections on public transport

The role of public transport is to provide a reliable efficient transport mode to support economic and social transport. This system must be subsidized by the State, so it is able to mitigate the Apartheid geographical spatial planning that put workers far away from economic opportunities. The present transport cost to most workers are as high as 17% of their income in certain instances. In addition to the financial cost, there is also a time cost to workers traveling those long distances, with many workers traveling for 2 hours from work to home. This effectively reduces the time that working class parents can spend with families to reinforce parenting lessons, that guide kids. This is a moment that society can use to develop a peak spreading policy, that ensure that transport modes are not overcrowded, as the peak is reduced by spreading it over a longer period. The spreading of the peak and its reduction in overcrowding will lead to time traveling efficiencies across all modes, with reduction in cost.

The big focus for Cosatu going forward is for the responsible Union to develop a detailed set of proposals to fix the transport system. This must ensure that the transport system prioritises the provision of services to working class communities, as opposed to profitability of operators in the private sector.

The SATAWU must lead a coordinated campaign into addressing the transport policy and roll out in South Africa that expands the transport public service.

15. Trade and Industry

The WTO membership has resulted in South Africa eliminating restrictions on currency exchange, elimination of subsidies and reduction in tariffs. These measures resulted in the closure of factories, loss of jobs and capital flight.

Despite technological changes our exports are still based on raw and semi processed mining and agriculture products. The mining sector contributes 9% to GDP and agriculture 3%. The dominant sectors are Finance 20%, Government 19%, and Trade 15%. The manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP has declined to less than 13% from 26% in 1994.⁵ Germany has 19% of manufacturing of GDP; China 27% and Japan 21%.

Despite the reduction in the share of mining in the GDP its value chain is important for the economy and as a foreign exchange earner. The mining sectors employs about R451 000 workers.

Most workers are employed in the community and social services sector (3.2 million- of this government employs about 2.1 million workers)), followed by trade (2.9 million), finance sector (2.2 million), manufacturing (1.4 million), construction (1 million) agriculture (800 000).

In 2019, SA imported a significantly higher proportion of goods, measured as a percentage of GDP, than many others. SA's imports accounted for 25% of GDP, Brazil (9,6%), the US (12%), EU (14%), Russia and China (14,4%) and India (17%).⁶

The WTO membership of China in 2000 has changed international trade and has turned China into the factory of the world and a producer of low cheap and high-quality goods. This transformation of international trade resulted in pressure on wages, and loss of jobs as most companies have stopped producing locally. The culprit is the international trade system, which is based on slave, cheap labour, race to the bottom and not China.

The trade and industry policies in South Africa and in many WTO, members are export oriented and not based on infant industry policies e.g., financial subsidies and tariffs. Therefore, local firms are at the mercy of imports and most end up importing goods from Asian countries, specifically China and India. Despite the Industrial Policy Action Plan and funding by development finance institutions (DFI's), our trade policy has remained capital intensive and skills intensive and not responsive to our needs for jobs. The black industrialist programme is inadequately funded, and this will ensure that manufacturing sector remains a white affair and this would reduce potential to create jobs.

Our trade policy is based on openness and comparative advantage in mining which has not resulted in linkages with the manufacturing and agricultural. SA needs to rethink its trade and industrial policy and to adopt a protectionist stance with the support of fellow African countries.⁷ A protectionist continental trade policy will ensure that the continent becomes self-sufficient and less dependent on overseas markets.

Our trade and industrial policies are not talking to each other. Whilst government has imposed export restrictions on scrap metal there no taxes on export of natural resources such as chrome. These raw chrome exports have resulted in closure of smelters and loss of jobs. A call to impose an export tax has been opposed by exporters of chrome. Save SA Smelters has called on the government to impose an export tax of up to 80 percent on certain minerals. The bullying of the SA government by the US to import unhealthy chicken portions is proof that SA does not have powers to protect its interests and to develop an independent trade and industrial policy.

⁵ Statistics SA Q1: 2021 (current prices).

⁶ Presentation to NEDLAC 1 July 2021 Ambassador Xavier Carrim A Trade Policy for Industrial Development and Employment Growth

⁷ Ziyad Mohamed Free Trade, The Washington Consensus, And Bilateral Investment Treaties: The South African Journey: A Rethink on The Rules on Foreign Investment by Developing Countries American University Business Law Review 2016.



African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement

The fifty-four (54)⁸ Member States of the AU have signed the Agreement. However only thirty-seven (37) had deposited their instruments of ratification as of June 2021.⁹ Whilst the agreement has been touted as a game changer it would not result in creation of local firms and jobs if it is not based on protectionism and protection of indigenous firms.

According to the Department of Trade and Industry and Competition, the African continent is important for our economy for the following reasons;

The share of intra-Africa trade remains low: on average 13% for intra-Africa imports and 20% for intra-Africa exports over the 2013-2019 period;

South Africa is the major player in intra-African trade with a share of intra-African exports varying from 26% to 31% over a period 2013-2019, followed by Nigeria (13,9% in 2019) and DRC (7% in 2019).

SA is also the leading player in intra-African imports (14%), followed by Namibia (7%) and Botswana (6%).

South Africa's exports into the Rest of Africa grew from about R 9 billion rand in 1994 to over R 340 billion by 2019.

South Africa's trade with the Rest of Africa sustains about 250,000 jobs locally and contributes about R 60 billion towards our economic output.

South African companies invested in 40 (destination) African countries. The firms have invested US\$ 36 billion, created 54,311 jobs and financed 420 projects in 25 sectors across the continent (January 2003-October 2017).

The AU has failed to agree on rules of origin that will determine which goods will enjoy low tariffs and the benefits of the agreement. For example, there is no consensus on whether the double transformation¹⁰ in clothing and textile should apply and whether imports of second-hand goods should be stopped.

A State led Industrial policy is needed to ensure that trade on the continent is mutually beneficial and not only benefits SA's multinationals.

To ensure that trade agreements are not only about market access and profits we have proposed that a labour chapter be inserted in all trade agreement which will require firms to pay a specific minimum wage, to counter the race to the bottom and to enforce labour standards.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of borders and reduction in imports and exports. This meant that countries that did not have production across value chains were exposed to huge losses as they had to wait for essential components. This shows that an effective trade policy must localise and protect the whole value chain and not specific products.

South Africa and India have made a joint proposal for a waiver or suspension of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines, syringes, and related products. This policy shift shows that we cannot hope to industrialize within the current neo liberal trade policies of the WTO.

The future of SA's economy is in the continent and SA should stop looking at overseas markets. Without a firm decision on trade industrial policy, we would not be able to reduce the 51% unemployment rate.

⁸ Eritrea is yet to sign the AfCFTA.

⁹ Status of AfCFTA Ratification 13 Jul 2021 Tralac.

¹⁰ This SADC Trade Protocol rule of origin requires fabrics and yarn for garment manufacturing to be produced within SADC to qualify for preferential treatment. Some of the big economies on the continent believe in imports of finished goods e.g., cars as a source of development. A 2019 AU workshop report on AfCFTA Rules of Origin has not been presented to AU Ministers of Trade and Finance because of divergent views on the approach towards industrialisation and rules of origin. Some countries believe that we should import finished goods and others that we should import but transform or add value to imports to create jobs. Whilst SA supports double transformation many countries on the continent are against this policy.



Designation of certain sectors for local content is a welcome policy shift because it would increase local production and protect jobs. However, this is not enough because these regulations are not binding across all government levels. A stricter local content law is required to ensure local procurement.

Master plans are based on the IPAP sectors, and they seek to include labour, government and business in decision making and in addressing sectoral challenges. However, they do not address policy flaws in some of the sectors. Engagement on different master plans is ongoing. We have secured involvement of affiliates in some of the master plans.

In summary our trade policy should be based on protectionism (trade and industrial policy in the West is still based on protectionism despite pronouncement to the contrary), delinking from the West, increased funding of black industrialists, infant industry policies, a labour chapter in trade agreements, and uniform continental trade policy. A protectionist trade policy will increase jobs and sustain livelihoods on the continent.

16. Education and Training

This Department is responsible for the implementation of these following Congress Resolutions. These capacity building sessions are done in conjunction with the Affiliates and Provinces

1. Building Local Leadership
2. Information on the right to strike and the obligations of employers
3. Training mandate of the SETA's and the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
4. The Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution
5. The Reconfigured Alliance
6. Implementation of the Freedom Charter
7. Free Post schooling
8. Transformation and the effect of gender equity

16.1 Building Local Leadership

The constant processes of shopsteward elections and the revival of Locals as the basic structures that are more closer to the workplace, demand that we equip all the newly elected provincial Office Bearers with a clear understanding of their roles in the Federation. We have done these sessions in All provinces and the need is still very high. These sessions since they involve forging Teams, solidarity and cadreship can be extremely challenging. We constantly deliver them but realise with each and every other intervention that the capacitation needs to be cascaded to the shopfloor as well. Our reporting records show that we have trained in excess of 3000 Shopstewards Annually, the numbers covered are never enough as there is a very high turnover of such shopstewards

At the very upfront we should mention that this task is proving much difficult than before. This is because many Affiliates do not provide for their sector specific training. We end with many engagements being derailed by the shopstewards who seek more understanding and facilitations on areas like their Union Collective Agreements, Sector Bargaining issues, Union Constitutions, Shopfloor related other areas. However these challenges vary from Province to province as is the issue of the public vs private vs service sector divide We also encounter many more public sector Unions. Other challenges are issues of distances between our Provincial centres and these Locals where we end up not reaching needy areas to the sessions. The following Provinces are more susceptible to these distance challenges being the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Western Cape



We recommend that Unions spend more on Basic Shopsteward Training, consider employing Regional or Provincial Educators or rotate the Head Office based ones. We also feel that more resources need to be spent on Funding Locals training or the payment of claims when the Federation conducts such in these areas. We have found the Online Programmes being more effective albeit their equally resource based challenges as many workers cannot afford the smart or Online enabled gadgets to engage in such programmes. The challenge of the departure from direct human engagement also still pertains

16.2 Information on the Right to Strike and the Obligations of Employers

We have also trained on this provision largely for Leadership and Affiliates on the new provisions of the labour law. This was to ensure of the proper understanding of the changes in the law on these areas. This also happens on the backdrop of employers drive to curtail the right to strike through various means largely the fuzzy explanations of the essential service concept. In 2020 we conducted 3 Provincial sessions covering over 700 Provincial Shopstewards in Limpopo, Free State and Mpumalanga covering the critical area of the right to strike. This was done in conjunction with the Organising Department that led in the material development and technical training

We have also relied on the Online sessions with the Chris Hani Institute but the overall engagement was not even above 120 participants. We need to much more here including our commitment to popularise the 2019 Strike demands and the propagation of our own anti-establishment narrative

16.3 Training mandate of the SETA's and the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

We have had 6 workshops on this front with the Fourth IR Presidential Commission and NALEDI and only 2 directly with the Federation. These are very high level workshops and expose the different sectoral experiences and encounters with this phenomenon. Also such workshops tend to be more for Leadership rather than Plant based Shopstewards who need such engagements more dearly. We have also realised that Sector Education and Training Authorities relate differently to the Union training demands on the matter. Many still regard as a pure Collective Bargaining matter whilst it talks directly to how they anticipate new technologies and plan their Sector Skills Plans to relate to such Scarce or Critical skills

What came quite clear from the many workshops was that only when Unions negotiate and are in control of the introduction of new technologies, can they be able to save existing jobs or rather create any new ones.

Whilst many jobs are being lost with the introduction of new technology, we think that many Unions do not relate such with this new production trend. This is because also bosses are never open and transparent when they decide on production changes. These are therefore not effected into the Training plans even with the Senior and Top Management as well. In other experiences new technologies are introduced to curb work stoppages or after strikes which make such changes difficult to fight

With the induction of the newly Affiliated Unions we have committed to embark especially for Agriculture, Arts and Transport on these workshops to get into details about the new work methods and equip our Unions on how to respond to these enforced changes

16.4 The second Phase socio-economic Radical Economic Development of the National Democratic Revolution, the Reconfigured Alliance, Land Question and implementation of the Freedom Charter

These were covered in the Political Education workshops in the form of the Socialist Forums, Political Schools and the Chris Hani Brigade. They involve largely trying ensure the left understanding of these concepts in the Federation. Since many of our Shopstewards come from the ANC where some varying interpretations are formulated this was to dispel all such notions. The political workshops tend to elicit high levels of participation and even input from Shopstewards wherein the major concern is around the form and shape of the Alliance,



what the experiences like Metsimaholo inform us and how best we need to shape for the possible SACP contestation of state power. Whilst our recent Special Central Executive Committee has taken a firm ANC Local Government support, the recent neoliberal stance of the ANC government especially the failure to implement the 2018 Public Sector wage Agreement and its ramifications have made the facilitation of such discussions quite enormous

Our political education philosophies have also been thwarted by the continued poor macro-economic performance. Coupled with the inherent backward views on gender, regressive views and attacks on foreign nationals, regionalism and all other capitalistic ills including the dominant conservative media views, we find that many of our shopstewards find it difficult to relate to the progressive COSATU resolutions

These we continue to strive against. We however need to be frank to this Central Committee that many of our Provinces and Affiliates either do not find time to engage thoroughly in political economic matters and therefore leave such to the conservative whims. In the main the lack of Political Schools, the poor funding of Shopsteward Education and the continued and never ending chase of accredited and self oriented programmes are the key reasons for this practice

16.5 Transformation

We have trained all Provinces in the areas of transformation. These programmes were of great assistance in the setting up of the Provincial Gender structures. As we prepared now for the 2021 Provincial Gender Conferences we find a far better environment for transformation. However our companies and sectors have not followed suite. We still fare quite dismally on gender transformation especially insofar as the representation of women in the overall participation rates of Women and especially African and Coloured women in the labour market generally. These categories of women have an average 10% deficit between their levels in the population versus the employment active population. We also have very few Women in Top echelons of companies

When we launch such capital attacks we are forever reminded that even the Non Government Organisations where we reside equally fair dismally. This is despite COSATU being the only Woman led Workers Federation. This measurement is done largely at the level of the lack of Women Presidents and General Secretaries that lead Unions. We get reminded at every interval that we ourselves need to have the necessary drastic improvements. This is worsened by the failure to submit, observe and report on transformation by our Unions

The failure to effect workplace transformation stems from the fact that employment equity committees at the workplace are driven largely by bosses. These pay a lip service to transformation and rather prefer to promote White women as opposed to those from the Black groups. We need to foster changes as the legislation allows majority unions to compose such Committees only with management as opposed to the current formulation of workplace forums where the voice of the union gets easily sweetened by the other non-unionised groupings pushing their self interests

The Commission of Employment Equity have since recognised the problem of slow movement in many sectors. To that end it has now embarked on deriving sector targets that all companies in these sectors need to abide by in order to now obtain the licence to do business with the State. This has placed serious jitters in the Boardrooms of many companies who either like Mining Houses need Government licences to exist or those that have interests in the public purse for survival. The arrival at such targets has however being a very tedious and laborious process as the Department of Employment and Labour seeks to rather be accommodative to these capitalists who for the life of the legislation has dismally failed to abide by its prescripts. We need a very strong company based voice on these matters to ensure that such jitters yield us the very good outcomes in that many nationals and Africans can not only be absorbed in the labour market but also rise in the Boardrooms and maybe we can have more fruitful engagements with such



16.6 Free Post Schooling and the Social Dialogue

We have also worked on the matter of the Free Post Schooling at the NEDLAC level using the social dialogue instrument. In 2019 after finalising the National Skills Development Strategy for 2020-2025 we had agreed with the Department of Higher Education and Training that next in our engagement would be the legislation and the funding mechanisms. We had long made it clear that we were gunning for a Levy increase with a cross-subsidisation of the Free Post Schooling system. This seems to have send shivers down the Departmental spine as the negotiations have been since stalled until recently with the introduction of the Skills Strategy.

With the current Treasury austerity measures, the message from Government is quite confusing and not clear. There is the peddling of the economic recovery programme alongside the fiscal discipline of apex programmes needed for such a recovery like education and training. We as the Federation have opposed this. We see the levy as one of the many avenues that can ensure that capital not only enjoys the public education system products but pay for their ultimate cultivation. Other mechanisms include amongst others the centralisation of all public bursary funds under the National Financial Aid Scheme. We have also called for the increase of the funding threshold to accommodate the missing middle who are largely our public sector workers who are quite unable to fund post school education but are currently calculated out of the R300 000 odd threshold. We also have mooted the possible graduate taxation which we still need to be one with the student body

Whilst the State has over the last 7 years or so utilised Skills levy as a public fund to subsidise the increasing need to fund free Post Schooling system but on the other hand they are refusing to formally engage on such a exercise. This is as a result of business having taken them to Court and won the case on their failure to adequately consult on the Skills levy regulations or rather the manner of the utilisation of the skills fund. Their counter argument is that levies are being lowly utilised and companies have a very low uptake of the related mandatory and discretionary grants.

However the more pressing need of the current post schooling is the failure of the State to implement our decisions on no application and registration fee, a moratorium on fee increase and the scrapping of the current student debt. We then experience every year and more so on this austerity year many protests due to the different University behaviours and the fact that academia and administrative policies are viewed as independent of the State's intervention. The iron is that these public post schooling institutions (including the private sector ones) enjoy Government subsidies. Essentially institutions that rely on the State don't have to adhere to its policies

16.7 Working with Unions

We have worked with the Unions identified before. Some of these unions have had challenges in implementing education and training programmes but some have been the advanced ones who carry high level political education programmes. We have also overseen the dissolution of LIMUSA as a Union and its incorporation into the NUM

We have equally worked well with the other Unions and Federations like Solidariteit, NUMSA, NACTU and FEDUSA on matters like Worker Education, Social Dialogue and Skills Development and Artisan Development Committees

The socio-economic matters are generally discussed at NEDLAC because they demand policy intervention or legislative approach. Engagements at NEDLAC need both the political and technical work which is evidence-based. The major NEDLAC work is led by the Cosatu policy unit; however, it would be possible that this work could succeed without unions involvement. In order to ensure unions involvement, the NEDLAC chamber convenors are supposed to be affiliate-led. The challenges here is that most unions are not interested to occupy this task as it is time demanding. Currently there are few unions involvement both in the chambers and other related work. This arrangement tends to exclude those who are not closer to the work of NEDLAC. Attempts have been made in the past of inviting union leadership to show interest on the NEDLAC work. This matter of doing the Federation work at NEDLAC which is time consuming and laborious need all our unions to contribute

their time and resources. When Covid stroke in South Africa NEDLAC was engaging on a number of activities and the pandemic did not declared them invalid though reprioritisation has to be organised.

3.1 NEDLAC Covid-19 Rapid Response Task Team

A NEDLAC Rapid Response Task Team was established at the beginning of the lockdown.

It met virtually daily since March 2020 and has been able to make numerous interventions during the lockdown.

These engagements and sub-committees are dealing with a wide variety of engagements. These include:

- **UIF**

Ensuring that the UIF upgraded its systems to manage the massive increase in applications, attending to the many crises it has faced, ensuring that it releases as much funds as sustainably possibly to assist workers etc. By the end of the August period it is likely to have released over R53 billion to more than 7 million workers. This has helped to ensure workers have money to buy their essential goods to take care of their families and to prevent retrenchments.

It is critical for unions to make sure all workers are registered for the UIF and employers are paying their dues.

The UIF Covid-19 reached over 4 million individual workers. It is likely to exceed R60 billion in payments. This has taken the UIF from R154 billion before the lockdown to R110 billion. R60 billion of the R110 billion is liquid and accessible.

The UIF Covid-19 TERS ended on 16 October despite workers over 60 years or with co-morbidities or from shut down or restricted industries barred from working e.g. liquor and tourism industries.

This has condemned hundreds of thousands of workers to absolute poverty, no wages, retrenchments and threatened the collapse of these industries.

Government has refused to provide any relief for these workers and industries.

COSATU has raised with government and the ANC the need for socio-economic relief measures to be extended to affected workers and businesses. These include extending the UIF Covid-19 TERS, the R350 unemployment grant, the Loan Guarantee Scheme, tax relief, bank loan relief and sectoral relief.

The NEC Lekgotla agreed on the need to extend the R350 grant for 3 months and revamp the Loan Guarantee Scheme. It also agreed on the need to engage on extending the UIF Covid-19 TERS and other relief for affected workers and businesses and that these engagements need to take place at NEDLAC. COSATU will need to increase the pressure on government to meaningfully engage, compromise and agree to provide relief to affected workers, businesses and sectors.

- **Health and Safety Measures**

COSATU and the NEDLAC RR Task Team meet fortnightly with government's Nat. Joints to engage on the various health and safety measures put in place to manage the fight against Covid-19. These range from the wearing of masks, sanitisation requirements, curfews, restrictions on social gatherings and liquor.

- **Workplace Safety**

Ensuring that workplace safety directions are in place to help protect workers' lives. This includes what measures are needed e.g. social distancing, sanitising, deep cleansing, isolation etc. It includes what assistance workers can receive from the Compensation Fund when infected at work.

It is critical for unions to make sure all workers are trained on their rights and all workplaces are compliant and that all workers are registered for and up to date with the Compensation Fund.



- **Vaccine Roll Out**

COSATU is participating in government's Vaccines JSOC. Progress has been made increasing in the daily vaccination rate from 15 000 to over 200 000. Efforts are being made to increase this to over 300 000 daily and in particular over weekends.

These will help to ensure South Africa meets the 67% population immunity levels by the end of 2021.

More work needs to be done to mobilise all adults to register and to vaccinate.

Work has been done to vaccinate key exposed economic and workplace sectors, e.g. mining, education, SAPS, SANDF, DCS. These sectors are being expanded.

More workplace vaccination sites are being rolled out in both the public and private sectors. SACTWU has led a bargaining council approach with great success.

- **Transport**

Extensive engagements have taken place to deal with health and safety plans for public transport e.g. taxis, busses and trains.

COSATU supports the R1.1 billion relief measures for the taxi industry. However, the Federation has stated that this cannot be a blank cheque. It must be conditional upon the sector becoming compliant with all laws but in particular the UIF, COIDA, BCEA, tax and traffic laws. Government has however been woefully weak and buckled to pressure from the sector abandon social distancing in taxis.

COSATU has met with SANTACO and the Taxi Driver's Association. Follow up engagements will take place to find a resolution to this crisis.

- **PPEs**

COSATU and affiliates have held numerous engagements on PPEs with government, the Solidarity Fund and business.

These engagements were to ensure that sufficient supply exists and is procured, that such supplies must be locally made and that workers receive them.

A joint task team was set up between DTIC, industry and COSATU. It has 6 working streams focused on cloth masks, medical textiles, sanitisers, plastic screens, rubber gloves, medical kits and ventilators. This has helped to ramp up local production. This has resulted in a shift in PPEs procurement by the Solidarity Fund from over 90% imports to over 75% locally produced.

SACTWU has undertaken extensive investigations in government and the private sector to monitor local procurement and compliance with Treasury regulation

NEHAWU has undertaken a comprehensive inspection programme of the distribution of PPEs and conditions at public healthcare institutions.

SADTU conducted detailed research on school readiness.

These have formed the basis for COSATU engagements with Parliament for their intervention into the national PPEs scandals.

It is critical for all affiliates to undertake such proactive work.



- **Education**

NEDLAC repeatedly attempted to engage the Department of Basic Education on its plans to ensure the safety of learners and staff.

The responsiveness of the Department was underwhelming and an indication of why schools are frequently not ready to reopen.

- **Alcohol**

COSATU has supported the need to tackle the abuse of alcohol and the massive burden it has placed on healthcare institutions and society as a whole.

It is critical that such measures are ramped up. Industry must play its part in reducing the abuse of alcohol. But equally consumers have to accept responsibility as adults.

Engagements are taking place on what measures industry and government can put in place to reduce the widespread abuse of alcohol. A draft social compact has been developed and will soon be finalised.

It includes a ban on drinking and driving, reductions in when alcohol can be sold and how much consumers can buy, consumer education, restrictions in advertising and the industry contributing towards government's healthcare infrastructure.

Additional support is needed from government and the private sector to help sectors badly affected by the ban e.g. agriculture, alcohol, bottlers, retailers, restaurants etc. This includes tax deferrals, credit access and loan holidays.

- **Retail and Tourism**

Similar engagements will take place to see what measures can be put in place by government and the private sector to assist retail and tourism to recover and in particular to protect workers' wages and jobs.

3.2 KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng Violence Disaster Relief Fund Proposals

In the immediate aftermath COSATU tabled the below package at NEDLAC to form the basis for a national disaster relief fund to assist workers, their families, communities and the economy to begin the processes of rebuilding:

- Food parcels for affected communities who now have no money or place to buy food.
- Reinstatement of the R350 Covid-19 Grant for all unemployed persons across the country.
- Insurance relief from insurance companies and SASRIA for destroyed businesses and property.
- Relief from government for those not covered by insurance.
- Unemployment Insurance Fund's Covid-19 TERS relief for workers from KZN and GP who will lose wages and jobs as their workplaces have been destroyed.
- Pension withdrawal relief for workers who have lost wages or are struggling.
- Tax and municipal rates relief for affected businesses.
- A revamped Loan Guarantee Scheme to assist companies to rebuild.
- Bank loan and insurance policy payment holidays for affected workers and businesses.
- Tripling the Presidential Employment Programme's budget from R11 billion to R33 billion so that it can create at least 2 million jobs.
- A moratorium on retrenchments by employers in both the private and private sector.
- Mobilisation of donations to the Solidarity Fund to provide help to the indigent.



- Practical actions by government and businesses to ramp up local procurement to help save countless companies and jobs.
- A massive ramping up of the vaccine roll out programme so that the economy can emerge safely as soon as possible.

3.3 Presidential Jobs Summit

The President Jobs' Summit's implementation was overseen by the Presidential Working Committee met on the first Monday of each month. It was chaired by the President and included Ministers, the leadership of business and labour.

It was a strategic and critical venue to push key interventions with regards to the implementation of the Jobs Summit Agreement.

COSATU was able to fast track interventions in such key areas as the Eskom Social Compact, Scrap Metal Export Levy, Public Procurement Bill, water licensing, the UIF's Temporary Employment Relief Scheme amongst others.

Other areas needing further pressure include digital spectrum, the scarce skills regime of the Immigration Act, the pledged but yet to be seen R100 billion commitment by business for new companies etc.

Since the implementation of the lockdown it has not met. Its set meetings have been repeatedly postponed by government.

It has now been integrated into the 3 Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP) structures.

These are meetings with the President every other month and his relevant ministers, in particular the economic cluster with the leadership of social partners.

There are monthly meetings of the 7 a side ERRP Leadership Team. Under it are 4 and possibly later 6 working streams. The 4 working streams are currently focused on energy security and the Eskom Social Compact, the transport sector, SMMEs and state capacitation.

COSATU engaged extensively with social partners at NEDLAC on what elements are needed in the economic recovery strategy. Significant areas of consensus were achieved.

These include on the need for:

- Impact investments.
- A massive infrastructure programme that targets ports, rail, energy, agriculture, water, housing etc.
- Fixing Eskom and other key SOEs.
- A mass employment programme.
- Fast tracking the roll out of the digital economy.
- Fixing the ports and Transnet so exports can reach their destinations; and
- Fixing Metro Rail so workers can get to work on time.

Business tried to raise labour market reforms. Whilst business denies this is an attempt to undermine workers' rights, it was intended to weaken the labour laws. COSATU was able to block this and instead raise the need to strengthen the labour market institutions and address the existing gaps in the legislation.

The Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (ERRP) was adopted by Cabinet and tabled at Parliament in October 2020. A copy of the Plan is attached as an appendix to this report. A more detailed analysis will be developed for the CEC, including commitments by social partners and organised labour.

Further engagements need to be held on medium- and long-term interventions with government and business at Nedlac.

3.4 Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan

The Economic Recovery Leadership Task Team at NEDLAC has engaged on an implementation framework. The meeting agreed to focus on the commitments in the following four critical areas for the recovery of the economy:

- Freight and public transport;
- Energy security;
- Localisation; and
- Enabling a supportive ecosystem for SMMEs.

Additional work streams may need to be added.

Energy Security Work stream

The overall objective of this work stream is to ensure energy security for economic recovery and growth through policy coherence, collaboration between all social partners and increased accountability. It's work is based upon the Eskom Social Compact and Implementation Plan tabled by COSATU and endorsed by government and social partners.

The work stream has agreed to focus on:

- a) Fit for purpose energy institutions and infrastructure centred upon Eskom;
- b) Financial sustainability including in respect of:
 - vii. Tariff management;
 - viii. Addressing corruption and illegal and illicit activity;
 - ix. Debt recovery/payment for services (a revived Masakhane campaign); and
 - x. A balance sheet solution.
- c) Increasing electrical generation capacity including through:
 - xi. Self-generation e.g. for mining industry to protect mining sector jobs; and
 - xii. Enabling the production of alternative sources of energy, e.g. ensuring that Eskom enters renewable energy as an owner and generator of renewable energy capacity and not merely as a procurer.
- d) Developing a just transition road map in terms of energy with all relevant parties, .e.g. to extend the life span of power stations and coal mines where possible, where it is not possible to extend then to convert to other energy generation or alternative economic activities e.g. production of renewable energy technology.

Localisation work stream

The localisation work stream agreed on seven focus areas in respect of setting and achieving localisation targets

The following areas are being prioritised:

- a) Report backs on business targets, e.g. large procurers such as the mining sector and key sectoral targets e.g. cooking oil for the fast food industry, cement for construction etc;



- b) Labour and Community will develop an implementation framework detailing their localisation commitments; investment vehicles; identified champions and targets;
- c) Social partners will consider how best to expand capacity with having due regard to the lack of industrial capacity, value chains, deepening aggregate localisation and small business development support;
- d) SARS will participate in the localisation work stream in the context of curbing of the illicit economy through resource mobilization:
- e) The fast-tracking of the Public Procurement Bill which is on the medium-term agenda; and
- f) Proudly SA will engage with social partners in relation to additional efforts to bolster the buy local marketing campaign.

Enabling a supportive ecosystem for SMMEs work stream

The SMME work stream has prioritised two short term interventions:

- a) The identification and warring of unnecessarily stringent license and permit requirements; and
- b) Mechanisms to assist SMMEs negatively impacted by COVID-19.

Freight and public transport

The freight and public transport workstream agreed to prioritise the following for short term interventions:

- a) Reducing congestions at wet and dry ports and improving freight efficiency;
- b) Addressing vandalism of transport infrastructure especially Metro Rail;
- c) Passenger rail modernization;
- d) Road infrastructure investment and delivery including job creation; and
- e) Minibus taxi transformation, e.g. formalisation of the sector, ensuring taxi drivers enjoy their legal rights, protections and benefits.

Economic Recovery Action Plan Commitments for Reporting

Energy Security (Including the Social Compact to support Eskom)

Area	Commitments from the ERAP		Responsible Constituency
Energy security	1 (a)	Implementation of Eskom Social Compact	All
	1 (b)	Self-generation projects	All

Localization

Area	Commitments from the ERAP		Responsible Constituency
Localisation (to integrate work from Job Summit and TIC Chamber)	4 (e)	Organised labour commitments to buy local & invest in local manufacturing	Labour

Enabling Reforms and employment

Area	ERAP commitments		Responsible Constituency
Corruption and efficient govt spending	9 (f) & (g)	Business organisations, civil society and trade unions actions	Business Labour Community

Mobilization of Financial and human resources

Areas	Commitments		Responsible Constituency
Mobilisation of financial resources	11 (a)	Joint initiative to mobilise financial resources	All Social Partners
	11 (b)	Input into MTBS	All Social Partners
Social partners compliance and will	11 (e)	Tax compliance	All Social Partners
	11 (f)	Statutory and contractual obligations	All Social Partners
	14 (g)	Reinforce ethical culture	All Social Partners
Mobilisation of technical & human resources	11 (i)	Mobilise technical and human resources in areas of govt weakness	Business Labour Community

2.3 Country Investment Presidential Council and Technical Advisory Panel

These structures have been established under the Presidency to oversee the government’s investment drive to spur economic growth. Two Presidential Investment Summits have been successfully held. The majority of their committed investments have been met. However, they have not had their desired impact on the economy, to spur economic growth and reduce unemployment.

COSATU President Zingiswa Losi has been appointed to the Presidential Council and COSATU Parliamentary Coordinator Matthew Parks to the Technical Advisory Panel. These are work in progress.

2.4 Eskom Social Compact

COSATU welcomed the signing of the Eskom Social Compact and its Implementation Plan by the leadership of government, business, labour and community at NEDLAC on 8 December 2020.

This was an historic moment where government and social partners have come together to agree on a social compact to resolve a crisis bedeviling the entire nation.

COSATU developed the Eskom Social Compact as the many challenges facing the Eskom are a threat not only to workers at Eskom itself but in fact workers across the nation. The economy needs reliable and affordable energy for it to recover. Continued uncontrolled load shedding is a risk to jobs and the economy.

COSATU was pleased that NEDLAC partners have endorsed the Eskom Social Compact. It presents a comprehensive plan with 35 key intervention areas to stabilise and rebuild Eskom. Key components include:

- Ensuring the security of workers’ jobs;
- Tackling corruption and wasteful expenditure and holding the culprits to account;
- Reducing a bloated management and their exorbitant perks;
- Reviewing all contracts with Eskom to ensure that they are legal and affordable;
- Establishing clear control systems to ensure quality coal is supplied to Eskom;



- Compelling Eskom to enter the renewable energy generation space as an owner of generation capacity;
- Putting in place clear just transition processes to ensure that coal power stations and mines reaching the end of their life span are extended, converted to other energy generation or alternative economic activities. This is critical to ensure that workers are not retrenched, and communities not devastated.
- A clear debt recovery plan for all debtors, municipalities, government departments, State Owned Enterprises, businesses and other large defaulters.
- Ramping up investment in expanding energy generation capacity;
- Placing Eskom on a sustainable debt trajectory so that it can prioritise investment in maintenance and generation expansion and thus reducing load shedding;
- Locally producing renewable energy technology, in areas where jobs are at risk; and
- Producing electric and hydro energy vehicles locally.

The Federation is confident that if the progressive objectives of the Eskom Social Compact are implemented in full by Eskom, government, business and community, not only can we end the days of Eskom being a burden to the state and an obstacle to economic growth, but in fact the energy sector can become a source of job creation, export and manufacturing opportunities. It can drive the recovery of South Africa's economy and the region's industrialisation. It can enable South Africa to exceed its climate change targets.

A dedicated task team has been established and is working at NEDLAC to monitor its implementation and hold all parties accountable. Workers cannot rely simply upon good wishes. Neither can the nation afford for Eskom to fail.

3.5 SOEs Presidential Commission

A Presidential Commission has been established to oversee the SOEs and to ensure that they are saved. Many are in varying degrees of collapse e.g. Eskom, Transnet, PRASA, SABC, DENEL, RAF, SAA Group. Others e.g. SA Express have died.

New models need to be developed to ensure their revival and sustainability. These existing models are dying, and workers are made to pay the price with wages, pensions and job losses.

The 1st Deputy President of COSATU Mike Shingange and COSATU Deputy Parliamentary Coordinator, Tony Ehrenreich are representing COSATU on it.

Ongoing engagements with affected Affiliates are needed to develop clear plans to ensure these SOEs are saved.

SOEs Shareholder Management Bill

This Bill has been delayed for many years. It is now said to be being revived. It is meant to provide clear powers for the shareholder, namely government, to intervene timeously in the event of SOEs not performing as they should or in the event of malfeasance.

COSATU needs to ensure this Bill is prioritised and tabled at Parliament as a matter of urgency.

Public Investment Corporation Amendment Act and PIC Commission of Enquiry

The Act was passed by Parliament in 2019 in the face of severe resistance from the Minister for Finance and Treasury. It has now been signed into law by the President at COSATU's insistence.

COSATU was central to its drafting and passage by Parliament. It provides for worker representation on the PIC Board, pro-worker investment guidelines and transparency and mandating provisions.



COSATU now has 2 seats on the PIC Board and FEDUSA 1 seat.

COSATU participated in the PIC Commission of Enquiry and welcomed its reports on corrupt activities. The NPA must now act upon the report's anti-corruption recommendations.

However, the PIC Commission has called for the rejection of the PIC Amendment Bill and its provision for worker representation and pro-worker investment guidelines. It has recommended that the PIC be allowed to appoint its own board and chairperson. This is in direct violation of the PFMA governing all public entities and is tantamount to privatisation.

Edcon

In November 2018, Edcon approached SACTWU, SACCAWU and COSATU and the PIC for assistance to prevent its possible liquidation. It was struggling for a variety of reasons, and in particular to an unmanageable debt burden. It was on the verge of collapse if urgent assistance was not provided.

Edcon working together with its funders, the banks, landlords, SACTWU, SACCAWU and COSATU developed a turnaround plan. This was then taken to the UIF and the PIC for support.

This was agreed to after much effort by all involved. This helped to save 40 000 direct and 100 000 indirect jobs in the retail and clothing sectors. Unfortunately, Covid-19 came a year later and collapsed much of the turnaround strategy that was being successfully implemented. Edcon was then compelled to seek new owners and to be broken up. Whilst Edcon as a holding company ceased to exist, large parts of it were bought by other companies, and many jobs though not all were saved.

3.6 Labour Market

Unemployment Insurance and Labour Laws Amendment Acts

It was supported by COSATU passed by Parliament and came into effect in 2019. The key changes to the UIF include:

- Increase UIF benefits from 8 to 12 months.
- Increase maternity leave benefits from 54% to 66% of salary within the thresholds.
- Allow the Minister to increase maternity leave payments up to certain limits if enough funds are available without amending the act.
- Allow still born births and third trimester miscarriages to qualify for maternity leave.
- Separate maternity leave credits from UIF credits.
- Provide for reduced time workers under full time UIF benefits.
- Cover learnerships under the UIF.
- Deceased' beneficiaries will be entitled to the deceased's remaining benefits.
- Reduce time needed to accumulate UIF.
- Allow the Minister to issue regulations for domestic and SMME workers if needs be.
- Includes public service employees who would now be covered, e.g. if they are dismissed. Their inclusion will also significantly boost the UIF and provide space to increase further access to it by unemployed workers or mothers on maternity leave.

Once the Covid-19 pandemic has passed and the UIF's finances recover, the next round of UIF expansion negotiations will take place at NEDLAC to see how resignations, informal sector and self-employed workers can be included.



UIF Covid-19 Temporary Employment Relief Scheme

R40 billion was set aside by the UIF to assist workers retrenched or placed on unpaid leave for a 3-month period. This is separate from the normal UIF benefits that workers are entitled to. By March 2021 R60 billion had been paid to over 5.5 million workers across all sectors of the economy.

The Covid-19 TERS was resuscitated in July and backdated to March 2021 to cover vulnerable workers who are not able to work safely from work or home due to age or co-morbidities as well as sectors of the economy restricted from fully or partially operating e.g. the liquor, tourism, hospitality, restaurants, hotels, cinemas, bars, sports and events value chains.

Many challenges have been experienced with the UIF. It was not built for a shutdown of the entire economy and subsequently is unable to deal with the disbursements of Millions of Rands on a daily basis. COSATU has engaged with the UIF on a daily basis to reinforce its capacity and address gaps in the system.

This resulted in a new toll-free hotline being established with its staffing having been increased from 55 to over 600 to answer questions pertaining to the disaster relief fund.

The online systems have been reinforced to allow for employers and workers to apply online and to check on the status of their applications. The system was increased to process over 450 000 applications and payments a day. It has been linked to the banks to help verify bank account details.

Many challenges were experienced in the UIF's communications plan. These are being addressed with advertisements now being placed on various media platforms.

Employers were compelled by the Ministerial Directive to apply on behalf of workers to help ease the burden on the UIF systems. This has helped increase the uptake of UIF applications. However, there are some employers who have refused to apply. Often because they had never registered their workers with the UIF or had fraudulently failed to pay their UIF levies to the UIF.

Problems arose with some employers not paying the workers the UIF funds due to them. The UIF is paying funds directly into workers' accounts.

Bargaining Councils were encouraged to apply on behalf of their sectors too to ease the burden upon workers and the UIF. This was done by the Clothing and Textile Bargaining Councils. It is now being done by two bargaining councils in the passenger and transport sectors. Many other bargaining councils declined to do so due to insufficient capacity on their part.

The Covid-19 pandemic points to a number of gaps in the unemployment insurance fund with the exclusion of public sector workers, informal workers as well as freelance workers from contributions has left particularly freelance as well as informal sector workers vulnerable and without income protection for the duration of the lockdown. COSATU and its affiliate must grapple with the possibility of including groups of workers that would normally not be a part of the unemployment insurance fund.

Unions must develop and implement education awareness programmes and audits of their sectors to ensure that all employers needing to have applied to the UIF and that these monies have been paid to workers.

Unions should develop programmes to help workers struggling to receive their UIF monies. Unions should link these activities to a membership recruitment drive.

Labour Laws Amendment Act

This Act was a Private Member's Bill, drafted by a former ACDP Member of Parliament in response to COSATU's call for paid parental leave. It was driven through Parliament by COSATU.



Parental leave came into effect on 1 January 2020. All fathers are now entitled to 10 days parental leave when their children are born. Mothers who had a child born from a surrogacy pregnancy or are in a same sex partnership are also included.

All employers are required to provide 10 days parental leave. Workers can claim this once a year. Additional leave will have to be claimed under annual leave. Employers are entitled to ask for a copy of the birth certificate confirming the birth and parentage of the child.

It is critical for all unions to make sure workers are aware of their new right and that employers too are aware and abide by this.

This includes PSCBC unions. There have been many complaints from workers of employers, both public and private, refusing to provide for parental leave.

The amendments to the UIF and LLA Acts have come into effect, with the exception of paid parental and adoption leave for public servants as well as the inclusion of public servants under the protection of the UIF.

DPSA has failed to announce when they will be implemented and to undertake the necessary administrative action. To date members of the public service are not covered by the UIF in the event of dismissal nor are they entitled to 10 days parental leave. This has impacted upon hundreds of public servants who feel aggrieved by their illegal exclusion.

Treasury has refused to contribute to and public servants' contributions to the UIF due to cost constraints. It has instead offered to reimburse the UIF when public servants claim from it.

Government's refusal to support the UIF sends a message to private sector employers that UIF compliance is not important. It also denies the UIF badly needed injections of approximately R400 million per month that could have then been used to increase unemployment benefits.

This matter was taken up with the President and the Ministers for Employment and Labour, DPSA and Treasury in December. It needs to be followed up and taken up as well by the PSCBC.

National Minimum Wage and Basic Conditions of Employment Amendment Acts

The NMW Act came into effect on 1 January 2019. It was a long-standing demand and campaign of COSATU in addition to being a key commitment of the Freedom Charter and the ANC's 2014 national elections manifesto.

Key aspects of the National Minimum Wage Act when it came into effect in 2019 included:

- All workers to be paid at least R20 per hour.
- Farm and domestic workers to be pegged at 90% and 75% of the NMW for the first two years and then to be at 100% of the NMW.
- EPWP and CWP workers to be pegged at 55% of the NMW.
- A NMW Commission to be established to monitor the enforcement and impacts of the NMW and to review and increase it annually.
- The NMW Commission to take over the functions of the Employment Conditions Commission and to include representatives of labour, government, business and community.
- The annual review of the NMW to take into account inflation, the cost of living, wage inequality and poverty.
- Employers who cannot afford to pay a NMW must apply to the DOL for exemptions. Regulations will provide the criteria for such applications e.g. financial disclosures, the extent and length of the exemption etc.
- Employers who fraudulently receive exemptions or fail to pay the NMW will be fined and required to pay the monies due to workers, including the fines.



In March 2020 the NMW and its pegged levels were adjusted for inflationary linked increases. In March 2021 under pressure from COSATU they were increased by CPI plus 1.5%. Farm workers were also equalised with the NMW and domestic workers were increased to 88% of the NMW. Domestic workers should be equalised to the NMW in 2022.

The COSATU Deputy General Secretary, Solly Phetoe, represents COSATU on the NMW Commission.

Labour Relations Amendment Act

As part of the NMW engagements, amendments were made to the LRA. Attempts were made by business to hinder the right to strike. These were blocked by COSATU at NEDLAC. Key aspects of the Labour Relations Amendment Act include:

- Clarifying that the balloting of members before embarking on strikes by unions are secret ballots. This has been in the LRA since 1995 and is the practise of most unions.
- Providing for a transition period for those unions that don't have balloting clauses in their constitutions. Again, this has been in the LRA since 1995. Both clauses also apply to employers' organisations before embarking upon lock outs.
- An attempt by business to require balloting of offers made during negotiations was defeated by COSATU.
- Allows the CCMA to provide advisory arbitration when violence has occurred during strikes, constitutional rights of people are threatened or in the absence of the complete collapse of collective bargaining. This is an advisory arbitration and not binding. Parties can reject the proposed settlements. However, they are required to consult members and to indicate their decisions within 7 or if needed 12 days. Balloting is not required for this process. An attempt by business to require the suspension of strikes during this process was defeated by COSATU.
- Allowing the Minister of Labour to extend collective agreements where parties are sufficiently representative. This will assist unions struggling to reach 51% majority thresholds due to the rise of labour broking. It will also cover outsourced workers with the collective agreements reached by unions. This is a major victory in the fight against labour brokers and outsourcing.
- Allowing default picketing rules to be set through engagements between government, labour and business at Nedlac. This will help protect the rights of workers to picket when rogue employers attempt to intimidate and block them.

Contrary to media hype by SAFTU etc. these Acts mark a victory and not a defeat for workers. 6.4 million workers or 47% of the work force will see their wages rise. Workers' rights to strike have been protected. Collective bargaining has been extended to cover additional workers where unions are sufficiently representative.

Employment Equity Amendment Bill

The Employment Equity Amendment Bill was tabled at Parliament in 2020. It is expected to be passed by the National Assembly, by the end of 2021, the NCOP in mid-2022 and to come into effect by the end of 2022. It will help accelerate employment equity.

The Employment Equity Amendment Bill provides badly needed interventions to strengthen government's ability to hold employers accountable for their role and failures to adhere to the Employment Equity Act. Key progressive provisions in the Bill include:

- Requiring employers in their EE Annual Reports to provide confirmation that they have paid all their workers at or above the National Minimum Wage;
- Expanding the definition of disability to include intellectual and sensory, a long overdue correction;
- Empowering the Minister to set economic sectoral, sub-sectoral, regional, sub-regional and occupation

specific targets; enabling more precise targets for sectors, occupations and regions that are notorious for their failures to reflect South Africa's demographics;

- Allowing for regional and sub-regional variations, critical given the diversity of South Africa's population found in different provinces etc;
 - Requiring employers to consult trade unions on employment equity targets, helping to foster a more inclusive approach to meeting targets and supporting collective bargaining;
 - Empowering labour inspectors to inspect and ensure compliance with the EE Act;
 - Empowering the Minister to issue compliance certificates to employers in good standing with the EE Act and to require such certificates for companies applying for government contracts.
- ☞ This provision is a welcome step forward requiring employers doing business with the state to be in compliance with labour laws and acting in a way that supports good labour practises. Workers' hard-earned taxes should not be used to reward abusive employers.

Compensation of Injury on Duty Amendment Bill

The Compensation of Injury on Duty Amendment Bill was tabled at Parliament in 2020. It is expected to be passed by the National Assembly, by the end of 2021, the NCOP in mid-2022 and to come into effect by the end of 2022. It will help ensure domestic workers are covered and help to modernise the Compensation Fund.

COSATU welcomes the progressive provisions of the COIDA Bill. It is long overdue and will extend cover and relief to millions of workers, in particular women. COSATU's support is based upon the following critical interventions included in the COIDA Bill:

- Domestic workers will now be covered, benefiting almost a million largely women workers who had been unconstitutionally excluded;
- An expanded definition of workers' dependents and beneficiaries to include their spouse(s), children, siblings, parents and grandparents, thus reflecting South Africa's cultural norms;
- Diseases and post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from the workplace will now be included, providing relief for millions of workers in the mining, security and other sectors, and women;
- Introducing a no-fault rule, to replace practices in the past that have been abused in the past to deny relief to workers;
- Providing for stiff penalties for non-compliant employers;
- Providing incentives for compliant employers;
- Empowering labour inspectors to ensure compliance by employers;
- Allowing courts to place caps on the exorbitant fees claimed by lawyers;
- Extending the time frame for submitting claims from 1 to 3 years; and
- Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of employers, contractors and sub-contractors; thus, protecting millions of workers who otherwise fall through the cracks.

Whilst COSATU welcomes the progressive thrust of the Bill, it needs to be further strengthened to:

- Uplift rehabilitation from optional to a right, this is critical to prevent employers retrenching injured workers when they should be ensuring their rehabilitation and return to work; and
- Setting clear oversight mechanisms for insurance and compensation funds, e.g. that workers constitute 50% of their boards, they are held to account by the Minister and clear appeal mechanisms exist for workers denied their claims.



Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Bill

The OHS Act seeks to address many gaps in the Act. However, it has been delayed by several years in the Department. It left NEDLAC in 2016 and has yet to be tabled at Parliament. It has only recently been advertised for public comment.

It is hoped that it will be tabled at Parliament at the end of 2021 so that it could be passed in 2022 and come into effect in 2023.

COSATU will be requesting that an additional provision be inserted to provide for workers to refuse to work in unsafe conditions and to be protected from victimisation when doing so. This is based upon the experience of many workers in the pandemic who were forced to work in dangerous conditions. COSATU negotiated with the Department to issue Ministerial Directives providing workers such rights and protections.

3.7 International Labour Organisation - Convention 190 on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

Convention 190 is aimed at tackling sexual harassment and violence at the workplace. It was adopted by the ILO in 2019. Cabinet announced its support for it in November 2020. It is currently before Parliament where both the Portfolio and Select Committees on Employment and Labour have recommended its ratification. It is expected to be approved by Parliament by September 2021.

COSATU has been at the forefront leading the campaign for South Africa to ratify this crucial ILO Convention. We have done so as part of our gender program of action, which includes taking a firm and unwavering stand against gender-based violence.

It is symbolically significant that ratification come before December, during the 16 Days of No Violence Against Women & Children Campaign. December is the festive month. COSATU says that there is nothing festive about the scourge of gender-based violence. Cabinet and Parliament's approval is an important confirmation of our position.

While we are of the view that the ratification process could have been done quicker, we are pleased that there is now no turning back from converting this progressive tool in the fight against workplace harassment and violence to a central pillar of our employment law regime.

Its eventual and now inevitable ratification will be a critical boost in the fight against the pandemic of Gender Based Violence that women are subject to across countless workplaces.

The gender-based violence challenges facing South Africa require speed and diligence from the state, not endless shuffling of papers or sleeping on the job.

Parallel to the Parliamentary process towards ratification, the Department of Employment and Labour needs to immediately begin engaging Organised Labour at NEDLAC on a review of our labour and criminal legislation to ensure that they are in compliance with the progressive provisions of Convention 190 and where amendments are needed, to fast track these.

Scarce Skills Policy

The Departments of Employment and Labour as well as Higher Education and Training have committed to tabling a comprehensive and updated list of proposed scarce skills at NEDLAC for engagement with social partners.

This is critical as the existing scarce skills regime is outdated. Implementation is equally critical as many low skilled jobs are given to migrant labour when local unemployed workers should be targeted to fill such jobs. This is particularly prevalent in the restaurants, fuel, domestic and agricultural sectors.



Concerns have been raised with regards to the initial draft list of scarce skills by government as many of the professions identified cannot be said to be scarce nor unavailable in South Africa.

CCMA

The protection and promotion of fair labour rights in South Africa is enshrined in the Constitution. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), the entity that is mandated by law to oversee labour disputes is under imminent threat as a result of the drastic cuts to its funding in the 2021/22 budget as well as over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

Organised Labour in NEDLAC (COSATU, FEDUSA & NACTU) submitted a memorandum to Cabinet through the Minister of Employment and Labour to explain Organised Labour's call for the immediate reversal of these draconian budget cuts to the CCMA in the interest of protecting workers' hard won labour rights.

The R300 million budget cuts to the CCMA's budget over the next three years is already having a devastating impact on the working class. Over two million South Africans lost their jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic. This number is likely to grow with the trimming of the CCMA budget as workers fall victim to procedurally and substantively unfair dismissals, practices and wage cuts.

The decision to withdraw much needed funds from the CCMA is a reversal of workers' hard-won rights to fair labour practices.

The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the precarity of workers as employer make use of this period to exploit and abuse vulnerable workers. Workers will be left to fall through the cracks of the budget cuts as the CCMA is under resourced and thus unable to handle disputes.

The CCMA has been the worst affected labour market institution with regards to budget cuts as the CCMA grapples with the overwhelming caseloads.

Even though the CCMA is currently doing everything possible to function under these crippling conditions, it is workers who will suffer the most as employers make use of the CCMA's weaknesses to exploit and unfairly dismiss workers. Financial resources are vital for the success of the CCMA to satisfactorily provide conciliation, mediation and arbitration. The budget cuts on the CCMA are seen by Organised Labour and other unions and workers as a new wave of attacks on worker's rights to labour protection.

Since the 1st December 2020, the CCMA has reduced the services of the part-time commissioners and has only been functioning with full time commissioners. These excessive cuts are forcing the CCMA to reduce the number of Commissioners employed, thus not only contributing to the ranks of the unemployed directly, but lengthening delays in workers' cases being heard by the CCMA. These delays will result in thousands of workers giving up and simply walking away and accepting the loss of their jobs and rights.

The CCMA has already been forced to cancel conciliation services, the first step to resolve workplace disputes in a manner that seeks to preserve and restore the relationship between employer and employee. The CCMA has also been compelled to reduce walk in services disadvantaging thousands of workers.

These cuts to the CCMA's budget and capacity come as the CCMA battles to cope with a flood of workers seeking help as millions face abuses, lost wages and their jobs. The rights of workers are silently being reversed through the implementation of such budget cuts.

COSATU is engaging the Minister and the Alliance to reverse the budgets cuts to the CCMA. COSATU has requested Cabinet and Treasury to develop a task team with organised labour and business to investigate alternative sources of funding for the CCMA. These may come from the SETAs and other possible sources.



Budgets

COSATU continues to present its submissions to the Parliamentary budget public hearings where they enjoyed widespread support from MPs across party lines.

Whilst appreciating the fiscal, economic and other constraints facing government, the federation was not able to support many key aspects of the budget.

Key concerns with regards to the budget included:

- The midnight unilateral withdrawal by government from the 2020/21 public service wage agreement.
- Not slashing the bloated cabinet and management structures sufficiently.
- Not increasing taxes upon the wealthy.
- The failure to present a plan to deal concretely with corruption and wasteful expenditure.
- Not accounting for departments failures to meet key service delivery targets e.g. sanitation and infrastructure by the Department of Basic Education.
- Not sufficiently resourcing the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition industrial plans.
- Lack of a clear plan to turn the economy around.
- Lack of clear plans to save embattled SOEs and entities e.g. Eskom, SAA Group, SA Express, Transnet, Metro Rail, SABC, DENEL, RAF.

2020/21 Supplementary Budget and Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement

A supplementary budget was tabled at Parliament in June and the MTBPS in October 2021. It largely contained the various social and economic relief measures that were announced by the President in April.

This include the rapid rolling out of an expected R53 billion in UIF Covid-19 TERS, increasing social grants for 6 months, a long-term unemployed grant of R350 for 6 months, a R200 billion credit guarantee loan for businesses etc.

However, it did not include any further stimulus funding. COSATU stated that this is the biggest failure of the supplementary budget. The economy needs to be stimulated to inject growth, save and create jobs, protect fragile industries and sectors and ensure revenue for the state.

Treasury has instead indicated its preference to begin reducing state expenditure, central to which is its abandonment of the 2020 public service wage agreement and the imposition of a further 3-year wage freeze.

It has subsequently called upon SALGA and its Bargaining Council to abandon the 2020 municipal wage agreement.

The other major failures of the supplementary budget are the inability of the state to decisively tackle corruption and wasteful expenditure which consume on average 10% of the budget every year according to the Auditor-General's reports. This amounts to approximately R150 billion per annum. That alone is equal to the amount Treasury seeks to cut from the public service wage bill. The budgets offered no plan on how to stem this tide or to recapacitate the state.

2021/22 Budget

The 2021/22 budget includes crucially the implementation of the 2020/1 wage freeze and the additional 3-year wage freeze until 2024.

There was a lower revenue shortfall from the projected R310 billion to R230 billion due to higher gold, platinum and other mineral prices and thus better tax collections.

However, this is unlikely to persuade Treasury to retreat from its wage freeze imposition.



Drastic budget cuts to key entities and departments e.g. CCMA and DTIC are likely to continue.

The key challenge for COSATU and affiliates is to intensify our response to the wage freeze as well as other budgetary cuts that will have a negative impact upon workers. This will need to include mobilising workers, public engagements, presenting alternatives etc.

VAT increase

VAT was increased from 14% to 15% in 2018 to address an R13 billion shortfall that arose largely from the increased funding for NSFAS in 2017. Whilst COSATU was not able to stop or reverse this increase, Treasury did concede to add additional essential items to the VAT exempt products. These included sanitary pads, white bread and cake flour. Additional proposals to exempt school supplies was rejected by Treasury.

Parliament supported COSATU's proposal that the impact of the VAT increase be monitored and reported to Parliament by Treasury. This has not happened.

COSATU needs to continue to push its other demand be implemented, namely ensuring that all indigent households receive the free electricity and water allocations they are entitled too and that these allocations be increased.

Pension Funds Amendment Bill

In May 2020, COSATU and SACTWU made proposals to Treasury and Parliament on the need to allow workers who have lost wages to access a portion of their pension funds.

Several engagements have taken place between COSATU and Treasury to discuss this. However, it took months for Treasury to respond and agree to these engagements.

COSATU made two proposed options on how this could be done e.g. through a Ministerial Direction allowing access for emergency purposes or through an expansion of the existing home loan option for pension fund holders.

Treasury initially indicated that it is opposed to COSATU's proposal on the basis that it does not believe it is necessary, that workers can seek relief from the UIF and that it undermines the sustainability of pension funds. Treasury had initially stated that it does not believe that either option proposed by COSATU is legally possible.

Workers are likely to ask why government and the private sector are allowed to benefit from workers' pension funds and how they are invested, but when workers and unions ask that they be invested and utilised to benefit workers, then they are told no.

A Private Member's Bill has since been drafted by a DA Member of Parliament in response to and in support of COSATU's pension funds proposal.

COSATU should continue to support the Private Member's Bill as it addresses COSATU's proposals to allow workers to access a portion of their pension funds. It is already before Parliament.

Subsequently Treasury has engaged COSATU and agreed to our proposals. They committed to tabling an amendment bill with the budget in February in Parliament. This bill will provide for workers to be able to withdraw limited portions of their pension funds as an economic relief measure. COSATU has proposed that workers be allowed to choose cash withdrawals as well as loan options.

The agreement with Treasury is that this bill should be prioritised and passed by Parliament by June so that it can come into effect on 1 October 2021. However, this has not happened. Treasury has continuously delayed and given mixed signals on it.



It does not matter whether the Private Member or Treasury's bill is passed in the end, as long as one is passed, and it contains COSATU's proposals and it comes into effect in 2022.

National Health Insurance Towards Universal Health Care

The South African health system is in urgent need of an overhaul in terms of its financing arrangements, management and the ability to deliver quality healthcare services. There is consensus that the health system is dysfunctional, and that the quality of the health services is poor. Access to quality health services often depends on one's geographic location, race, employment status, income level, gender, and where the healthcare services are delivered: public or private health sector. The inequality in the financing and provision of health services between public and private sectors as well as provincial and district variation has detrimental impact in terms of the well-being of the population.

The unequal distribution of health spent in South Africa and the deteriorating state of public health care necessitates the implementation of the NHI. Ours is a society that has no option but to muster courage, to make resources available, to develop institutions and technical capacity and to mobilize the masses of the people to confront our four concurrent epidemics comprising poverty-related illnesses such as infectious diseases (including HIV/AIDS and TB), maternal and child deaths, non-communicable diseases and violence and injury.

COSATU together with like-minded organisations have on an ongoing basis called for the speedy implementation of the NHI as a step closer towards the realisation of quality health care for many vulnerable groups. Unfortunately, a few organisations with very deep pockets continue to fund the narrative that the NHI is a threat to economic growth and jobs, this narrative unfortunately takes us backwards and deny the poor and the working class of their fundamental right to quality health care.

The findings of the health market Inquiry report confirm COSATU's fierce opposition to the commercialisation of health and its consequence on both quality and access to healthcare.

The outcomes of the report necessitate the implementation of the national health insurance which will create a single public health system for South Africa. The speedy and efficient roll-out of the NHI will ensure that we achieve better health outcomes for all South Africans. We view the finding of the inquiry as one of the crucial processes in affirming our beliefs that privatisation and commercialisation of essential services produces negative socio-economic effects.

The COSATU 13th National congress has resolved to condemn the undesirable state of the health infrastructure in the country. In reiterating the 12th Congress resolution, the 13th Congress provides the broad framework of the COSATU perspective on the NHI as well as the transformation of the healthcare system in general including COSATU health campaigns. The South African health system is in crucial need of an overhaul in relation to its financing arrangements, management as well as the ability to deliver quality healthcare services. There is agreement that the health system is dysfunctional, and that the quality of the health services is poor.

It is essential that we continue to establish education programmes for our affiliates and members so to promote the NHI in the broader working class, in so doing we will be establishing campaigns and coalitions with progressive mass organisations. The evolving and developing of district level campaigns is critical so to ensure the democratisation and involvement of working-class communities in hospital boards, clinic-based health committees and improvements in the management and operations of health institutions.

The mobilisation of our members is crucial in fighting against the extreme exploiting of the private health industry, rising premiums and declining benefits. We need to defend and secure the implementation of the NHI. It is critical and essential that we defend against any attacks on the NHI in attempts to derail or undermine its implementation, this should be prioritised. The fight for the professionalization of the health workforce, should include improving health care worker pay, benefits, other conditions of work as well as morale to guarantee and defend the working class and rural poor in ensuring they receive better service.



We denounce all attempts by the ministry to de-professionalise certain health care workers in the profession and sector. It is essential that we campaign against incompetent and corrupt management of the institutions to ensure that the public hospitals and clinics progressively improve their performance to comply with the mandatory standards of the NHI. This campaign is also to make provision and support the strengthening and advancement of the State-Owned pharmaceutical company. State buildings must adhere to occupational health standards.

The implementation date of the NHI (2026) should not be deferred in order to see the implementation of the NHI in our lifetime. There should not be any retrenchments or loss of jobs during the implementation of the NHI. It is critical that the nursing campaign is advanced and so to enhance primary health care. The emphasis on the urgency in the implementation of the NHI is in the face of the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality, which should be prioritised.

To date COSATU has made submissions to parliament and NEDLAC in support of the NHI Bill. In partnership with the Department of Health shop steward training was conducted in all nine provinces. Shop steward training allowed the participation of all COSATU regions and locals to participate in the NHI public hearings.

Expropriation Bill and Section 25 Constitutional Amendment Bill

Progress is being made with regards to amending Section 25 of the Constitution to provide for expropriation without compensation. However, the previous committee dealing with Section 25 lapsed and to be revived.

COSATU has participated in support of these amendments at Parliament (Section 25) and at NEDLAC (Expropriation Bill). Public hearings are being held. There are some wording matters that must still be addressed but the draft wording is largely in alignment with COSATU's key demands.

The amendment should be concluded during 2022 given the delays due to the shutdown.

The Expropriation Bill was agreed to by NEDLAC. It will replace the apartheid era Act of 1975 and the various existing laws providing expropriation.

There will now be one single law providing clear processes, timeframes, rights, procedures, requires for and purposes of expropriation, the Valuer General to determine compensation, judicial processes of appeal and how matters of compensation will be determined.

It includes criteria for when full, partial and nil compensation will be paid.

The Section 25 Amendment Bill may not be passed due to deep divisions between the ANC versus the EFF versus the DA on it. This Bill requires a two thirds majority which the ANC does not have and needs the support of either the EFF or the DA. This seems unlikely. If this is not possible, then the ANC will proceed with the Expropriation Bill only. It too provides for expropriation without compensation in support of land reform. It should be passed by Parliament in 2022 and come into effect in 2023.

Local Government Elections

Local Government Elections Application to Postpone to February 2022

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) appointed Judge Dikgang Moseneke to investigate the possibilities of holding the 2021 local government elections in the midst of the pandemic and disaster management restrictions.

Judge Moseneke was been tasked with engaging key stakeholders, including organised labour at NEDLAC as well as inviting public submissions in this regard by 18 June.

Judge Moseneke engaged COSATU and other social partners on their views on whether free and fair elections can and should be held during the Covid-19 pandemic.



The question of whether to continue with local elections in October or for the IEC to submit a request to the Constitutional Court for permission to postpone them to early 2022 is an important matter for the entire country.

It speaks to the:

- Constitutional requirements to hold elections no later than 90 days of the 5th anniversary of the previous elections.
- Bill of Rights' call to government to preserve lives of all South Africans; and
- Need to hold local accountable to the electorate.

The CEC has discussed these matters and stated the need to abide by the Constitution, to hold local government accountable, to hold elections timeously and also to save lives and livelihoods.

There are pros and cons to proceeding with local elections in October or to requesting the Constitutional Court to condone a postponement.

Option A: Proceed with October 2021 Local Elections:

Pros include the needs to:

- Abide by very clear Constitutional requirements to hold elections within 90 days of the 5th anniversary of the last elections.
- Avoid undermining the Constitution and setting a precedent.
- Need to hold municipalities and political parties accountable.
- Need to replace corrupt and incompetent Mayors and councillors.
- Need to rebuild collapsing, corrupt and dysfunctional municipalities and restore basic services.
- Some countries have held their elections, e.g. America, India.

Cons include:

- It will undermine the Bill of Rights' very clear conjunction on the need to preserve lives above all else.
- It will undermine the need to save lives and livelihoods by minimising social interaction, the main vector of the pandemic.
- The vaccine roll out programme at its current rate will at best have vaccinated under 40% of the target population by the October election date and more realistically around 30% of the population.
 - ☞ To date only 2% of adults have been vaccinated. The current weekly vaccination rate is 1% of the target population. Government intends to double this to 2% a week.
 - ☞ Countless obstacles have been and continue to be experienced in the roll out.
 - ☞ Pfizer vaccines require a second dose and all vaccines take about 3 weeks to reach full efficacy in the recipients' bodies.
- Elections by their nature are social events, e.g. from door to door, ward and community meetings, rallies and most critically on election day when more than 20 million persons will stand in long queues for hours, especially in townships and informal areas where voting stations are usually poorly prepared and resourced.
- Countries that held their elections such as the US and India have subsequently experienced infection surges that dwarfed South Africa's and overwhelmed their much larger healthcare infrastructure. South Africa's would likely collapse in such a scenario. Indian hospitals ran out of the most basic supplies e.g. beds, oxygen etc and were forced to choose which patients to save and which to let die. The US has a hybrid electoral model where more than 70 million could vote early or by post.
- A 4th wave at the level of the US or India infection rates would compel government to reinstate a level 5 or 4 lockdown which would devastate the economy. Government and the UIF do not have the resources to provide relief at the level done in 2020.



- Government e.g. Ministers, senior officials etc. become distracted by elections and struggle to multi-task, e.g. local elections would distract them from focusing on rolling out the vaccines, reinforcing health and safety measures and infrastructure and rebuilding the economy etc.

Option B: Request the IEC to apply for condonation to the Constitutional Court to postpone the 2021 Local Elections until the 1st quarter of 2022:

Pros include the needs to:

- Abide by the Bill of Rights' very clear requirement to save lives.
- This would not be a violation of the Constitution as what matters are its principles and not literal interpretations, e.g. what would be asked for is a simple delay of 4 months to allow vaccines to be rolled, to reach full efficacy and for the 67% plus population immunity level to be achieved and not a cancellation of the elections.
- Precedence exists. Local elections were postponed in the Western Cape in 1995 when government was not ready to proceed. More critically was that all local government by-elections were postponed in 2020 during the lockdown to save lives. The constitutional requirement principles and legal necessities are the same for by-elections, e.g. they must be held within 90 days of a vacancy being declared by the IEC.
- Allow government and society to focus on ensuring the rapid roll out of the vaccines to enable society and the economy to remerge.
- Avoid sparking an unmanageable surge that would collapse healthcare infrastructure, cause unnecessary deaths, provoke a harsh lockdown, shatter the economy, collapse companies and see millions lose wages, pensions and jobs.
- Avoid further depleting the UIF and fiscus and the consequences therein.

Cons include:

- What if government does not achieve the 67% vaccination target by early 2022?
- Will a precedent be created where unpopular politicians will seek to postpone elections they may lose and search for crises to cite?
- Will the value of the Constitution be eroded by politicians routinely amending the Constitution or simply ignoring it?

COSATU made its submission to Justice Moseneke. Justice Moseneke's recommendation to the IEC was in line with COSATU's position, namely that whilst it is desirable to proceed with the local elections scheduled for October 2021, this is no longer possible in a manner that will not threaten lives and contribute to a devastating 4th wave or guarantee free and fair elections given the Covid-19 disaster management restrictions on social gatherings.

Justice Moseneke recommended that the IEC urgently apply to the Constitutional Court for condonation to postpone the elections until February 23, 2022. This should allow for the vaccine roll out to reach 67% herd immunity before then. This will hopefully help ensure that lives will be protected, and that free and fair elections may be held.

This matter is now before the Constitutional Court. A decision is expected shortly given the urgency of the matter and tight timeframes.

ANC Local Government Elections Manifesto

The ANC is planning to launch its elections manifesto by the beginning of August at the latest. It is critical that the key demands of COSATU and workers are addressed in it. The second draft of the ANC's manifesto is due this week.



Issues that COSATU has initially raised with the ANC that need to be included in the manifesto include the following:

- The need for a thorough and honest assessment of the implementation of the 2016 local and 2019 national and provincial elections manifestos.
 - ☞ Voters expect the ANC to account and show self-introspection.
- What are the proposed interventions to address the dismal state and at times collapse of local government? E.g.
 - ☞ Measures to tackle corruption and wasteful expenditure?
 - ☞ Measures to improve the quality of and deal with the bad behaviour of Councillors?
 - ☞ Restore basic service delivery, in particular water, sewerage, electricity (including free) and roads.
 - ☞ The transition to the District Model as the current 259 municipalities are not sustainable and in many cases are simply too small and should rather be converted to municipal service points of larger municipalities.
 - ☞ The reinstatement of municipal workers dismissed for exposing corruption or victims of factional battles.
 - ☞ The failure of many municipalities to pay workers on time, including their PAYE and pension payments.
 - ☞ Outsourcing of municipal work to the EPWP and CWP.
- The manifesto needs to include reference to the commitments of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, e.g.
 - ☞ Eskom Social Compact;
 - ☞ Presidential Infrastructure Programme;
 - ☞ Presidential Employment Programme;
 - ☞ Ramping up local procurement at all levels; and
 - ☞ Accelerating the development and implementation of the 15 industrial sectoral master plans.
- The need for government (national and local) to respect collective bargaining in both the SALGA Bargaining Council but also the PSCBC.

Climate Change and a Just Transition to a low carbon economy

Background

The COSATU 2009 Congress resolved that “climate change is one of the greatest threats to our plant and our people” further resolving that the working class, poor and developing countries will be most affected by climate change which is a leading factor to the access of electricity, job security and the just transition.

In addition to this the COSATU 13th National Congress has noted that there is a need for renewable energy so to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, including coal. Noting the establishment of IPPs by government which is informed by the National Energy Act 2008 and the Electricity Regulation Act (ERA) 2006, there should have clear rules and the guidelines of establishment and the regulation of the IPPs. The Act gives expression to the development of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) which specify the rules and the regulations of the IPP’s. The IRP was established by the Department of Energy (DoE) in 2010. The IRP intends to set out the new generation capacity per technology.

It is imperative that through the recognition of climate change and the need for a just transition as well as access to electricity we ensure that the accumulation of wealth through the causes of excessive greenhouse gas emissions, global warming and climate change is eliminated forming a low carbon development path which will be established to address unemployment and create decent jobs. Therefore, ensuring that all workers are afforded the right to clean and affordable energy.

The COSATU 13th National Congress resolved that there is an urgent need for an energy mix policy which is central for energy security and the main sources of energy need to play a role specifically gas, nuclear, coal and renewables.



In so saying, a transition to a low carbon economy must be a just transition and requires that government allows for the inclusion of workers in the discussion of the just transition as well as allow for an energy policy that ensures that ownership of renewable energy is state owned and controlled where the state motivates for a renewable energy transition.

In decreasing the use of coal in the energy mix, the just transition should consider and take to regard the securing of workers in the coal sector as well as the reskilling and skilling of workers which essential centres the securing of jobs and livelihoods of the workers in the sector. The introduction of renewable energy should not in any way undermine the number of jobs in the country and should not benefit foreign companies.

The just transition for workers

The question of jobs in the transition to a green economy is informed by the Million Climate Jobs campaign that calculated that more than three million new “climate jobs” could be created. There are few accurate statistics on the number of jobs that could be under threat in the transition to a low-carbon economy. But the number of new jobs which could be created in a just transition is likely to far exceed any possible job losses. There are opportunities for local manufacturers. Production processes which are more environmentally friendly tend to be more labour intensive, using people rather than machines or chemicals to do the work. The Central Committee of COSATU endorsed the Million Climate Jobs Campaign in June 2011.

The unfortunate reality is that in the planning of a transition so far, the planning for jobs has lagged, leaving thousands of workers behind in the transition to a green economy. The famous case in point is the plight of the workers in the coal-fired power stations, whom after the announcement of decommissioning have not been prepared to take up jobs in the green economy.

The just transition to a low carbon economy cannot take place without workers and people at the centre of the transition, as they stand a chance to be most affected by the transition. However, in practice the transition has overtaken South African workers losing the essence of a transition that is just. Now, South African workers urgently need a Just Transition. They are currently experiencing multiple impacts from climate change and responses to it. Sectors in mining and energy, agriculture and transport require just transition plans to prepare workers to adapt to net zero in 2050. Below is and in-depth scenario analysis of each sector.

Mining and Energy

Like all other countries South Africa needs to reduce its CO₂ emissions and has committed to do so. Most of South Africa’s emissions come from coal-fired power, which today fuels 90% of South Africa’s electricity via Eskom. Eskom, the power sector, and power prices are essential components in employment and competitiveness in other sectors, particularly minerals, mining, and manufacturing.

Eskom is in deep financial and operational trouble. The government has threatened to split Eskom up, with likely job losses in the process. Privatization of the unbundled utility is also possible. The SA government has promised workers a Just Transition, but getting it is going to be challenging. Eskom is already closing its older coal-fired power stations with no social or economic plans in place.

Eskom employs 48 628 workers directly, while the coal mining sector has 82 248 direct employees. In addition to Eskom’s direct employees, it has several contract employees and outsourced jobs, as well as workers employed in its supply chain. Not all coal miners are in Eskom’s supply chain, as SA exports 28% of its coal production.

The value of today’s jobs in coal mining and Eskom must be seen considering apartheid’s economic legacy: High levels of structural unemployment, poverty, and inequality, and an economy that still does not produce enough decent blue-collar jobs for black South Africans. Workers made redundant at Eskom or in the coal mines are very likely to go straight into unemployment and poverty.



The South African government has committed to reducing emissions from the power sector. However, so far it has relied on tenders to the private sector to develop renewable energy supply. Eskom is prohibited from competing for these tenders. Regulations also limit the ability of municipalities, communities and companies to build renewable energy projects for their own use.

COSATU rejects privatization of electricity generation, because private interest prioritizes profit maximization above the meeting of social needs, in this case the provision of affordable energy supply for the mass of our people. Privatized renewable energy projects so far have received very favorable contracts from government relative to the costs of coal-fired power. At the same time these projects have produced few and poor-quality local jobs.

Agriculture

South Africa's agriculture sector is comprised of 30 000 commercial farms which employ 750 000 workers. Prolonged droughts related to climate change have affected employment in the sector and have knock-on effects for working class and poor households in the form of higher food prices. For example, the 2015-2016 drought saw a 10% decline in agricultural production in real terms. From 2015 food prices increased by 6% for goods and services, and in 2016 food prices increased at the same rate as non-food inflation. There is an urgent need for labour market and other policies to maintain jobs in agriculture, improve their quality, and make the sector more resilient to climate impacts such as drought.

Transport

The South African auto manufacturing industry employs 100 000 people directly, with another 400 000 people working in auto retail and repairs. South Africa only produces petroleum-based vehicles, though several companies plan to introduce electric cars soon. The sector depends on imported inputs. 40% of auto inputs are local products, with most being structural rather than technological components. Employment will be affected by efforts to reduce petroleum use, including electrification.

The just transition blueprint for workers

COSATU is producing a "Just Transition Blueprint for Workers". With this project, COSATU seeks to build on its previous climate change policy (2011) that began identifying the broad principles of a just transition for workers. The project will lead a panel of experts to deliver a policy blueprint and toolkit for the just transition, particularly for workers in power/mining, transport, and agriculture. The blueprint and toolkit will include examples, best practices, and concrete policy proposals. The Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) has been requested to produce this blueprint, in its full form, as per the framework shared by COSATU, as well as a summarised version that will be printed and distributed to workers.

As part of the research process, COSATU has established a panel of experts that will assist to ensure the quality of the just transition blueprint. The panel is composed of the affiliates of COSATU, the COSATU research unit NALEDI, the just transition centre as well as various pro-worker academics.

Funding of Higher education: Free education

17. Funding principles

The funding of higher education must be informed by the following principles.

- Democracy and accountability,
- Equal access to quality education and
- Decent work for those working in the sector
- Debt free funding model
- Higher education is a public good which must be publicly provided by the state and everyone must have access to it and not be excluded.
- Social solidarity and cross subsidization are critical to ensure that those who can afford can pay more through taxes to fund the poor.
- A progressive introduction of universal free education, including FET and first-degree university levels.
- The practice of outsourcing, casualisation and the use of labour brokers by higher education institutions in the provision of support services must end.
- Students should not be denied access based on financial ability (only academic ability).¹¹

Constitutional requirement to fund free education

Although limited, access to higher education is a right and not a privilege. Section 29 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 1996 provides that “everyone has the right - (a) to basic education, including adult basic education. (b) to further education, which the state through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible”.

The debate about funding higher education is old. The Freedom Charter promises free education. “Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit.”

Throughout the world education is funded through loans, fees, grants, and bursaries. The source of funding can be the state, private sector and NGO’s or a mixture of state and private funding.

Colonial legacy

One of the legacies of apartheid is that white or Europeans as they were called were encouraged to be educated and to occupy skilled positions whilst non-European; coloured Indians and blacks were discouraged from obtaining educational skills. This has resulted in low enrolment by blacks and where there has been enrolment such has been accompanied by high dropout levels amongst blacks and coloured. One of the main reasons is lack of funding of students from poor backgrounds.

Labour Market

The labour market has become more skills intensive and less labour intensive. As a result, those who do not have skills higher education are paid little compared to those who possess qualifications that are less than matric.

The emphasis is more on degree courses and less on technical work that is supposed to contribute to economic development. The funding is also biased in favour of universities than TVET.

The cost of funding higher education must be addressed by considering the above specific historical and contemporary needs.

¹¹ At 123.



Cost sharing model: loan system

Since 1994 government has applied the cost sharing model whereby the cost of obtaining education is shared between the student and government through payment of fees and subsidies to the institutions. After the 2015 #Fees Must Fall Campaign, this model has been discredited.

The basis of the cost sharing model is correctly based on the view that since education results in public benefits and private benefits the beneficiaries thereof should contribute. However, this logic cannot apply in a society characterised by huge levels of poverty and inequalities.

The key disadvantages of the loan system include the following.

Whilst education is provided by the state the consumption thereof is paid for the student. This means that students must incur debt to obtain education. This is a problem for those who do not have the financial means and violates the right to education.

Universities rely on fee income as a source of income and rising costs mainly because of private sector management style of higher education institutions, these institutions must exclude students from accessing education or supply education at a high cost through high tuition fees. Furthermore, there has been a decline in funding for higher education.

Demand for free education

Fees charged by institutions for obtaining education became an issue first with Rhodes must fall movement which resulted in the removal of Rhodes statute at the university and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) announcement of a fee increase of 10.5%. The #Fees Must Fall spread to other universities and resulted in students' injuries in certain instances, death, expulsion, suspension, debarring and imprisonment of certain students.

In response to free education demands the government has implemented a national bursary scheme which was introduced during 2018 to support students from families earning a gross annual income of up to R350 000 per annum, aimed at covering their full tuition costs, support for learning materials and providing subsidies to assist with accommodation, living expenses and transport costs, where appropriate.

The missing middle

The missing middle currently refers to those students from households with incomes between R350 000 and R600 000. An estimated size of the missing middle in 2019 of 343 000 students out of a total PSET population of 1.4 m.

The cost of funding full bursaries for all these students at 2019 prices is estimated at R19.2 bn. If a sliding scale of support is introduced, the total cost falls to R11.4 bn.

There is a need to expand the missing middle.

3.10 The Heher commission report into the possibility of free tertiary education made the following findings and recommendations.

That Fee free include full cost of study (food, accommodation, transport, books, computers/tools/equipment, internet connectivity, health care and in many instances, family support) at the time of applying and for the academically acceptable period of their studies¹²

The provision of fee-free higher education is feasible.

¹² At 105



Fee-free education at the point of access with an Income Contingent Loan (ICL).

The need for public/private partnership through the involvement of the private financial sector in the provision of the full cost of education (to the extent that such is required) by granting student loans on favourable terms without a means test or provision of security.

The purchase by the state of any such loan indebtedness.

The loan shall only be payable when the (former) student earns a specific income, with repayments increasing as income increases. The income levels shall be fixed to avoid oppression of the debtor.

The collection and recovery of the loan debt by SARS.

The repayment of the amount of each loan (plus interest) to the lender by the state on a date not earlier than five years from advance of each loan.

Free-higher education with no loan obligation for TVET's.

Fee-free education at the point of access with an ICL.

In an ICL scheme the primary responsibility for funding the scheme will lie with the lenders i.e., the commercial banks using commercial rates and conditions.

Government must work towards funding universities with 1% of GDP.

Historic debt

Some students may face problems if they do not comply with the criterion of satisfactory academic performance.

It is recommended that students with debt, who have since graduated, be offered income-contingent loans as well.

Application and registration fees should be scrapped across the board.

Our recommendations

The task team should have a meeting (as a matter of urgency) with the Minister of Higher Education and look at alternative funding by tapping into the Seta's to fund NEFSAS. Some SETAs' could not implement their programmes in 2020 due to Covid-19 and the savings / surplus can be utilised to fund NEFSAS.

The struggle for a free education system, extending to the first degree, needs to be escalated to ensure that South Africa produces the required numbers of skilled workers to sustain economic development

A developing fund for postgraduate poor and working class

An end to registration and application fee

An end to university autonomy on the fee structure

Scrapping of historical debts of poor and working class (including missing middle)

End to private/public partnerships especially on Institutional Accommodation

An end to fee increases

Free education means exempted from paying tuition fees, accommodation and being provided with tools for studying by the State.



The threshold for the definition of the poor should be increased to cover as many students as possible within the scope of free education.

Students with outstanding debts should only be required to pay their fees once they have completed their studies and found a job. There should be no interest on this debt.

Students should not be discriminated against because they have an outstanding debt.¹³

Higher education institutions must not be allowed to blacklist students, enter acknowledgement of debts deny registration and release of certificates.

Whilst SETAS are meant to provide workplace training they should be used to fund free education specifically at the TVET colleges.

Insourcing so called non-core staff, cleaning, and security.

We reject the use of the UIF unclaimed pension benefits as these funds are meant to cater for specific purposes.

We reject the participation of banks as this might entrench the commodification of education and make funding of education expensive.

We should discourage the role of banks in funding higher education.

A study to compute the cost of free education.

Indebted students should not be denied their degree certificates and results and they should not be blacklisted or discriminated against in any way.

There should be special taxes on corporates to fund education.

Develop a new institution which will be well developed to accept student's application, vet them, and allocate the money straight to student accounts – removing the FUNDI and Universities as the third parties or middleman.

Mobilize funds from SOE's and public and private sectors which will increase the budget allocation of student funding.

18. Transport

The state of Public transport in South Africa is steadily declining due to mismanagement, corruption and vandalism and looting. The following modes of transport are reflected on in the report with a reflection of the challenges and the possible areas of intervention.

¹³ L Arendse: The Obligation to Provide Free Basic Education in South Africa: An International Law Perspective [2011] PER 34 <http://www.saflii.org.za/za/journals/PER/2011/34.html>.



The Trains System

Public Transport -- Prasa

This mode of transport has seen an underinvestment in infrastructure over the last 30 years, which has led to frequent breakdowns and delays in the service. The Management has reduced the inventory, and this has led to an inability to repair breakdowns, due to long parts order lead times. This reduction in reliability has led to many commuters deserting PRASA in favour of other modes of transport. This has in turn led to a reduction in the number of commuters using trains and the loss of income from commuter fees, which caused a funding crisis. The vandalism and looting of the train system has seen the cabling, trains and infrastructure functioning, significantly negatively impacted upon. The levels of overcrowding on the trains were at close to 80% in the last census that was done in 2010. Management and the Board has been implicated in the corruption taking place in PRASA. The Industrial relations and Human resource challenges has led to the service being dysfunctional and the workers reduced to tenuous insecure employment conditions.

SATAWU needs to coordinate their interventions in the SOC more effectively, to ensure that the restructuring of the service deals with both service delivery and conditions of employment.

Freight Rail

This has been one of the few areas that the Department of Transport has been able to keep the services functional. This is mainly in respect of the iron ore and mining sector, where minerals are transported to the coast for export. The rest of the Freight services are also in decline which has seen a move of freight onto the roads, with the resultant economic cost. The Government has now embarked on a road to rail strategy, to reduce the impact of truck transport on the road infrastructure. This programme is however struggling to advance due to the infrastructure collapse and resultant unreliability in the rail service.

Long distance trains and Busses

The cross-country travel has devolved to mainly TAXI travel and there is an urgent need to ensure that long distance Bus and Trains are restored, to ensure safe travel across the Country. This would mean significant investment in the Infrastructure required to provide the services safely and effectively.

Bus services

The historical subsidized Bus services has been complimented by the introduction of the new bus services modeled on the Bogota. These services have led to an improvement of the Bus services to workers, but the routes targeted for new services, has not always prioritized the working-class communities where the transport needs are greatest. There continues to be a constant tension between buses and Taxi, due to competition for commuters, which has manifested in violence and killings.

SATAWU is well organized in many of the companies, but there are many smaller Unions that are making inroads into the sector, and undermining SATAWU historical hegemony in the Sector.

Taxi services

The Taxi services has historically emerged to fill a lack of public transport for workers from new community areas. This service was not subsidized and means that workers had to cover the entire cost of the Apartheid geographic divide, which put them far from workplaces. The Taxi Industry is largely untaxed, and the regulations are akin to voluntary measures, which are often not complied with. This has led to lots of tensions and violence in the Industry, which manifest in intra taxi violence over routes and control of the Industry. The conflict between Taxi and Bus and Train services, has seen a sabotaging of train services and damaging of busses. the present situation related to Covid-19 has seen the occupancy levels of 100% posing a significant risk to workers



traveling to and from work. The rights of workers are routinely disregarded and there is an urgent need to organize these workers into SATAWU.

Plane travel

The national carrier has partially been sold to a consortium, with the State retaining a 49% stake in the SAA. This has seen significant threats to the viability of the SAA in the long run, with the impact on tourism and the trade regime of inputs into our economy and Industrial sectors. Whilst it is not central to working class transport, it is a significant employer and status symbol of the South Africa and an important means with which to link to the rest of the continent, with Continental trade agreement unfolding. SATAWU had historically been the majority Union and a concerted effort should be made to restore the membership in SAA, so we are able to play a more active role in the restructuring of the SOC.

General reflections on public transport

The role of public transport is to provide a reliable efficient transport mode to support economic and social transport. This system must be subsidized by the State, so it is able to mitigate the Apartheid geographical spatial planning that put workers far away from economic opportunities. The present transport cost to most workers are as high as 17% of their income in certain instances. In addition to the financial cost, there is also a time cost to workers traveling those long distances, with many workers traveling for 2 hours from work to home. This effectively reduces the time that working class parents can spend with families to reinforce parenting lessons, that guide kids. This is a moment that society can use to develop a peak spreading policy, that ensure that transport modes are not overcrowded, as the peak is reduced by spreading it over a longer period. The spreading of the peak and its reduction in overcrowding will lead to time traveling efficiencies across all modes, with reduction in cost.

The big focus for Cosatu going forward is for the responsible Union to develop a detailed set of proposals to fix the transport system. This must ensure that the transport system prioritises the provision of services to working class communities, as opposed to profitability of operators in the private sector.

The SATAWU must lead a coordinated campaign into addressing the transport policy and roll out in South Africa that expands the transport public service.

19. Trade and Industry

The WTO membership has resulted in South Africa eliminating restrictions on currency exchange, elimination of subsidies and reduction in tariffs. These measures resulted in the closure of factories, loss of jobs and capital flight.

Despite technological changes our exports are still based on raw and semi processed mining and agriculture products. The mining sector contributes 9% to GDP and agriculture 3%. The dominant sectors are Finance 20%, Government 19%, and Trade 15%. The manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP has declined to less than 13% from 26% in 1994.¹⁴ Germany has 19% of manufacturing of GDP; China 27% and Japan 21%.

Despite the reduction in the share of mining in the GDP its value chain is important for the economy and as a foreign exchange earner. The mining sectors employs about R451 000 workers.

Most workers are employed in the community and social services sector (3.2 million- of this government employs about 2.1 million workers), followed by trade (2.9 million), finance sector (2.2 million), manufacturing (1.4 million), construction (1 million) agriculture (800 000).

¹⁴ Statistics SA Q1: 2021 (current prices).

In 2019, SA imported a significantly higher proportion of goods, measured as a percentage of GDP, than many others. SA's imports accounted for 25% of GDP, Brazil (9,6%), the US (12%), EU (14%), Russia and China (14,4%) and India (17%).¹⁵

The WTO membership of China in 2000 has changed international trade and has turned China into the factory of the world and a producer of low cheap and high-quality goods. This transformation of international trade resulted in pressure on wages, and loss of jobs as most companies have stopped producing locally. The culprit is the international trade system, which is based on slave, cheap labour, race to the bottom and not China.

The trade and industry policies in South Africa and in many WTO, members are export oriented and not based on infant industry policies e.g., financial subsidies and tariffs. Therefore, local firms are at the mercy of imports and most end up importing goods from Asian countries, specifically China and India. Despite the Industrial Policy Action Plan and funding by development finance institutions (DFI's), our trade policy has remained capital intensive and skills intensive and not responsive to our needs for jobs. The black industrialist programme is inadequately funded, and this will ensure that manufacturing sector remains a white affair and this would reduce potential to create jobs.

Our trade policy is based on openness and comparative advantage in mining which has not resulted in linkages with the manufacturing and agricultural. SA needs to rethink its trade and industrial policy and to adopt a protectionist stance with the support of fellow African countries.¹⁶ A protectionist continental trade policy will ensure that the continent becomes self-sufficient and less dependent on overseas markets.

Our trade and industrial policies are not talking to each other. Whilst government has imposed export restrictions on scrap metal there no taxes on export of natural resources such as chrome. These raw chrome exports have resulted in closure of smelters and loss of jobs. A call to impose an export tax has been opposed by exporters of chrome. Save SA Smelters has called on the government to impose an export tax of up to 80 percent on certain minerals. The bullying of the SA government by the US to import unhealthy chicken portions is proof that SA does not have powers to protect its interests and to develop an independent trade and industrial policy.

African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement

The fifty-four (54)¹⁷ Member States of the AU have signed the Agreement. However only thirty-seven (37) had deposited their instruments of ratification as of June 2021.¹⁸ Whilst the agreement has been touted as a game changer it would not result in creation of local firms and jobs if it is not based on protectionism and protection of indigenous firms.

According to the Department of Trade and Industry and Competition, the African continent is important for our economy for the following reasons.

The share of intra-Africa trade remains low: on average 13% for intra-Africa imports and 20% for intra-Africa exports over the 2013-2019 period;

South Africa is the major player in intra-African trade with a share of intra-African exports varying from 26% to 31% over a period 2013-2019, followed by Nigeria (13,9% in 2019) and DRC (7% in 2019).

SA is also the leading player in intra-African imports (14%), followed by Namibia (7%) and Botswana (6%).

South Africa's exports into the Rest of Africa grew from about R 9 billion rand in 1994 to over R 340 billion by 2019.

¹⁵ Presentation to NEDLAC 1 July 2021 Ambassador Xavier Carrim A Trade Policy for Industrial Development and Employment Growth

¹⁶ Ziyad Mohamed Free Trade, The Washington Consensus, And Bilateral Investment Treaties: The South African Journey: A Rethink on The Rules on Foreign Investment by Developing Countries American University Business Law Review 2016.

¹⁷ Eritrea is yet to sign the AfCFTA.

¹⁸ Status of AfCFTA Ratification 13 Jul 2021 Tralac.



South Africa's trade with the Rest of Africa sustains about 250,000 jobs locally and contributes about R 60 billion towards our economic output.

South African companies invested in 40 (destination) African countries. The firms have invested US\$ 36 billion, created 54,311 jobs and financed 420 projects in 25 sectors across the continent (January 2003-October 2017).

The AU has failed to agree on rules of origin that will determine which goods will enjoy low tariffs and the benefits of the agreement. For example, there is no consensus on whether the double transformation¹⁹ in clothing and textile should apply and whether imports of second-hand goods should be stopped.

A State led Industrial policy is needed to ensure that trade on the continent is mutually beneficial and not only benefits SA's multinationals.

To ensure that trade agreements are not only about market access and profits we have proposed that a labour chapter be inserted in all trade agreement which will require firms to pay a specific minimum wage, to counter the race to the bottom and to enforce labour standards.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of borders and reduction in imports and exports. This meant that countries that did not have production across value chains were exposed to huge losses as they had to wait for essential components. This shows that an effective trade policy must localise and protect the whole value chain and not specific products.

South Africa and India have made a joint proposal for a waiver or suspension of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines, syringes, and related products. This policy shift shows that we cannot hope to industrialize within the current neo liberal trade policies of the WTO.

The future of SA's economy is in the continent and SA should stop looking at overseas markets. Without a firm decision on trade industrial policy, we would not be able to reduce the 51% unemployment rate.

Designation of certain sectors for local content is a welcome policy shift because it would increase local production and protect jobs. However, this is not enough because these regulations are not binding across all government levels. A stricter local content law is required to ensure local procurement.

Master plans are based on the IPAP sectors, and they seek to include labour, government and business in decision making and in addressing sectoral challenges. However, they do not address policy flaws in some of the sectors. Engagement on different master plans is ongoing. We have secured involvement of affiliates in some of the master plans.

In summary our trade policy should be based on protectionism (trade and industrial policy in the West is still based on protectionism despite pronouncement to the contrary), delinking from the West, increased funding of black industrialists, infant industry policies, a labour chapter in trade agreements, and uniform continental trade policy. A protectionist trade policy will increase jobs and sustain livelihoods on the continent.

¹⁹ This SADC Trade Protocol rule of origin requires fabrics and yarn for garment manufacturing to be produced within SADC to qualify for preferential treatment. Some of the big economies on the continent believe in imports of finished goods e.g., cars as a source of development. A 2019 AU workshop report on AfCFTA Rules of Origin has not been presented to AU Ministers of Trade and Finance because of divergent views on the approach towards industrialisation and rules of origin. Some countries believe that we should import finished goods and others that we should import but transform or add value to imports to create jobs. Whilst SA supports double transformation many countries on the continent are against this policy.



Education and Training

This Department is responsible for the implementation of these following Congress Resolutions. These capacity building sessions are done in conjunction with the Affiliates and Provinces

- Building Local Leadership
- Information on the right to strike and the obligations of employers
- Training mandate of the SETA's and the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
- The Second Phase of the National Democratic Revolution
- The Reconfigured Alliance
- Implementation of the Freedom Charter
- Free Post schooling
- Transformation and the effect of gender equity

Building Local Leadership

The constant processes of shop steward elections and the revival of Locals as the basic structures that are more closer to the workplace, demand that we equip all the newly elected provincial Office Bearers with a clear understanding of their roles in the Federation. We have done these sessions in All provinces and the need is still very high. These sessions since they involve forging Teams, solidarity and cadre ship can be extremely challenging. We constantly deliver them but realise with each and every other intervention that the capacitation needs to be cascaded to the shopfloor as well. Our reporting records show that we have trained in excess of 3000 Shopstewards Annually, the numbers covered are never enough as there is a very high turnover of such shop stewards

At the very upfront we should mention that this task is proving much difficult than before. This is because many Affiliates do not provide for their sector specific training. We end with many engagements being derailed by the Shopstewards who seek more understanding and facilitations on areas like their Union Collective Agreements, Sector Bargaining issues, Union Constitution's, Shopfloor related other areas. However, these challenges vary from Province to province as is the issue of the public vs private vs service sector divide, we also encounter many more public sector Unions. Other challenges are issues of distances between our Provincial centres and these Locals where we end up not reaching needy areas to the sessions. The following Provinces are more susceptible to these distance challenges being the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and Western Cape

We recommend that Unions spend more on Basic Shopstewards Training, consider employing Regional or Provincial Educators or rotate the Head Office based ones. We also feel that more resources need to be spend on Funding Locals training or the payment of claims when the Federation conducts such in these areas. We have found the Online Programmes being more effective albeit their equally resource based challenges as many workers cannot afford the smart or Online enabled gadgets to engage in such programmes. The challenge of the departure from direct human engagement also still pertains

Information on the Right to Strike and the Obligations of Employers

We have also trained on this provision largely for Leadership and Affiliates on the new provisions of the labour law. This was to ensure of the proper understanding of the changes in the law on these areas. This also happens on the backdrop of employers drive to curtail the right to strike through various means largely the fuzzy explanations of the essential service concept. In 2020 we conducted 3 Provincial sessions covering over 700 Provincial Shopstewards in Limpopo, Free State and Mpumalanga covering the critical area of the right to strike. This was done in conjunction with the Organising Department that led in the material development and technical training



We have also relied on the Online sessions with the Chris Hani Institute, but the overall engagement was not even above 120 participants. We need to much more here including our commitment to popularise the 2019 Strike demands and the propagation of our own anti-establishment narrative

Training mandate of the SETA's and the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

We have had 6 workshops on this front with the Fourth IR Presidential Commission and NALEDI and only 2 directly with the Federation. These are very high-level workshops and expose the different sectoral experiences and encounters with this phenomenon. Also, such workshops tend to be more for Leadership rather than Plant based Shopstewards who need such engagements more dearly. We have also realised that Sector Education and Training Authorities relate differently to the Union training demands on the matter. Many still regards as a pure Collective Bargaining matter whilst it talks directly to how they anticipate new technologies and plan their Sector Skills Plans to relate to such Scarce or Critical skills

What came quite clear from the many workshops was that only when Unions negotiate and are in control of the introduction of new technologies, can they be able to save existing jobs or rather create any new ones.

Whilst many jobs are being lost with the introduction of new technology, we think that many Unions do not relate such with this new production trend. This is because also bosses are never open and transparent when they decide on production changes. These are therefore not affected into the Training plans even with the Senior and Top Management as well. In other experiences new technologies are introduced to curb work stoppages or after strikes which make such changes difficult to fight

With the induction of the newly Affiliated Unions we have committed to embark especially for Agriculture, Arts and Transport on these workshops to get into details about the new work methods and equip our Unions on how to respond to these enforced changes

The second Phase socio-economic Radical Economic Development of the National Democratic Revolution, the Reconfigured Alliance, Land Question and implementation of the Freedom Charter

These were covered in the Political Education workshops in the form of the Socialist Forums, Political Schools and the Chris Hani Brigade. They involve largely trying to ensure the left understanding of these concepts in the Federation. Since many of our Shopstewards come from the ANC where some varying interpretations are formulated this was to dispel all such notions. The political workshops tend to elicit high levels of participation and even input from Shopstewards wherein the major concern is around the form and shape of the Alliance, what the experiences like Methimazole inform us and how best we need to shape for the possible SACP contestation of state power. Whilst our recent Special Central Executive Committee has taken a firm ANC Local Government support, the recent neoliberal stance of the ANC government especially the failure to implement the 2018 Public Sector wage Agreement and its ramifications have made the facilitation of such discussions quite enormous

Our political education philosophies have also been thwarted by the continued poor macro-economic performance. Coupled with the inherent backward views on gender, regressive views and attacks on foreign nationals, regionalism and all other capitalistic ills including the dominant conservative media views, we find that many of our Shopstewards find it difficult to relate to the progressive COSATU resolutions

These we continue to strive against. We however need to be frank to this Central Committee that many of our Provinces and Affiliates either do not find time to engage thoroughly in political economic matters and therefore leave such to the conservative whims. In the main the lack of Political Schools, the poor funding of Shop steward Education and the continued and never-ending chase of accredited and self-oriented programmes are the key reasons for this practice



Transformation

We have trained all Provinces in the areas of transformation. These programmes were of great assistance in the setting up of the Provincial Gender structures. As we prepared now for the 2021 Provincial Gender Conferences, we find a far better environment for transformation. However, our companies and sectors have not followed suite. We still fare quite dismally on gender transformation especially insofar as the representation of women in the overall participation rates of Women and especially African and Coloured women in the labour market generally. These categories of women have an average 10% deficit between their levels in the population versus the employment active population. We also have very few Women in Top echelons of companies

When we launch such capital attacks, we are forever reminded that even the Non-Government Organisations where we reside equally fair dismally. This is despite COSATU being the only Woman led Workers Federation. This measurement is done largely at the level of the lack of Women Presidents and General Secretaries that lead Unions. We get reminded at every interval that we ourselves need to have the necessary drastic improvements. This is worsened by the failure to submit, observe and report on transformation by our Unions

The failure to effect workplace transformation stems from the fact that employment equity committees at the workplace are driven largely by bosses. These pay a lip service to transformation and rather prefer to promote White women as opposed to those from the Black groups. We need to foster changes as the legislation allows majority unions to compose such Committees only with management as opposed to the current formulation of workplace forums where the voice of the union gets easily sweetened by the other non-unionised groupings pushing their self-interests

The Commission of Employment Equity have since recognised the problem of slow movement in many sectors. To that end it has now embarked on deriving sector targets that all companies in these sectors need to abide by in order to now obtain the licence to do business with the State. This has placed serious jitters in the Boardrooms of many companies who either like Mining Houses need Government licences to exist or those that have interests in the public purse for survival. The arrival at such targets has however being a very tedious and laborious process as the Department of Employment and Labour seeks to rather be accommodative to these capitalists who for the life of the legislation has dismally failed to abide by its prescripts. We need a very strong company based voice on these matters to ensure that such jitters yield us the very good outcomes in that many nationals and Africans can not only be absorbed in the labour market but also rise in the Boardrooms and maybe we can have more fruitful engagements with such

Free Post Schooling and the Social Dialogue

We have also worked on the matter of the Free Post Schooling at the NEDLAC level using the social dialogue instrument. In 2019 after finalising the National Skills Development Strategy for 2020-2025 we had agreed with the Department of Higher Education and Training that next in our engagement would be the legislation and the funding mechanisms. We had long made it clear that we were gunning for a Levy increase with a cross-subsidisation of the Free Post Schooling system. This seems to have send shivers down the Departmental spine as the negotiations have been since stalled until recently with the introduction of the Skills Strategy.

With the current Treasury austerity measures, the message from Government is quite confusing and not clear. There is the peddling of the economic recovery programme alongside the fiscal discipline of apex programmes needed for such a recovery like education and training. We as the Federation have opposed this. We see the levy as one of the many avenues that can ensure that capital not only enjoys the public education system products but pay for their ultimate cultivation. Other mechanisms include amongst others the centralisation of all public bursary funds under the National Financial Aid Scheme. We have also called for the increase of the funding threshold to accommodate the missing middle who are largely our public sector workers who are quite unable to fund post school education but are currently calculated out of the R300 000 odd threshold. We also have mooted the possible graduate taxation which we still need to be one with the student body



Whilst the State has over the last 7 years or so utilised Skills levy as a public fund to subsidise the increasing need to fund free Post Schooling system but on the other hand they are refusing to formally engage on such an exercise. This is as a result of business having taken them to Court and won the case on their failure to adequately consult on the Skills levy regulations or rather the manner of the utilisation of the skills fund. Their counter argument is that levies are being lowly utilised, and companies have a very low uptake of the related mandatory and discretionary grants.

However, the more pressing need of the current post schooling is the failure of the State to implement our decisions on no application and registration fee, a moratorium on fee increase and the scrapping of the current student debt. We then experience every year and more so on this austerity year many protests due to the different University behaviours and the fact that academia and administrative policies are viewed as independent of the State’s intervention. The irony is that these public post schooling institutions (including the private sector ones) enjoy Government subsidies. Essentially institutions that rely on the State don’t have to adhere to its policies

Working with Unions

We have worked with the Unions identified before. Some of these unions have had challenges in implementing education and training programmes but some have been the advanced ones who carry high level political education programmes. We have also overseen the dissolution of LIMUSA as a Union and its incorporation into the NUM

We have equally worked well with the other Unions and Federations like Solidariteit, NUMSA, NACTU and FEDUSA on matters like Worker Education, Social Dialogue and Skills Development and Artisan Development Committees.

3.11 Collective Bargaining in the Public Service

This subject has become more and more of an increasing focal point especially through an avalanche of non-implementation of signed resolutions by the employer.

The table below seeks to demonstrate how the State, led by the Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA) and National Treasury (NT) are gradually eroding the hard-earned benefits that seeks to improve the lives of ordinary Public Service workers, leading to a total collapse of Collective Bargaining in the Public Service.

RESOLUTION	STATUS	IMPACT
Non-implementation of the last lap of the Wage Agreement: Res 1/2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employer is reneging from the Agreement; • The employer employs all sorts of delaying tactics by raising technical issues; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This means employees will be adversely affected by the rising cost of living Any other benefit that increases with the salary adjustment will stagnate
Establishment of the Government Employee Housing Scheme (GEHS). This was supposed to assist Public Service Employees to get access to affordable houses	The employer is completely ignoring the provisions and the role of the GEHS Advisory Body established by the Council Resolution;	More than 60% of the public service employees will remain without decent homes

RESOLUTION	STATUS	IMPACT
Long Service Awards. The quantum for the awards is supposed to increase per CPI as per Res 1/2012	The employer did not increase the quantum for 2020 by CPI, remaining the same as 2019.	This fails to recognize the service the employees have rendered, thereby demoralizing employees.
Pay Progression and Performance Bonuses	The employer is currently abolishing the Performance Bonuses and while reducing the budget for pay progression.	Public Service Employees would no longer qualify for performance bonuses, while the number of those who qualify to receive pay progression would be reduced drastically
Non-filling of vacant posts	Despite the acute shortage of employees in critical posts and the rising number of the population, the employer is still not filling the vacant posts in order to offer quality service the citizens.	This is a subtle way if introducing retrenchments and austerity measures in the Public Service.
Non-implementation of PSCBC Resolutions	The employer is failing to implement a number a Resolutions that stand to benefit Public Service employees	There would no improvement on the conditions of service of Public Service Employees.
Austerity measures (Budget Cuts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 2020 Budget speech the Minister of Finance announced that R160 billion would be cut over a three-year period as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ F/Y 2020/21: R37.8 billion. ➤ F/Y 2021/22: R54.9 billion. ➤ F/Y 2022/23: R67.5 billion. 	The employer will make savings for 2020/21 out of the non-implementation of Res 1/2018 of the wage increase.
National Treasury Guidelines for costing and budgeting for compensation of employees	The NT released the Guidelines to various departments to guide them on implementing cutting measures to reduce compensation of employees	The document clearly spells out that there would be no increase of wages for Public Service workers the next three Financial Years
Temporary Incapacity Leave (TIL)	The guidelines issued by the DPSA to Departments on TIL do not address the fundamental problem previously raised that most, if not all, Departments fail to adhere to the 30 day time frame within which they are to take a decision on whether or not to grant an employee TIL. NAPTOSA still demands that such failure by Departments should lead to TIL being granted by default	With the delay in responding to application for TIL employees may go on unauthorized leave due to the pressure of their ill-health condition. This may have devastating consequences if months later the employer responds to say leave was not approved, and therefore leave without pay measures must be applied. This may plunge employees into financial difficulties



RESOLUTION	STATUS	IMPACT
Resolution 4 of 10 Clause 4.2 Develop and implement a sustainable home ownership scheme for public service employees in collaboration with Department of Human Settlement, GEPP and PIC	Not yet implemented	Resolution 5/2017 established an advisory to be driven by the MPSA to deal with the establishment of the scheme. Many employees still cannot access any housing scheme.
Resolution 4 of 2010, clause 6.1 – Request Essential Service Committee to investigate and provide recommendations on Minimum Service Agreement	Not yet implemented	No minimum service agreement is in place 10 years later
Resolution 4 of 2010 Clause 6.2 Establishment of a reference group to assist the Essential Service Committee	Not yet implemented	No minimum service agreement is in place 10 years later
Resolution 4 of 2010 Clause 6.3 Appointment of experts to assist Essential service committee	Not yet implemented	Essential Services Committee not assisted 10 years later
Resolution 4 of 2010 Clause 6.4 Recommendations to be submitted to parties by no later than 31 December 2010	No recommendations sent to parties to date	Stagnation
Resolution 4 of 2010 Clause 7.1-7.4 Alignment of negotiation and budget processes	Not yet implemented	Stagnation



RESOLUTION	STATUS	IMPACT
Resolution 1 of 2012 Clause 10 PSCBC to conduct an independent audit on compliance with the occupational health and safety act and the report must be tabled at PSCBC for discussion	Not completed	Employees subjected to work in work places that are not audited for health and safety compliance and thereby risking injuries and a myriad of health and safety issues
Resolution 1 of 2012 Clause 13 Employer to review exit management system in order to expedite the processing of pension pay-outs within 30 days	Not completed	Employees exiting the system often have to wait for many months before their benefits are paid out

The above is proof enough for the unwelcomed state of affairs in the public service.

The Central Committee is requested to indulge ways and means of protecting collective bargaining especially amid the renegeing of signed collective agreement as displayed.



4. INTERNATIONAL SECTION

PART ONE:

1. Background
2. Trade Union Internationalism as a primary terrain of class struggle for workers power,
 - ☞ Context of our internationalism
 - ☞ Structure and form of our internationalism
 - ☞ Reference Materials
 - ☞ Building Working Class internationalism (global and continental)

PART TWO: Progress since 2018 13th National Congress

- a. Pronounced and focused activities/reporting areas
 - ITUC
 - ITUC-Africa
 - WFTU
 - OATUU
 - COSATU-Ghana TUC- NLC Nigeria Trilateral Engagements
 - Discussion of inclusion of COTU-K (Quadrilateral)
 - ILO
 - SATUCC
 - SADC ELS
 - COSATU China Exchange
 - BRICS – SA Trade Union Forum Presidency in 2018, Brazil (2019), Russia (2020) and India (2021)
 - ACFTA
 - SIGTUR
 - Building Peace in Africa
 - COSATU International School
 - COSATU Labour Migration Policy Position Paper
 - MIS Programme
- b. International Solidarity
 - Swaziland
 - Zimbabwe
 - Palestine
 - Cuba
 - Western Sahara
 - Venezuela
 - Black Lives Matter
- c. 2021 International Programme

Background

This Central Committee Meeting taking place at a time that most of us did not anticipate or predict. The COVID-19 pandemic has unfolded, as a trigger event that has both revealed and accelerated the crisis of global capitalism. The world and the labour movement are faced with significant challenges: a raging pandemic amid an economic recession. Workers across the globe are faced with unprecedented retrenchments, vulnerability to the virus in the workplace because of a lack of adequate protective gear, increased socio-economic challenges, and employers who are using the pandemic as an excuse to illtreat and exploit them. The world today is in a crisis generated by the greed that drives capitalism, and proletarians is being made to pay the price to bail out the system just as it has happened with previous economic slumps. Since the 13th National Congress in 2018, the principle trends that define the world today are mainly that:



- A rise of right-wing majoritarian governments who exploit the insecurities of their citizens, with no respect for jobs, benefits, security, crime, etc, and shift the entire blame on to the working class/poor.
- A more integrated, but multipolar and heterogeneous global economy, as a result of increased globalisation
- The changes in global production are reflected in changing global trade patterns. Overall trade has grown at rates much faster than those of world domestic product, and not only did developing countries expand their share in world trade, but they were able to diversify and increasingly export manufactured products. However, these patterns are far from uniform—diversification is largely limited to developing and emerging economies in Asia, whereas traditional trade patterns based on commodity exports and imports of manufactures and capital goods prevail in Africa and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America. The rise of China in particular has contributed to this trend, both directly owing to China's large demand for commodities and the traditional sectoral patterns exhibited by rising South-South trade, and indirectly by contributing to high commodity prices, particularly for oil and minerals;
- Age of agitation: In the past few years the frequency of mass demonstration across the globe have increased more than seven-fold. Protests against entrenched authoritarian governments, stagnating economies, corruption, human rights violations, and for meaningful wages/salaries, enhanced livelihoods, and conducive conditions for development. On the continent alone, countries such as Sudan, Algeria, Nigeria, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa. We have seen youth-led protests push unpopular governments out of office.
- While Covid-19 as epidemiology threatens all sections of society, the accompanying social crisis deepens existing social differentiation.
- A dramatic rise in technological innovations, which have facilitated more efficient and accurate processes than those that were available 20 years ago. This advancement of artificial intelligence tools however has affected widespread job losses in different sectors of work, with the potential of causing further job losses, if the process is not managed through reskilling of workforces.

With the economic crisis becoming more pronounced in both the advanced capitalist states and developing countries, this presents a special opportunity for more international working-class solidarity, deeper coordination of global struggles and the sharpening of a strategic focus. Instead of offering measures to address this crisis, the ruling class and its political representatives are using the economic disaster they created as an opportunity to escalate the attack on the working class.

The 21st century has already experienced a profound crisis for the capitalist system, and indeed has seen its fair share of significant mass mobilisations of workers, poor and young people around the world. These movements resemble movements of the past in many ways, but in many other ways are completely novel, which brings with its new challenges for Marxists.

Today we are seeing significant and militant strike action by teachers in the US and lecturers in Britain, reflecting a widespread process of 'proletarianization' in which professions that were once considered to be in some way privileged, have been ground down by neo-liberal assaults on conditions and forced to organise. Strikes by teachers and lecturers would have been unheard-of in Marx's day, as would the 'feminist strike' of five million workers in Spain on International Women's Day in 2018, which followed the example of women in Poland defending abortion rights in 2016. These examples, and many more just like them around the globe, show that the working-class methods and traditions of organisation and struggle will redevelop, in new forms and on a higher level, as working-class people clash with the same unequal, violent, oppressive system that led them to struggle in the first place.

Nothing is surer than that the greatest (and most trying) events in the history of the class struggle lay ahead of us, not behind. But it's worth remembering that the aim of the socialist movement for Marx and Engels was to engage in the class struggle on the side of and as part of the proletariat, which they sought to make "conscious of the conditions of its emancipation" – to finally bring the class struggle to an end by sweeping away "the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally... [and] In place of the old bourgeois



society... we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all. This is the socialist world the workers have to win.

It is in this context that this report seeks to highlight the work and progress the federation has made since the 13th National Congress, and what it means to the efforts towards the active consolidation and deepening of the class struggle on a global scale, to both fight the attack on the working class, and at the same time defend the gains workers have made over the years through their collaborative efforts. As we engage in the content of the report – we cannot shy away from the fact that particular emphasis and priority must be given to the urgency of the African situation. We must develop a collective response to the crisis of poverty, underdevelopment, patriarchy, wars, increased worker exploitation by Multinational Companies, political oppression, massive landlessness, extreme inequalities and the spreading trends of hopelessness and marginalisation.

For COSATU, the task of building the African trade union movement, and the progressive movement on the African continent, now forms a matter of absolute priority. Workers on the African continent need to take an active role in all struggles that affirm human dignity and contribute to the creation of a new and just world order. We will never succeed in changing society unless we base our activities on the mass of the global working class.

In this report, we shall confine ourselves to only the international resolutions and programmes of the federation since September 2018, and not the analysis of the global power dynamics or the global balance of forces in detail.

The year 2019, brought with it, one of the biggest public health challenges of our generation – the Coronavirus. It may also be described as the greatest societal challenge since the Second World War. The impact of COVID-19 is usually measured in rates of infection, deaths, jobs lost and the hit on national economies. But there's another metric – the surge in extreme poverty – that describes the most severe effect of the pandemic on people in Africa. While recession, infections and hospitals dominate the current daily headlines, the personal economic consequences of the virus are what will linger.

Africa's development trajectory has suffered a severe setback. The headline goal of the SDGs is the elimination of poverty, but extreme poverty rises in all of the report's COVID-19 scenarios, and African growth rates are significantly below what is required to alleviate it.

With the economic crisis becoming more pronounced in both the advanced capitalist states and developing countries, this presents us with a rare opportunity to reimagine Africa in a post-COVID-19 era. The pandemic has forced us to develop new ways of addressing our challenges of peace and security, socio-economic under-development, and poverty. The COVID-19 crisis contains the seeds of a large-scale reimagining of Africa's economic structure, service delivery systems and social contract. The crisis is accelerating trends such as digitalisation, market consolidation and regional cooperation, and is creating important new opportunities - for example, the promotion of local industry, the formalization of small businesses and the upgrading of urban infrastructure.

Addressing disruptions caused by the pandemic and the return to a better normality require that innovation, particularly digital technology, is perceived as a prerequisite for Africa to address its main development challenges, such as poverty, limited access to health services, food insecurity, climate change and governance. It is also essential for enhancing productivity, competitiveness and economic diversification.

The last five years have witnessed a wave of change emerging in Africa. Three African initiatives indicate that the continent might be approaching a qualitative leap in both economic growth and development:

1. The creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) with the objective of creating a single market should generate a combined GDP of more than US\$3.4 trillion and benefit more than one billion people.



2. The South African government's creation of a new Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR) of the World Economic Forum (WEF), for dialogue and cooperation on the challenges and opportunities presented by advanced technologies; and
3. The launch of the Africa Growth Platform, an initiative by the WEF that aims to help companies to grow and compete internationally, leveraging the fact that in Africa, entrepreneurial activity in its initial stage is 13% higher than the global average.

These initiatives, if successfully implemented, may be game changers that galvanize the development and growth in Africa, which puts the interests of the working class at the centre. In order to ensure that this is the case, is to be actively involved in the crucial decision-making processes where the implementation of these initiatives is discussed.

As workers on the African continent, we need to take an active role in all struggles that affirm human dignity and contribute to creating a new and just world order. We will never succeed in changing society unless we base our activities on the mass of the global working class.

CRITICAL POINT: Are COSATU affiliates engaging effectively with the global developments in their respective sectors, and sister unions – particularly on the African continent in order to have influence in key decision making processes that have long lasting effects on the livelihoods of the working class?

Part ONE: Trade Union Internationalism as our primary terrain of class struggle for worker's power

Four Parts to the overall scope and focus of COSATU International work.

- a. Content of our internationalism
- b. Context of our internationalism
- c. Organisational Structure and form of our internationalism
- d. Processes and Future Considerations for our internationalism

a. The Content of our internationalism

The following key points are primary in defining the content of our internationalism.

- "Accumulation of massive wealth on one hand and accumulation of misery on the other", is how Marx summarised the inherent development, design and functioning of the capitalist system.
- Capitalism is a system, meaning rule of capital whose ideas, organisation and tendencies aim at accumulating profit and therefore, reproducing the system of class dominance on a global/international/universal scale. It is not just a national system.
- The organisation of each class determines and is further determined by the power it wields in society and thus, the centrality of class power. Our struggle is for class power and therefore, our organisation and forms of struggle must, at all times, be guided by that aim.
- It must be accordingly noted that Proletarian internationalism is not the same as trade union internationalism, though they inextricably linked and connected. This profound linkage and distinction clarify why COSATU affirms its revolutionary content, class character and militant traditions of struggle, based on mass workers struggles and advanced organisational traditions.

In this regard, there are priority areas that we must pay more attention to and build a movement for just socio-economic alternatives, but in a context where the struggle, is to ultimately change the global balance of power in concrete political and strategic terms;



- The Ecological and climate justice crisis – it is not an accident of history that the destruction of the environment corresponds directly with the model of “development”, prescribed by the model or system we “developing” under, called capitalism.
- Fighting for Fair and developmental industrial and trade systems that enhance manufacturing capacity and job creation
- The Poverty, unemployment, inequalities and hunger crisis
- Fighting the ruthless power of Multinational Companies and corrupt elites
- Fighting against racism, national oppression, imperialism and occupation
- Building a democratic developmental state, particularly in the Southern African region
- Building a broad front of progressive and democratic forces to draw in the widest possible forces against all and every form of injustice and human suffering

Towards that end, COSATU Congress Resolutions concretely give strategic content, practical expression and tactical guidance towards in pursuance of the above stated aims and in giving direction and effect to its Principles. They are regularly evaluated by the Central Committee (CC) as regards progress, relevance and focus.

b. Context of our internationalism

The Southern African economy was, primarily shaped by and in the interest of colonial (capitalist) accumulation to become the supplier of raw material, cheap labour and markets for the products of the metropolitan (colonial masters) countries.

The main sectors of the economy in the region are mining, agriculture, eco-tourism and increasingly, services. The political economy of the region has not undergone any fundamental changes since the liberation/independence period. Most often, the post-colonial regimes acquired the neo-colonial state and power, but did not change them towards serving a new, democratic and developmental agenda. This led to the further integration of the regional political economy into the unequal and unjust global system as an instrument for the advancement of the narrow interests of the former colonial powers, with the collaboration of the new regimes.

The new regimes inherited and strengthened the very structures colonialism used to oppress and marginalise the African majority, hence the intensification of post-colonial suppression and persecution, accompanied by deepening levels of poverty, hunger, unemployment and inequalities in several of our countries.

The SADC region and the African continent as a whole are naturally endowed with abundant and rich human and mineral resources, which have not yet been effectively and properly harnessed, resulting in the current structure of the regional economy, which is based on the derivation and extraction of mineral commodities for export to the colonial (metropolitan) economies, thereby contributing to the patterns of perpetual neo-colonial underdevelopment and lack of economic expansion and job creation in the region.

Some of these massive and abundant natural resources that are the main reason why the Scramble for Africa by the former colonial powers happened, in the first instance, include; diamond, platinum, cobalt, coltaz, uranium, gas, iron ore, coal, agriculture products, water, as well as the vast arable and fertile land.

c. Structure and Form of our internationalism

The International Department of COSATU is assigned by the federation with the responsibility to oversee, drive, advise and support the federation’s international work in the interests of its constitutional and programmatic mandate.

In this regard, it offers support to the Political leadership, NOBs and other Constitutional structures towards that end, providing quality technical and strategic insights and writings that advance that mandate.



The Federation, through its Central Executive Committee (CEC) Annually adopt an International Programme and Budget, based on the Congress Resolutions and at the same time, quarterly evaluates progress on same. The IRC which took place in March 2019, took a decision which was endorsed by the May 2019 CEC, that the four distinct objectives of the department should be divided into practical and feasible activities which will inform the yearly programme. Therefore, the Department held a Strategic Session in October 2019 and 2020, which have devised and concretised on yearly activities which have informed the programme of the Department to-date. Understanding the nature of the Department's work however, the programme is subject to change as other more crucial activities are introduced during the course of the year.

The 2021 International Programme included as part of the Reference Material, clearly indicates our core priorities for this year. Amongst the key priority issues for 2021, are the other activities or actions we have always taken up, including the following international solidarity campaigns (guided by our Congress Resolutions):

- The struggle of the Saharawi people (in Western Sahara) for self-determination and freedom from colonial occupation by Morocco.
- The Cuban peoples struggles against imperialist aggression and for the territorial integrity and sovereign self-rule against state-sponsored terrorism by the US. This has spread with Brazil, Venezuela and various parts of Latin America as expanded frontiers of US imperial aggression.
- The struggle for democracy and freedom from royal oppression in Swaziland.
- The struggle against apartheid and colonial occupation against the Palestinian people by Israel
- The struggle for democracy and justice in Zimbabwe.
- Various struggles that affirm the dignity and freedom of workers, human rights and justice for all.

Since the 13th National Congress, in addition our solidarity campaigns afforded to our priority countries, COSATU has also extended solidarity/made commentary on the following international occurrences:

• **2019**

COSATU slammed Turkey's continued attack against Kurdish forces in Syria

Call for US authorities to stop political persecution of Julian Assange

COSATU called for Israel to be excluded from diamond processing over 'war crimes

COSATU condemned US's Unjust Economic and Financial Blockade on Cuba

COSATU mourned the passing of SADR Ambassador Cde Radhi Bachir

• **2020**

COSATU called for the release of Kurdish leader – Abdullah Ocalan

COSATU mourned the passing of former ZCTU President Cde Lovemore Matombo

COSATU called for AU and SADC decisiveness on Zimbabwe crisis (joined the #FreeZimbabwe Movement)

COSATU commemorated Commander Fidel Castro – paying tribute to his remarkable legacy (celebration of Cde Castro's birthday)

COSATU condemned military coup d'état in Mali

COSATU condemned US war against Iran, killing innocent civilians

COSATU condemned US's Unjust Economic and Financial Blockade on Cuba

COSATU supported striking healthcare workers in Kenya



COSATU condemned Zimbabwean government's intimidation and harassment of its health care workers

COSATU outraged by Arab normalisation deals with Israel

COSATU urged Southern Africa to fight insurgence in Mozambique

COSATU disturbed by Nigerian government's attack on unarmed peaceful protesters

COSATU supported Nigeria's fight against police brutality (Joining the #EndSARS Movement)

COSATU sent heartfelt condolences to the family of gallant Swazi trade unionist and politician – Jan Jabulani Sithole

COSATU extended condolences to the UGTT on the passing of Deputy General Secretary - Brother Bouali Mbarki

COSATU extended condolences to the Palestinian people on the passing of "iconic" Dr Saeb Erekat

COSATU supported the Anti-imperialist Working-Class Global Conference

COSATU commentary on the US election outcome

COSATU extended condolences on the passing of Cde Kjeld Jakobsen – in Sao Paulo

• **In 2021**

COSATU supports ICC decision to probe war crime charges against Israel

COSATU extends condolences to CGT Colombia on the passing of President Julio Roberto Gómez

COSATU in solidarity with protesting farmworkers against repressive farm laws - India

COSATU expressed solidarity with the people of Myanmar

COSATU calls for vaccine equity – regarding concerns around non-South Africans not receiving the vaccine

COSATU congratulated Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala on her appointment as the WTO Director-General

COSATU extends a message of sympathy to the people of Tanzania on the passing of President Dr John Pombe Magufuli

COSATU outraged by Lesotho's retrenchment of close to 350 nurses, as doctors warn of dire shortages

COSATU concerned over deadly attacks and deteriorating security situation in Mozambique calls for urgent action

d. Processes and Future Considerations for our internationalism

One of our Core founding Principles as a federation is international solidarity, based both on the fact that we were born at a crucial time in the history and struggle of the people of South Africa against apartheid (expressly racial variant of capitalism), but also in the broad struggle against global capitalism itself.

We remain fixated with the fast-changing global developments and struggles that shape the situation today in the world and how best to make durable and effective interventions that enhance our perspectives and challenge imperialism and all forces against humanity. Crucial to our time, is the importance of international solidarity during this time of crisis. This crisis has demonstrated the potential for working-class people to come together around our common interests, as has happened many times in the past. But we also need to build a mass, anti-sectarian political force rooted in the organic unity of the working class, in workplaces and in struggle.



Such a force cannot ignore or wish away the issues which divide our communities but can demonstrate how genuine solutions can only be found when workers come together in a spirit of solidarity and mutual respect. Crucially, the means fighting for a socialist future, free from poverty, oppression and coercion.

Before the pandemic, it would have been difficult for many to imagine neo-liberal and right-wing governments nationalising failing industries, freezing rents, and the partial (and temporary) lifting of austerity. Before the pandemic, essential workers were “unskilled”. Before the pandemic, we were told by capitalist commentators that it was common sense that people are individualistic and selfish, thus justifying the greed and profiteering of the bosses and super-rich. We were not “all in it together” before the pandemic.

Like a storm unearthing a gem from the mud, collective hardship has revealed the international solidarity that exists amongst the working class. The sheer scale of our good will and collaboration has been a massive force in fighting the pandemic and giving people a new sense of hope.

It is more important than ever that we strengthen solidarity in the international labour movement, vigorously defend workers’ rights, support workers’ struggles across the globe, and make sure that workers’ voices continue to be heard. We need to go back to the principles of Proletarian Internationalism or International Socialism, where we all demonstrate an understanding that as communist revolutionists, our struggle is a global class struggle rather than a series of separate localised events.

The IRC, accordingly met in April 2021 and decided that this matter, as done before, must not be discussed outside the prevailing balance of power, global configuration of class forces and the practical modalities of pursuing our class struggle in the concrete situation posed by today’s realities.

In this regard, the IRC which met for a Strategic Session in October 2020, recommended to the CEC that an International School Session take place in June of 2021, or before the Central Committee for the purposes of the following tasks:

- Correctly assess the balance of power and the forces shaping the world today and their concrete meaning to our struggle for working class power, in class and organisational terms
- Undergoing series of trainings on the fundamentals of working-class internationalism
- Clarification to the essence and meaning of trade union internationalism, to draw in the widest possible sections of workers into active, united and focussed struggles around minimum battles against the most basic manifestations of socio-economic crisis of capitalism at the workplace, community and in society generally
- Clarify our Strategic Perspective on the most contentious issues brought to the fore by the development of capitalism today and how to relate to them.
- Consolidation of the African trade union movement, and the revival of the African Left Networking Forum
- The Future of Work (what kind of jobs, workplace and organisational design and systems are now defining work and how do we respond?)
- Zero-in our international solidarity work, and the go back to the basics on the importance of international working-class solidarity.

From all these, we hope to be able to adequately and appropriately, respond to the basic question on; what is the future of trade union internationalism? What Organisational model, capacity and resources are required to advance our aims in the most concrete and effective way possible, given the concrete realities, we face and shall still face?

In the midst of all these global manifestations and crisis, how best do we allocate our minimum resources and capacity to make real contributions, without either under-utilising our power or exaggerating it, in a real world where balance between the ideal and real is an imperative.



Reference Materials

- COSATU National Congress Resolutions
- COSATU International Policy Document
- CEC Decisions
- IRC Outcomes
- International Practitioners Resource Handbook
- International Shop stewards Guide
- Departmental Plans and Priorities – Matrix of the Implementation of CEC and IRC Decisions, Lines of Duty and Scope for each member of the Department and the Framework for International Deployments
- Specific Tasks allocated and assigned by the Secretariat and NOBs from time to time

CRITICAL POINT: Are we using the contradictions and opportunities of uneven class consciousness and level of organisation in the international trade union movement to advance a real working class agenda in a more nuanced and sophisticated way or maybe we may be mechanical, even as we remain bold on the real working class issues?

But also, what real and imagined influence and power do we wield in the international terrain, to advance or form strategic alliances towards our goals?

Part TWO: Progress since the 13th National Congress of COSATU

In this regard, we wish to outline some of the major and most noticeable and focused activities that have taken place since the last Congress and the actual progress recorded so far. This will then be followed by the more concise COSATU International Programme for 2021, as adopted by the November 2019 Central Executive Committee.

1. International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

The 4th World Congress of the ITUC

The ITUC held its 4th World Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark from the 4th – 7th November 2018, where Cde Sharrow Burrow was re-elected as the General Secretary of the 207-million-member movement.

Five urgent resolutions were passed calling for:

- human rights and peace in Colombia (ongoing - Attacks on indigenous communities intensify in Cauca),
- solidarity with students and workers in Iran (ongoing);
- solidarity with workers and students in Iran (ongoing);
- labour law reforms in Hungary (ongoing);
- labour rights and solidarity with independent trade unions in Kazakhstan; and
- freedom for Lula. ITUC President João Felício read a letter from former President of Brazil, Lula da Silva, thanking the trade union movement for the solidarity and collective action to protest against his unjust imprisonment. In April this year, COSATU joined the global progressive movement in celebrating the annulment of the unjust criminal charges and the restoration of Lula's political rights. Brazil's full Supreme Court upheld a ruling annulling former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's corruption convictions, which cleared the way for him to run for a new presidential term next year.



At the conclusion of the World Congress, unions committed to:

- Organise, to create a 250 million-member ITUC over the next four years, to build workers' power;
- a new social contract, where businesses, including platform businesses, are made to take responsibility for their workers; and a UN Business and Human Rights Treaty;
- a Just Transition to sustainable economies to tackle climate change and keep temperature rises to 1.5 degrees or less;
- reverse the trend of low-wage growth and rising inequality through collective bargaining, increased minimum wages and social protection; and
- close the gender pay gap, fight discrimination and racism and take forward action against gender-based violence. These are foundations for the future of work.

The statement adopted by the ITUC World Congress included four pillars – on peace democracy and rights; regulating economic power; global shifts - just transitions; and equality – which set out the ITUC agenda for the next four years. Women delegates attending the ITUC World Congress increased from 42 per cent in 2014 to 46 per cent in 2018.

The ITUC General Council elected Ayuba Wabba, President of the Nigerian Labour Congress, as ITUC President. Cathy Feingold of AFL-CIO (USA) and Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson of LO Sweden were elected as the ITUC Deputy Presidents. Owen Tudor, Victor Báez and Mamadou Diallo were elected as the ITUC Deputy General Secretaries. The next ITUC World Congress will be held in 2022.

ITUC delegation to South Africa – meeting with COSATU NOBs

On the 23rd – 25th September 2019, an ITUC delegation was deployed to South Africa to assess the SAFTU's application for membership/affiliation. The delegation from Brussels was led by Deputy General Secretaries, Cde Mamadou Diallo and Cde Owen Tudor, accompanied by ITUC Africa General Secretary Cde Kwasi Adu Amankwah. Procedurally, the delegation was here on a follow-up visit to their previous visit in 2018, to assess, the existence, state, legality of structures and unions affiliated to SAFTU. The delegation met with FEDUSA, NACTU, NEDLAC and COSATU. Representing COSATU in the meeting was President Zingiswa Losi, General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali, Sonia Mabunda-Kaziboni (International Secretary), Bongani Masuku (Secretariat Co-ordinator), Tshepo Mabulana (International Administrator).

The COSATU leadership indicated concerns/alleged discrepancies with the number of members SAFTU was alluding to having, and raised concerns about the existence of a federation which seeks to divide workers, whereas our main focus is the consolidation of the working class and fighting to ensure that all workers in South Africa are organised, and therefore protected from their employers. The COSATU NOBs further emphasised that the federation had no "issues" with SAFTU. The more personal attacks and intentions to cause some division, were being perpetuated by Cdes from SAFTU. This is observed in spaces where COSATU and SAFTU are in the same space/meeting.

The ITUC leadership delegation also expressed concern with COSATU's decision to maintain a dual affiliation to both the ITUC and WFTU whose ideological differences are "different" according to the ITUC. The concern with this is also the precedence it will set for other affiliates of the ITUC, who may want to do the same. The COSATU NOBs stood on the principle that there is no rule or principle in the ITUC's Constitution that indicates that dual affiliations are prohibited. Secondly, COSATU NOBs clearly stated the position of COSATU's affiliates regarding the subject matter. The delegation compiled its final report which was to be presented in the first General Council in 2020, however due to the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the assumption is that feedback on both matters will be discussed once concluded.



2. ITUC-Africa

4th Ordinary Congress

Over 500 representatives from workers' unions across the continent gathered in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, on the 20th – 21st November 2019 for the quadrennial Congress of the African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa). COSATU was in attendance represented by the following leaders: Louisa Thipe (COSATU 2nd Dep President), Solly Phetoe (COSATU Deputy General Secretary), Freda Oosthuysen (COSATU National Treasurer), Gertrude Mtsweni (COSATU Gender Coordinator), Angeline Phetlhe (SACCAWU 1st Deputy President), and Lucky Cele (SADTU Deputy President).

In choosing '*Unite and make a difference*' as its theme, the African trade union movement aimed to promote unity as the key to achieving policies that respond to workers' needs, given the various socio-structural evolutions that we are experiencing. A united front is also needed to breathe renewed life into our continent through new strategies to tackle corruption, poverty, armed conflict, to end illicit financial flow and ensure a sustainable future for the youth. A major focus was placed on building unity within the movement in order to maximise impact on the policy-making process. Two underlying components of strengthening workers' power were highlighted in the Congress outcomes: growing the movement through organising more workers; and deepening the internal democracy of the movement.

The past four years have seen workers from the informal economy organise into unions and take important strides towards formalisation, notably through the extension of social protection coverage. This inspiring work remains the exception, but we can work to generalise the approach to ensure that more people can collectively improve their living conditions in a context where over 80% of workers operate in the informal economy. In terms of policy objectives, the African labour movement aims to advance social protection for all, to deepen democracy and advance workers' rights and interests, tackle corruption including through reducing the influence of money on politics and ending illicit financial flows. Furthermore, it was stressed that the labour movement should be committed to building industries to ensure that the value added on top of raw materials, is added here in Africa and can benefit the working people of the continent, their families and communities.

The first day of this important trade union meeting allowed participants to review the ITUC-Africa's work over the past four years. During the second day, several workshops and sub-plenaries took place on five key issues that will serve as a basis to orient the work of the next four years. COSATU congratulates our very own Cde Freda Oosthuysen on her appointment as part of the internal audit team of ITUC Africa. The Congress was preceded by a series of pre-congress activities on the 18th -19th of November with themes on women, youth, human and labour rights, peace and security, and Africa Development. COSATU was allocated 10 delegates as per paid-up membership. The following resolutions were sponsored by COSATU and adopted as standing resolutions.

1. Strengthening of the existing resolution on Palestine that includes supporting the BDS Campaign in Africa.
2. The 4th Industrial Revolution and its impacts on the industrialization of Africa
3. A resolution on the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the AfCFTA since it has been ratified by 44 of the 54 countries in Africa.
4. A resolution on Latin America, with a focus on solidarity with Cuba, Venezuela, and Brazil.
5. Reaffirmation of the resolution on Western Sahara.

The Congress also deliberated and concluded on the following outcomes:

1. Deepening Democracy, Advancing Workers' Rights, and Interests
2. Peace and Security in Africa
3. Social Protection for All in Africa: The Role of Trade Unions



4. Organizing: Organization Development and Unionization
5. Strengthening the Power of the Youth
6. Economic and Social Development for the People
7. Internal Democracy in Trade Unions
8. Promoting informal and social/solidarity-based economies for better development in Africa
9. Effective Trade union engagement on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

ITUC- Africa 21st General Council Virtual Meeting

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC-AFRICA) 21st General Council Meeting took place on the 30th of September and 1st October 2020. COSATU was represented by General Secretary Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali, and Cde Freda Oosthuysen, wearing the cap of ITUC-A Auditor.

For two days, about 50 trade union leaders who make up the members of the General Council of the ITUC-Africa, together with representatives of sub-regional organisations and the regional women committees discussed important issues relating to the functioning of ITUC-Africa: activities, financial reports, and ITUC-Africa 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. Issues relating to the reformation of the Youth Committee, and the role of the Assistant Secretary-Generals and new affiliation requests were also discussed, among others. The 2022 ILO Directorship was discussed, as an item sponsored by COSATU.

Some decisions resulting from the meeting are:

- The organisation of a virtual regional youth conference where young people can meet and set up a new youth committee for a four-year term
- Call for more solidarity action by trade union organisations for workers in Sudan, Ethiopia and wherever else necessary.
- For the ILO Directorship position, priority would be given to the support of an African female candidate, that is sponsored by trade union formations on the continent.
- The next meeting of the General Council of the ITUC-Africa will be held in September 2021.

It should be noted that the General Council is the highest authority of the Regional Organization between Congresses. In accordance with the current statutes, it is responsible for directing the activities of the Regional Organization and implementing the decisions and resolutions of the Congress.

3. World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)

Presidential Council Meeting

COSATU President Cde Zingiswa Losi attended the Presidential Council Meeting which took place on the 3rd – 4th April 2019. She was later joined by the General Secretary Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali on the 5th and 6th April 2019. The formalisation of the affiliation was done on the 5th of April where COSATU was formally welcomed as a WFTU affiliate.

During this visit a delegation which included the President of COSATU paid a courtesy visit to the President of Greece His Excellency Prokopis Pavlopoulos. During the visit the issues of the 4th industrial revolution on how ready the Trade Union movement is preparing for this and the ratification and implementation of the ILO conventions were discussed.



The processes and procedures of doing this is different from what we are accustomed to and therefore COSATU was not taken through its constitutional obligations, rules, governance structures and programme as expected and we hope this process would still be done through the Africa regional office of the WFTU.

Update on dual affiliation

The 13th National Congress reaffirmed its decision to affiliate to both the ITUC and the WFTU. It was further agreed that in order for this to happen, COSATU affiliates who are affiliated to the WFTU need to withdraw their individual memberships, and COSATU resume affiliation as the federation, representing all its affiliates. The leadership of COSATU, together with the leadership of NUM, NEHAWU, POPCRU, were to hold a physical meeting in March 2020, however due to the disruptions of COVID-19 as a result of the lockdown and subsequent restrictions – the meeting could not take place in the intended form.

However, through engagements between the leaders, it was agreed that taking into consideration that COSATU is currently not able to assume the financial obligations that come with requesting NUM, NEHAWU and POPCRU to disaffiliate from WFTU, the status quo will remain until the federation is able to fully take over.

The CC needs to discuss dealing with the implications of COSATU's affiliation to WFTU and the unions remaining as independent affiliates to the WFTU.

Progress regarding the matter needs to be made considering that the Congress resolve has been implemented and COSATU taken the steps to formalise the affiliation but the conclusion on the matter has not been made. In order for COSATU to formalise the affiliation completely, the current affiliates of COSATU who are individually affiliated to WFTU need to decide way forward on how to manage their transit from the WFTU to allow COSATU to represent all its affiliates in WFTU.

Managing the transition is proving difficult in light of the minimal affiliation fees payable to WFTU-Greece which is not near enough to cover the running costs of the organisation both in Greece and in Africa as well as other regions. Serious introspection needs to be done to develop a sustainable fundraising method, particularly for the Africa office.

The following can be considered by the CC,

- Mobilising funds through dual affiliation (Greece and Africa)
- The affiliates of COSATU that are also affiliated to WFTU disaffiliate but continue to contribute resources to both the Greece and the Africa Office while a sustainable funding strategy is developed
- Assisting WFTU to coordinate the Africa Office for all Africa affiliates of the WFTU – create a system that is more coordinated and make the Africa office operational

Regional Office

WFTU at global level is one of the largest federations across the world, but the least funded of them all. This is partly due to the modest affiliation fees it charges its affiliates. This, however, poses detrimental challenges in terms of funding programmes and activities of the Federation as well as the regional offices in different continents.

The Africa office for example, needs to be supported with resources both financially and human. The other regional federations' offices (GUFs) that are based in South Africa are registered entities and function guided by legislations which means they are more formal in nature, ideally this should be considered for WFTU.

The Africa regional office previously based in Johannesburg CBD is soon to relocate to COSATU House. The office is run by officials that were seconded by affiliates, which is similar to the situation of the office in Greece. Currently, there is no money received from Greece to run the Africa office and the office is funded by the affiliates of WFTU in South Africa. In this regard there is a need to look into the development of a sustainable



funding model. This situation also influences and stifles progress in the debate regarding the disaffiliation of the COSATU affiliates affiliated to WFTU.

The NUM has seconded Cde Masha's visit to Athens for a year in 2019 and subsequent to this, Cde Johannes Masha is the WFTU Africa Regional Coordinator. Through extensive engagements with Cde Masha, the following issues were identified.

- The Africa office is not visible in the region,
- There is a need to develop an organising strategy for the Africa Region,
- There needs to be a development of a funding model of the Africa office and the human resources to strengthen the office.
- All regions are able to grow membership and in Africa not much is happening regarding membership. Also, there is a lack of collaboration of programmes at regional and sub-regional level
- Greece needs to share the membership data with the Africa office to allow the office to start groundwork in organising to grow WFTU
- The regional and sub regional programmes to promote trade union unity and internationalism
- Need to develop a strategy to operationalise the office in terms of Sustainability (Own Staff, Own Programmes, Own Funding Model)

WFTU Anniversary Celebrations

74th Anniversary

The 3rd of October 2019, marked the 74th Anniversary of the WFTU. This year, the anniversary was commemorated with the theme: "Against xenophobia, racism and fascism". Xenophobia and racism are intentionally raised among the peoples by governments and lobbies, so as to divide them, to make them accuse one another of the problems that are caused by capitalists and multinationals. In Africa, in the Middle East and many other places, the looting of the workers' natural resources, poverty, imperialist wars and conflicts create millions of refugees who fall victims of hatred and racist discriminations.

In Europe and on other continents, the economic crisis facilitates the rise of fascist ideologies and actions that poison the mind and consciousness of people, making them to fight for the interests of big businesses, leading them even to crimes. Efforts are being made by the EU to equalize fascism with Socialism, to hide the great conquests that workers had achieved in the USSR and to distort the historical reality.

Since its Foundation, the WFTU has placed at the forefront of its demands the struggle for peace and equality, fighting against Apartheid in South Africa, against racial and all types of discriminations. For the rights of all workers: women, migrants and refugees. The WFTU affiliates, including COSATU staged a successful picket outside the Department of Labour in Johannesburg, Braamfontein which was attended and addressed by various leaders, and closed by WFTU President Cde Makwayiba.

75th Anniversary

In the framework of celebrating October 3rd and the 75th anniversary of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the WFTU and COSATU jointly organised a successful Symposium on October 1st under the title "Working-class solidarity, during a time of crisis: Unilateralism in the era of multilateralism" with the participation of trade unionists and officials from South Africa and many other African countries. The president of WFTU opened the Symposium, with George Mavrikos (WFTU General Secretary) and COSATU General Secretary Cde Bheki Ntshalintshal giving the key addresses. Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) General Secretary Cde Arezki Mezhoud addressed the Symposium with a strong solidarity speech and representatives from other countries gave messages of support at the end.



The discussion was enriched by the speeches of representatives from the Cuban and Iranian Embassies in South Africa. The Symposium concluded on joint actions, and collaborative efforts to strengthen international solidarity around the world.

76th Anniversary

This year's celebrations, and theme are yet to be announced and discussed.

13th Congress of the TUI of Public Services and Allied Workers

The 13th Congress of the TUI PS&A of the WFTU concluded on the 17th of November 2019, with optimism and enthusiasm for the organisation faced by the new struggles of workers in the public services. The Congress elected its new General Secretary of the TUI PS, our very own Cde Zola Saphetha from NEHAWU. During his speech, the WFTU General Secretary, Cde George Mavrikos pointed out the importance of the TUIs which are the heart of the WFTU and called for the strengthening of the action and coordination of the TUI PS&A. COSATU congratulated Cde Saphetha on his election, emphasising that his appointment lays a solid foundation for COSATU and its other affiliates to reaffirm its ties with the workers of the world, as led by our class conscious and Socialist orientated allies in the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), amidst the deepening crisis of Capitalism in Europe, Greece and the United States. The ongoing global crisis of Capitalism and ousting of dictatorial regimes by the workers and the poor of Africa is living proof that a better and alternative world is indeed necessary.

It was through the unprecedented support of the WFTU, with the help of the South African Communist Party (SACP), that our struggle against apartheid was elevated at an international scale, and strong contacts were established for the African National Congress (ANC) to pursue the liberation struggle in exile.

4. Organisation of Trade Union Unity (OATUU)

General Council

The 42nd Session of the OATUU General Council initially scheduled for 12th -16th August 2019, took place on the 16th – 20th September 2019 due to the Islamic festival -Eid al Adha on the 11th -15th August 2019. The session was convened in Nairobi, Kenya.

The programme included:

- I. The workshop on gender meeting,
- II. The ILO centenary workshop
- III. The Executive Committee Meeting and
- IV. The General Council.

The issue of the unity project was top of the agenda, to which COSATU sponsored the resolution to merge OATUU and the ITUC – Africa. We need to pick this conversation up again, as it is now also supported by the COTU-Kenya.

COSATU was be represented by the 1st Deputy President Cde Mike Shingange, Cde Gertrude Mtsweni (who sits in the Women's Committee) and Cde Khutso Moloko Bolaka a Young Worker from NACTU representing South Africa.



10th Joint Annual Partnership Forum on Migration and Mobility for Sustainable Development

The Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) in collaboration with the African Union held its 10th Joint Annual Partnership Forum on Migration and Mobility for Sustainable Development from the 24th to 26th July 2019 in Tunis, Tunisia.

The forum set to bring light the role of trade unions in Migration and Refugees' Challenges under the theme Migration and refugees challenges: The role of trade unions.

During the Opening Ceremony, the Secretary General of Unions General des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT), the Ambassador Jalel Chelba, Head of Civil Society Division, CIDO, AUC and OATUU Secretary General Mr. Arezki Mezhoud addressed the participants.

The Objective of this meeting was to identify and intensify the role of trade unions on migration and refugees issues, publicizing current AU initiatives in connection with the migration and mobility issues and popularizing the revised Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018-2030). The outcome of this forum was a trade union road map on addressing migration and refugees' issues for promoting sustainable development on the continent.

OATUU Video Conference - pandemic and its Socio-Economic Impact on Workers in Africa: The Role of Trade unions

On the 22nd of September 2020 OATUU hosted a Video Conference under the title "Corona Virus (COVID 19) pandemic and its Socio-Economic Impact on Workers in Africa: The Role of Trade unions". COSATU General Secretary, Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali was a panellist in the virtual event, and shared on the experiences of South Africa, on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and trade union responses.

The virtual video conference discussed COVID-19, its impact on socio-economic development in Africa and identified its challenges on workers and their jobs; and recommendations were on actions to be taken or put in place to ensure jobs are protected. In addition to this, the leaders engaged on:

- The role of trade unions in combating the pandemic and ensuring that the workplace is made safe.
- Strategies or mechanism that workers and Trade Union can put in place to influence policy decisions on the pandemic now and in the future; and
- How trade unions can ensure that there are comprehensive social protection packages that will cover all categories of workers, both in the formal and informal economy.

COVID-19 Challenges in the World of Work

On the 8th of April 2021 OATUU organised a virtual conference for women and youth commission members dubbed "Covid-19 Challenges in the World of Work: Gender Equality, Youth Concerns and the Way Forward". The conference was organised at a time when the pandemic continues to expose weaknesses in social and economic structures across Africa and further sharpens already existing gender inequalities, as well as challenges the youth are facing. COSATU was represented by Cde Gertrude Mtsweni, as the conference engaged women and youth leaders of the organisation in a bid to analyse the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on working women and youth in Africa, and discover effective interventions that will diminish its effects so far and promote the interests of these groups. The conference participatory and involved brief presentations from members of OATUU's Women and Youth Commission.



5. International Labour Organisation/International Labour Conference

The 108th ILO ILC session was convened from the 10th – 21st June 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. On the agenda for 2019 was the ILO centenary outcomes document, the standard setting second discussion on violence and harassment in the world of work and other thematic debates and events connected to the future of work including various centenary initiatives among other items. COSATU conducted the necessary groundwork to beefing up its input in the debates particularly on the standard setting processes through consultation processes in the NGC and information sharing in the region.

The Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) discussed the report of the committee of experts on the application of conventions and recommendations. The preliminary list of 40 cases for possible discussion at the CAS (long list), as prepared by the social partners is now available on the ILO website. Out of those cases, 24 were selected for the CAS discussion. The list is on the link below:

<https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/108/committees/standards/lang-en/index.htm>

During the Africa International Labour Conference (ILC) preparation meeting held in Rwanda on 20th – 22nd March 2019, the African Trade Union selected the below list of Countries to focus on during the ILC.

LIST OF AFRICAN CASES FOR 2019 ILC PREPARATORY MEETING KIGALI, RWANDA

NO	COUNTRY	CONVENTION	PRIORITY PREFERENCE	ANTICIPATED CONCLUSION
Special Note case	Ethiopia	138	Decided by the CEACR	Technical Assistance
1	Zimbabwe	87	Short list	Special paragraph
2	Cameroon	87	Short list	Special paragraph
3	Chad	151	Short list	Special paragraph
4	Burundi	105	Short list	High Level Technical mission
5	DRC	135	Long list	High Level Technical mission
6	Uganda	81	Long list	Technical Assistance
7	Liberia	98	Long list	High Level Technical Mission
8	Malawi	138	Long list	Technical Assistance
9	Rwanda	87	Long list	Technical Assistance
10	Ghana	182	Long list	Technical Assistance

COSATU affiliates were requested to submit names of interested participants to the office of the General Secretary, if they wished to attend the ILC in 2019 at own cost. Only SASBO and SACCAWU confirmed names.

COSATU was represented by 5 people officially and in addition 2 representatives from SASBO and 4 from SACCAWU at the 108th ILC,

1. General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali
2. President Zingiswa Losi
3. Lebogang Mulaisi
4. Gertrude Mtsweni



5. Xolani Fakude
6. SASBO President Malesela Moses Lekota
7. SASBO Assistant General Secretary Myan Soobramoney
8. SACCAWU GS Bones Skulu
9. SACCAWU Deputy President Mike Tau
10. SACCAWU Secretariat Coordinator Lucas Ramatlhodi
11. SACCAWU National Gender Coordinator Patricia Nyman

In the year 2020, the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation postponed the annual International Labour Conference (ILC) until 2021 due to the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. This decision was taken in light of severe worldwide travel restrictions due to the pandemic, and the need to ensure the health and well-being of delegates and staff. The conference was originally scheduled for May 25th to June 5th, 2020 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Following extensive consultations, the Governing Body (which includes COSATU General Secretary, Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali) decided at its 341st Session that the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference would be held virtually in two separate parts:

- A first part, from 3rd to 19th June 2021 to deal with all agenda items except items IV (inequalities and the world of work) and VI (skills and life-long learning), with the opening sitting being held on Thursday, 20th May 2021 to elect the Officers of the Conference, appoint its standing and technical committees and approve any adjustments to its Standing Orders and working methods, as may be necessary in view of the virtual format of the Conference;
- A second part, the dates of which will be determined at a later stage, to deal with items IV (inequalities and the world of work) and VI (skills and life-long learning).

The special procedures, programme and arrangements for the 109th Session of the Conference, including a detailed outline on the drafting process of the COVID-19 response and its adoption during the Conference, will be finalised in the course of April 2021 in consultation with tripartite constituents, and will be announced in this webpage and communicated to all Member States.

ILO Global Summit

From the 1st to the 9th of July 2020, the ILO hosted the largest ever online summit of workers, employers and government representatives to address the impact of COVID-19 on the world of work, and how to build a better future of work after the pandemic. The ILO Virtual Global Summit took place in a year in which the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body have been unable to meet. But it is a crucial year for the Organization and the world of work. This is the context in which the Summit was able to provide critically important guidance. The need is to identify how, the ILO can best contribute to moving the world of work forward from the COVID-19 crisis to the better future it committed to build last year. In the period leading up to the 2021 International Labour Conference, the Organization must negotiate and adopt its Programme and Budget for 2022-23. Moreover, the Conference itself provides the unique occasion to concretise the Organisation's role in processes of recovery which will have lasting importance for those undergoing the impact of the pandemic, and those who come after.



In 2021

ILO Directorship

The Current ILO Director-General Guy Ryder will be retiring this year and a view was posed by the African Trade Union Movement that a consideration must be made that the successor be of African origin. In this regard the name of Cde Ebrahim Patel was identified as one person whose nomination would be widely supported by the workers group, taking into consideration that he would be supported by the South African government as well. However, the discussions took a backseat following the COVID-19 disruptions.

We have raised the issue again with our friends in the region (through SATUCC), and ITUC-Africa to resuscitate the conversation. We are advised that COSATU and its Quadrilateral partners should engage each other on the matter and include OATUU.

The Virtual ILO Governing Body Meeting which sat on the 15th – 25th March 2021, discussed the calendar for the election of the next Director-General of the ILO. The current Director-General's term of office expires in September 2022. The GB decided on a calendar of actions:

- 1 July 2021: The Chairperson of the Governing Body calls for candidatures
- 1 October 2021: Last date for the reception of candidatures
- 14-15 March 2022 (344th Session of the Governing Body): The Governing Body conducts candidate(s) hearings
- 25 March 2022 (344th Session of the Governing Body): The Governing Body conducts the ballot for the election of the Director-General
- 1 October 2022: The term of office of the Director-General commences; and
- requests the Office to prepare for its 342nd Session (June 2021) options to provide for additional opportunities for interaction with candidates before the regular hearings in private sitting.

6. COSATU-Ghana TUC- NLC Nigeria-COTU-Kenya Quadrilateral Engagements

Trilateral Meeting

In 2018 the Africa Trilateral Leaders Meeting and Extended Conference were deferred to 2019. The Nigeria NLC was meant to host the leaders meeting while Ghana TUC was meant to host the Extended Conference. It was later suggested that both meetings should be held in Ghana in 2018. Seeing this is the year for the ITUC-Africa Congress it is critical to ensure these meetings sit to prepare for the 4th Congress of ITUC Africa. The three Federations have discussed and Ghana TUC is in the process of discussion internally and has promised to revert back to us regarding logistics and if they are able to host both meetings which we proposed should be back to back. Ghana TUC will communicate by 18th May 2019.

Africa Trilateral \ Quadrilateral Meeting COSATU-NLC-GTUC-COTU 2-5 August 2019

The 4th Trilateral Leaders and General Meetings were convened in Accra, Ghana on 1 – 5 August 2019 at the La-Palm Royal Beach Hotel under the theme "Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Workers in Africa".

The Conference brought together the leaders and delegates from the TUC-Ghana, the NLC – Nigeria, the COSATU-South Africa and for the first time the COTU-Kenya was also in attendance. With the acceptance of COTU-Kenya as a member the trilateral had to be changed into a quadrilateral meeting.

The Trilateral\Quadrilateral Conference was convened in two parts:

The first part was a leader meeting of the four federations held from 2nd – 3rd August 2019. This meeting was attended by 5 representatives from each national centre and COTU – Kenya was represented 3 representatives. This session focused on political, economic, social situation and the current challenges confronting workers in



their respective countries and the continent at large. It reviewed the progress on priorities agreed on in previous trilateral meetings and deliberated on current development globally and continental that has impact on workers and their trade unions. Further to the ordinary business of the leaders meeting, the meeting deliberated on the preparation for the ITUC – Africa 4th Ordinary Congress.

The second part of the conference was the Trilateral/Quadrilateral General or Plenary Meeting held from 4th -5th August 2019. This meeting was attended by the leaders of the 4 National Centres and their affiliates. Ghana was represented by 36 delegates, the NLC by 34 delegates, COSATU by 8 delegates and COTU-Kenya by 3 delegates. COSATU was disappointed by the lack of interest of the affiliates and the last-minute cancellation by others who had confirmed attendance. The plenary for this meeting was opened by the Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour Relations of Ghana, Honourable Bright Wireko-Brobbe.

COSATU was represented by the following 8 people:

- a. COSATU President Cde Zingiswa Losi
- b. COSATU GS Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali
- c. COSATU DGS Cde Solly Phetoe
- d. COSATU National Treasurer Cde Freda Oosthuysen
- e. COSATU Deputy International Secretary Cde Zanele Matebula
- f. SAEPU President Mr. Mpho Mpogeng
- g. SADTU President Mr. Magope Maphila
- h. CWU GS Aubrey Zanele Tshabalala

The trilateral hosting rotates among the Federations and the host country acts as secretariat with the International Relations officials of all 3 Federations working together to coordinate the programme and discussions of the Trilateral. The 5th Quadrilateral will be held in Nigeria in 2021.

The Leaders Meeting 2nd -3rd August 2019

The meeting received the country reports from each national centre, which highlighted the common struggles faced by workers in the respective countries and in the continent. From the discussion it became clear that the struggle of workers was not only intensifying but also changing in nature. All 4 countries reported on massive job losses, unemployment and deepening inequality and poverty. The impact of the technologic advances brought on by the 4th industrial revolution and the prospects positive of negative that the Africa Continental Free Trade Area may present. These discussions highlighted the importance of infrastructural development as a key issue to stimulate industrialisation for employment creation and the favourable implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area as well as preparing the trade union movement for the challenges ahead with the changing nature of work. The meeting agreed that this was an area of focus for all and advocacy for infrastructural policy development and implementation must be done and the strengthening of social dialogue must be achieved.

Assessing the implementation of the agreed priorities of the previous trilateral meetings, the leaders agreed that there needs to be a better communication and strategies to ensure successful implementation of the priorities. The review was helpful in that it assisted in consolidation of all the priorities into realistic and workable plan of action that is time bound and measurable. Further to this the technical team has been tasked with coordinating all activities to ensure work of the trilateral is achieved and successful. In this regard, the Ghana TUC will develop the first trilateral annual bulletin and each national centre will develop a bulletin on the years they host the Trilateral which means the next will be issued by NLC. The Technical committee will work with the information and communications departments to develop the bulletins.



The issue of the unity project on the merger\future of the ITUC-Africa and OATUU, deliberations made it clear that Africa needs an independent African Trade Union. The discussion led by the President of OATUU was a robust, open and honest discussion that highlighted the experience of veteran trade unionists in their interaction with ITUC – Brussels and hinted on the independence of ITUC-Africa from the Brussels office. This led to most leaders in the meeting agreeing that the merger of the two organisations may be difficult in the current form the ITUC-Africa is in and maybe the Trilateral must just agree that the two organisations need to work closely together in advancing the struggles of workers in the continent. It was agreed that there needs to be a proper discussion at each national centre, in the meantime both the organisations were encouraged to work closely together and to increase their visibility in all regions of the continent and this includes joint activities and programmes.

The forth coming 4th ITUC-Africa Ordinary Congress to be held in Abuja, Nigeria presents an opportunity for the quadrilateral to implement some of the priorities. Using the pre congress organisers' activity, all national centres will ensure their organising departments attend and take time during this event to exchange on their experience in organising particularly in the informal economy; the NLC will share its programme and training programme to kick-start the process of joint training of organisers.

On the Congress itself, Cde Kwasi Adu Amankwah took the meeting through the Congress preparations and developments on the ground. Cde Kwasi advised that there are 5 positions the meeting needs to deliberate on (General Secretary, 2 Deputy General Secretary, Auditors, Deputy President) and also representation in the Standing orders committee (6) and the Credentials Committee (6). Then names of the Erick Manzi of Rwanda was raised for DGS, Cde Kwasi availed himself to stand for the GS position, he highlighted the great job done by Cde Freda currently as auditor, suggested a few names for the standing orders and credentials committee.

The meeting agreed that there should be a shift in how we elect and retain positions, and secretariat, it is time to review the issue of the Presidency of the ITUC Africa agreeing the current president has been in this position for too long and it was time for change. That also we need a plan for succession in the GS and DGS position. The Trilateral \Quadrilateral supported the idea for constitutional amendment on the position of the President and DGS. The suggestion for rotation of Presidency to the 5 regions of the continent, that Southern Africa sponsors the person this time and that the person should be female.

On the positions of the Deputy General Secretary the Trilateral\Quadrilateral agreed that there is a need for constitutional amendments to have 2 Deputies and that the amendment should be sponsored formally. The meeting agreed that the NLC would sponsor the name and decide if they want to offer for the 1st or 2nd Deputy. With this, caution was given to the meeting that there may be an issue regarding the position since the position of the GS is contested by English speaking country (Ghana) therefore the NLC being an English speaking country may not be able to hold the DGS as this was an issue when the name of Cde Mody Guiro was raised for the ITUC World Congress in 2018 that you can't let two people from Senegal (French Speaking) both contest or serve in executive and Cde Mody Guiro had to be let go so Cde Mamadou Diallo could then stand for the DGS of Brussels. Also, the meetings attention was drawn to the fact that a 2nd DGS would have financial implications for the organisation. The meeting agreed that they would sponsor the constitutional amendment for the position and the issue of funding for the position will be discussed when the amendment is passed. East Africa was requested to discuss the issue of the sponsored name of Menzi that they must discuss bearing in Mind we support the NLC.

On the position of the General Secretary the meeting agreed to support Cde Kwasi Adu Amankwah (Ghana-TUC) for this last term with the understanding that there should be a transition process to his term.

On the Auditor position the meeting agreed to support COSATU Cde Freda Oosthuysen to retain her position as auditor. The meeting learned that FEDUSA also is lobbying for the Auditor position.

On the question of the Deputy Presidents each region has a vice president (7) and among them, they elect the Deputy President.



For the General Council there are 12 positions to be elected by the congress (North Africa – 2 members, East Africa - 2 members, Southern Africa – 3 members, West Africa – 3 members, Central Africa -2 members) and the meeting agreed that there is a need to lobby for people who we can influence to support our position but also ensure that representation is spread out that all regions are equally represented in all positions. It was noted that COSATU Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali, NLC Cde Ayuba Wabba, COSATU Cde Lefa Phatsoane and COTU Cde Francis Atwoli automatically become the GC members by virtue of being in the ITUC Brussels GC therefore there's a need to identify the others who can support the position of the Trilateral\Quadrilateral. Members need to go back to their regions to check first who the people who already serve or nominated are or to be nominated so we know who we lobby for. The meeting agreed that there is a need to lobby for gender parity. Our lobby should also go to the women (2) and youth (1) representation.

The meeting was cautioned regarding the approach the quadrilateral must take as these decisions are political. The quadrilateral was advised that it needs to be very careful, explaining that in West Africa there are 16 countries only 4 of which are English Speaking, Central Africa is French Speaking and parts of North Africa is also French Speaking. The meeting was advised that Tunisia has also shown interest to sponsor the 2nd DGS.

The General \ Plenary Meeting

The meeting receive presentation and deliberated on the following new priorities:

- **The SDG8 (Decent Work in Africa)**

The National Centres were urged to engage their national governments to advocate for creation of tripartite structure (where they do not exists or are weak) that will bring about social dialogue in order to ensure the implementation that leaves no one behind. This structure should be used to advocate for the ratification of ILO conventions and Recommendation that advance the trade union agenda as well as the development of country programmes on decent work.

- **Future of Work in Africa**

The meeting recommended that centres should come up with suggestions at national level on how the trade union should respond to the 4th industrial revolution and the future of work. Once suggestions are made there should be a consolidation of responses done for a common response to be adopted. This should be done through the trilateral commissioning research work to be done for the urgent development and adoption of a continental trade union response to the 4th industrial revolution. This should be done and concluded by the next sitting of the trilateral \ quadrilateral.

- **Universal Social Protection in Africa**

The Trilateral raised a concern that majority of Africans are not covered by comprehensive social security. The trade union should shape the policy to be inclusive of everyone. Ratification of ILO Convention 102 on Social Protection and Recommendation 202 of 2012 on Social Protection Floor remains paramount to the protection of human and workers' rights in terms of basic needs of people.

The trilateral expresses their concern about the continental management of pension funds by governments which jeopardises the pensions of workers this includes governments borrowing from these funds and the corruption in those processes.

The state must cover all its citizens the modalities as to how can be looked into and also what role does private sector play.

In this regard, the trilateral should call for a new social contract that involves all stakeholders (Governments, Private Sector, Trade Unions and Community) which will define the role of each stake holder in improving the livelihood of the people in this continent. This will help address the gap in the implementation of the social security systems



The Centres must close the gap by advocating for and influencing policy that promotes universal social protection for all.

- **Organising in Formal and Informal Economy (including Challenges in organizing multinational companies like MTN and Chinese-owned Companies)**

Recommendation 204 (R204) on the Formalisation of the Informal Economy was adopted by the ILC in June 2015. The recommendation ensures the protection of workers' rights in the informal economy through social protection and advocating for decent working condition.

The trade union centres have coordinated much at national level to organise the informal economy and experienced a lot of difficulty in retaining members as well as collections of dues.

In this regard, it was agreed that organising is at the centre of our existence and in a situation where, many of the working force in Africa are not unionised and informal sector having a huge number that unions and centres should invest time and money organising.

The NLC Programme of organising academy to be emulated. In line with this, centres were encouraged to send organisers to Nigeria during the ITUC Africa Congress first to participate in the side meeting of organisers planned by the ITUC-Africa, thereafter meet with the NLC Head of Organising and industrial relations to share experiences and compare notes.

Affiliates organising in the communications sector got an opportunity to interact and exchange on strategies to handle the MTN problem.

- **Elimination of Violence and Harassment at work in Africa**

At the 108th session of the International Labour Organisation of 2019, Convention C190 with its Recommendation 206 was adopted. The Trilateral committed to the Elimination of all forms of Violence and Harassment in the world of work.

In line with this, the various national centres were encouraged to adopt their own policies on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.

The centres are encouraged to advocate for their governments to ratify convention C190 and its accompanying Recommendation 206.

- **AfCFTA (Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement)**

The Quadilateral is concerned about the processes that led to the adoption of the AfCFTA. It recognised that AfCFTA provides both opportunities and threats for the Trade Union Movement in Africa. The current manner in which it has been handled has not allowed the trade union movement and civil society actors to contribute to it and is strictly driven by governments.

In this regard, the meeting agreed that,

- the trade union movement must push to be included in all future AU deliberations on African Continental Free Trade Area.
- national centres should push for engagements at national level on the issue of route of origin of goods and use the opportunity to properly define the role of the trade union in AfCFTA and strengthen the rules on the route of origin of goods.
- the trilateral partners must mobilise regions in the continent to make a call to bring back the African Labour Affairs and Social Commission as it was before, this will re-instate the proper participation of the trade union in the A.U and will assist in strengthening our role in the implementation of the AfCFTA.
- All affiliates had an opportunity to network with their sister unions during the session, and the meeting concluded with the adoption of the 4th Communiqué of the Quadilateral and the accompanying Priorities.



7. Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC)

Leadership Induction Workshop

SATUCC convened a leadership induction workshop on 9-10 April 2019 which turned into the Central Executive Committee meeting alongside the Regional Seminar on Migration in Gaborone, Botswana.

The purpose of the induction was to introduce the leadership to what SATUCC functioning and programmes are. The Executive Committee was addressed by the former President of SATUCC Cde George Nkiwane who spoke about the history of SATUCC and looking back to the work done by SATUCC. The meeting also assessed the performance of SATUCC based on the SATUCC Strategic Plan 2014-2018. The meeting was further used to prepare for the 108th ILC meeting.

The EC agreed that there is a need for 2 more meetings before September 2019 which will include induction of the office bearers on the SATUCC Constitution. The SATUCC Regional Seminar on Migration was convened as informed by the Resolutions from the two previous congresses of SATUCC, which saw labour migration as a key development agenda. It aimed to highlight the key role of the trade union in achieving a fair labour migration and its role in ensuring that rights of workers were protected and were not subjected to the borders and immigration status.

The issue of labour migration remains one of the most difficult issues to tackle and in light of the challenges related to labour migration in Southern Africa, SATUCC and affiliates needed to contribute towards the development and implementation of a comprehensive regional and national migration systems and policies, while simultaneously strengthening their own capacities, competencies and coordination mechanisms in order to enhance their ability to positively influence migration and labour related policy outcomes at regional level.

The workshop was used to strategically plan a process towards achieving fair labour migration. The workshop objective was to develop a SATUCC Strategic Plan / theme on Labour Migration; and labour migration messages to promote decent work.

With regards to Strategic Plan- theme on Labour Migration, the workshop agreed on key focus areas to build messages on labour migration, these focus areas are:

- a. SATUCC and Affiliate Policy on Migration.
- b. Labour Migration Information System.
- c. Decent Work for Migrant Workers.
- d. Ratification of Regional and International Instruments.
- e. Education and Awareness raising (e.g. pre-departure information).
- f. Labour Migration and Xenophobia (Trade Union Role).
- g. Gender and Labour Migration

COSATU was represented by the SADTU Deputy President Cde Mabutho Cele at the Migration Workshop.

37th Central Executive Council Meeting

The 37th Central Executive Council Meeting took place on the 14th of November 2019 in Gaborone, Botswana. The Meeting was attended by COSATU President Zingiswa Losi, and Gender Coordinator Gertrude Mtsweni. Planned activities for this year have not been communicated yet and will therefore be reflected in the next CEC Report, or as attended.



Virtual seminars on COVID-19

On the 18th and 19th of August 2020, SATUCC hosted two virtual seminars on COVID-19 during the 16th Civil Society Forum (CSF). These two crucial seminars covered issues around 'The impact of COVID-19 on Workers in SADC Region' and The Role of Youth on Employment Creation Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic. The Seminars were opened by SATUCC President Zingiswa Losi, and COSATU was in attendance represented by International Secretary, Sonia Mabunda-Kaziboni and Deputy International Secretary, Zanele Mathebula.

Conclusions/Outcomes

- The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified a number of challenges that workers were already facing before COVID-19 emerged such as increase of insecure and informal work, lack of social protection, rising of unemployment which stand to exacerbate poverty and inequalities in Southern Africa.
- The youth are more vulnerable due to high youth working poverty rates and because the youth are overrepresented in vulnerable and informal employment which are at great risk of worsening due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Young women are facing an increasing double burden to manage both paid work and unpaid care and household work due to widespread school closures.

Action points

- Trade unions should be actively involved in the formulation and implementation of concerted responses on COVID-19 pandemic at both national and regional level
- COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impacts on workers (including the vulnerabilities of women and young workers) should be included on the agenda for social dialogue and an item in the collective bargaining agreements (CBAs)
- Trade unions should not only focus on reacting to the devastating impacts of COVID-19 pandemic in SADC region, but also being pro-active with alternative proposals towards building sustainable economies after the COVID-19 pandemic

SATUCC 40th Congress

The 40th Anniversary Congress of SATUCC is scheduled to take place in the fourth quarter of 2021. Is it important for COSATU to begin engaging in the conversations regarding the election of leadership, and in particular lobbying for the re-election of our President, who is the current President of SATUCC?

As we prepare for the Congress, the SATUCC leadership has also indicated on multiple occasions that the issue of non-payment of affiliation fees by some affiliates, hinders progress on activities in SATUCC. The payment of staff salaries, and benefits is also included amongst the challenges faced.

8. SADC Employment, Labour and Social Partners Meetings (2019, 2020, 2021)

In 2019, Namibia convened the ELS Ministers meeting from the 4th – 8th March in Windhoek, Namibia under the theme "Coordination of development programmes to maximize employment creation and productivity". The meeting commenced with the SADC ELS Technical Committee Meeting which sought to prepare for the ELS Ministerial Meeting. The meeting was divided into 3 sessions:

- Strategic Policy Dialogue
- Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
- International and Continental Commitments



On Strategic Policy Dialogue the meeting discussed the following.

- Labour migration considerations of the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration
- Ratification of the SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour

On Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting the following were discussed:

- Follow-up on the mid-term review report of the SADC Decent Work Programme (2013-2019)
- Portability of social security benefits in the SADC region
- Follow-up on establishment of SADC ELS Forums
- Dispute Prevention and Resolution
- Labour Inspection
- Public Employment Services
- Labour Migration Action Plan (2016-2019)
- International Labour Standards – Addressing common challenges
- Follow-up on Report on ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189): Ratification by SADC Member States
- Decent work for youth in the rural economy
- Reports by Member States
- Revised RISDP (2015-2020)
- ELS Codes (Social Security, HIV&AIDS and Employment)
- Reports by Social Partners
- SADC Private Sector Forum (SPSF)
- Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC)

On International and Continental Commitments, the following were discussed:

- SADC Members' preparations for the African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment
- Report by SADC Members of the Governing Body of the ILO
- Preparations for the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC)
- ILO Centenary outcome document (Namibia)
- Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work (standard setting, second discussion) (Lesotho)
- Thematic debates and events connected to the Future of Work, including various Centenary Initiatives (Eswatini)

The ELS Ministerial was divided similarly, under the Strategic Policy Dialogue the ministers discussed:

- The ILO Report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work: Implications for SADC
- Presentation of the Global Commission's Report (ILO)
- Tripartite Panel Discussion

In the session on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting the Ministers deliberated on the Annotated Agenda and the Senior Officials' recommendations from the Technical Committee meeting. The meeting was concluded on the last day by observing the ILO Centenary celebration through presentation of the ILO work and its impact in the SADC Region.



COSATU attended the ELS meeting as part of the South Africa delegation representing labour and Cde Maja Mphahlele from NUM represented, while the President of COSATU attended representing SATUCC.

2020

In 2020, the SADC Employment and Labour Sector (ELS) Troika Virtual Meeting took place on the 19th of October 2020. The Meeting by representatives from the following members: Mozambique (Chair), Malawi, United Republic of Tanzania, SADC Private Sector Forum (SPSF), Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Cde Sonia Mabunda-Kaziboni attended the Meeting on behalf of COSATU. The sole agenda item for the meeting was consideration and adoption of the draft SADC Employment and Labour Policy Framework (2020-2030).

The Secretariat introduced the policy framework highlighting that all key facets of labour administration had been addressed in a focused, coherent and logical way, which provides clear pathways for the region to achieve better decent work outcomes. These pathways were based on five strategic objectives in the areas of employment creation; rights at work; social protection; social dialogue; and labour migration. The Secretariat also pointed out that the draft policy framework was fully aligned to ELS commitments as outlined in the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, as adopted by Heads of State and Government in August 2020.

The Consultants proceeded to unpack the draft policy document, with emphasis on the strategic orientation as follows:

- Strategic Objective 1 – To create decent job opportunities and inclusive economic growth across all sectors for men and women in SADC through the promotion of pro-employment policy making and implementation, employment-intensive public and private investments, and sustainable enterprises.
- Strategic Objective 2 – To promote application of International Labour Standards and fundamental principles and rights for social justice at work.
- Strategic Objective 3 – To enhance coverage of quality comprehensive and sustainable social protection and conditions of work to prevent and mitigate vulnerability.
- Strategic Objective 4 – To strengthen social dialogue and labour market institutions for harmonious labour relations and productivity at work.
- Strategic Objective 5 – To enhance labour migration governance for safe and regular labour migration.

The consultants also outlined the theory of change before touching on the institutional arrangements and structures, which also include aspects of roles and responsibilities, budgeting and resources requirements, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

The meeting welcomed the draft policy framework as a useful framework for SADC in the pursuit of decent work in the region. However, a number of comments were made with a view to strengthen the draft emphasising the need to:

- Revisit the terminology used in the framing of the strategic objectives in line with standard nomenclature, notably with respect to the ones on International Labour Standards (how to address social justice issues), social protection (comprehensive treatment), social dialogue (aspects of social partners' roles) and labour migration (issues on mobility).
- Address labour market disruptions in a strategic and comprehensive way, that is not too limited to COVID-19.
- Rationalise the analysis of key labour market indicators, ensuring that the analysis is more strategic at the regional level
- Amplify interventions on two key issues for the region, that is, industrialisation and formalisation of the informal economy



- Amplify Occupational Safety and Health given that it is a key intervention area, including in the results framework, where the main activities will flag this issue.
- Address treatment of the Codes of best practice in the way forward (Codes on Social Security, HIV and AIDS, etc)
- Address issues of funding and resource mobilisation for full implementation
- Ensure that the draft policy framework's structure/format is fit for purpose and aligned to other blueprints
- Address issues connected to the labour market information system
- Ensure that the translation of the documents into other languages is done accurately

The Secretariat gave clarifications on the main issues raised, undertook to address the comments and to submit a revised draft policy framework by 26 October 2020.

As part of the way forward, the meeting considered and approved a roadmap for the development of a SADC Decent Work Programme as proposed by the ILO Director, Dr Joni Musabayana. The SADC Decent Work Programme will be the implementation tool for the draft policy framework. The following was the Roadmap:

- Submission of the 1st SADC DWP Roadmap to the Troika by Friday 23rd October 2020
- Submission of members' comments to the Secretariat by Friday 30th October 2020
- 2nd sitting of the Troika to review the Draft DWP before presentation to the JTTS on the 6th of November 2020
- Final Draft SADC DWP to be presented for adoption by the SADC Ministers and Social Partners

Employment and Labour Sector Joint Tripartite Technical Sub-Committees (JTTS) Virtual Meeting

On the 23rd – 24th November, 2020 COSATU through SATUCC participated in the Employment and Labour Sector Joint Tripartite Technical Sub-Committees (JTTS) Virtual Meeting of Experts, where a crucial issue discussed, among other things was, the Draft SADC Employment and Labour Policy Framework (2020-2030). Members of the JTTS noted that the draft policy document proposes five strategic objectives in the areas of employment creation, rights at work, social protection, social dialogue and labour migration as follows:

- i. to create decent job opportunities and inclusive economic growth across all sectors for men and women in SADC through the promotion of pro-employment policymaking that facilitates increased industrialisation and formalisation,
- ii. to promote the application of International Labour Standards and fundamental principles and rights at work,
- iii. to enhance gender-responsive and inclusive social protection coverage and reduce workers' vulnerabilities through better working conditions,
- iv. to strengthen social dialogue and labour market institutions for harmonious labour relations and productivity at work,
- v. to enhance labour migration governance for safe and regular labour migration.

Members of the JTTS deliberated on the fifth proposed strategic objective on labour migration governance and noted that the complexity of labour migration management potentially necessitated the standalone strategic objective, to enable clear programming in the subject matter. However, it was also noted that under the well-established decent work agenda, labour migration is addressed as an integral part of the four strategic objectives and that, this approach should, therefore, be maintained. Accordingly, the ELS Troika was requested to revisit the issue and make a suitable recommendation in the draft policy, taking into account the deliberations. COSATU General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali, and Deputy International Secretary, Cde Zanele Mathebula attended the Meeting representing COSATU.



2021

This year, the Virtual SADC Ministers of Labour and Employment and Social Partners Meeting took place on the 28th – 30th April 2021.

On behalf of Organised Labour in South Africa, the delegation was as follows:

- Cde Zingiswa Losi (COSATU President, attending also as the President of SATUCC)
- Cde Maja Mphahlele (NUM Parliamentary Head)
- Cde Lucky Mabutho Cele (SADTU Deputy President)
- Cde Riefdah Ajam (FEDUSA General Secretary)
- Cde Zanele Mathebula (COSATU Deputy International Secretary)

The meeting discussed policies that address employment and labour conditions and ensure safe and healthy working conditions, as well as other pertinent items of global significance in the labour market.

The President of Southern Africa Trade Union Coordinating Council, Ms Zingiswa Losi, called for structural transformation which will comprehensively suppress poverty, inequality and unemployment within an overall developmental context in which SADC Member States must play a more active and decisive role. She called upon Member States to ratify and domesticate International Labour Standards, including International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention Number 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the workplace.

During the meeting, the Ministers and Social Partners:

- approved key sectoral policy instruments towards realisation of the SADC Vision of a peaceful, inclusive, competitive, middle to high income industrialised Region, where all citizens enjoy sustainable economic well-being, justice and freedom.
- approved the SADC Employment and Labour Policy Framework (2020-2030) and the SADC Decent Work Programme (2021-2025) which seeks to address decent work deficits, including unemployment and underemployment, which continue to undermine prospects of productive structural transformation and poverty eradication in the Region. Member States committed to do this through enhanced application of fair labour standards and more effective cooperation between governments and the organisations of employers and workers, while taking into account the pressing challenges such as increased inequality, climate change and labour migration;
- noted with concern that the outbreak of COVID-19 has stagnated and subdued economic gains across all sectors, especially those that depend on global demand such as mining and agriculture, and those that depend on international travel, such as tourism and hospitality, all of which significantly employ the majority of young people;
- called upon SADC Member States to continue providing economic stimulus packages and to prioritise investment in employment-focused enterprise recovery; and move to introduce responsive and long-term social protection mechanisms, including unemployment benefit schemes. In addition, Ministers and Social Partners committed to improve working conditions through implementation of strategic workplace initiatives aimed at curbing the spread of the virus, informed by the public health measures and maintaining a balance between disease control and preservation of livelihoods and economic stability;
- prioritised the development of a new SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour which will include responsive measures to address emerging labour market challenges, such as those posed by rapid technological, climatic and demographic transformations; and
- commended the International Cooperating Partners (ICPs), notably ILO and IOM for continued cooperation at both the regional and national levels.



9. SIGTUR RCC Webex Meeting Notes – November 2019

Due to difficult circumstances faced currently by Philippines, need to re-schedule face to face RCC for February 2020 if OK with Philippines KMU.

Philippines

- 27,000 Philippines have been killed under 'War on Drugs'.
- 45 unionists' extrajudicial killings.
- At least 6 unionists in jail trumpeted up charges
- Police harassing people at home at night and raiding houses.
- KMU office along with other trade union centres raided.
- 53 union leaders arrested.
- ILO and UN delegations not being allowed into the Philippines.
- ITUC will announce International Day of action for 10th Dec 2019.
- Australian states of Victoria and Western Australia preparing activities for 10th December 2019 with Sydney to follow on 11th December 2019
- Theme will be around red tagging.

Brazil

- Lula arrested and held in prison, but Supreme Court ruled that defendant be freed whilst appeals heard. Lula now free but concern for what might happen next.
- Elections not due for another 3 years.
- Labour and social security 'reform' and privatisation on the agenda of the right and ongoing
- Fires – still massive issue plus there has been an oil spill. Nothing has changed regarding attitudes - protecting environment not a goal of the current government.

Argentina

- Waiting for change of Government to occur on 10 December.
- Union congress planned.
- Economic situation the same, high debt and recession.
- Jobs losses in industrial areas.
- Poverty rising
- There will be a push for the next government to move quickly to resolve issues after the 10th December 2019.

Australia

- Ensuring Integrity Bill – allows any party to make application to have individuals and/or unions deregistered. Rejected by Government in the past. Government now only needs 1 vote from cross bench to get legislation through. Union campaign to lobby members of parliament and stop legislation being passed.
- Welfare payments – government trying to claw back money arbitrarily from unemployed and vulnerable.
- Wage Growth – increased public debate on who low wage growth is affecting families and slowing economic growth.

Due to disruptions caused by the pandemic, we been unable to meet more formally. The next RCC Webex will be scheduled for later this year, or as required.



10. COSATU-China Exchange

COSATU was invited to send a senior delegation to visit China by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) from 31st August to 6th September 2019. All costs for travel were borne by the Chinese hosts.

The delegation consisted of President Zingiswa Losi, Deputy President Mike Shingange, Treasurer Freda Oosthuysen, International Secretary Sonia Mabunda-Kaziboni, and Parliamentary Coordinator Matthew Parks

a) Programme

The delegation was hosted by the ACFTU and its Shandong Provincial and Qingdao Municipal Branches.

The delegation met with the following delegations:

- Research Institute of the Ministry of Commerce.
- ACFTU National Leadership.
- Shandong ACFTU and Chinese Communist Party Provincial Leadership.
- Qingdao ACFTU and Chinese Communist Party Municipal Leadership.
- Haier Group (leading Chinese electric appliance manufacturing company); and
- Qingdao Port Authority.

b) Observations:

The delegation had numerous extensive engagements and interactions with the ACFTU national, provincial and municipal leadership. Key observations from these discussions include:

- China will very soon become the world's largest economy and remain South Africa's most strategic economic and political partner.
- China will be the world's leading producer of 4th industrial revolution technology and lead in the implementation of its own economy.
- China is currently restructuring its economy, in particular key industries and rapidly automating key sectors. These sectors cut across all economic sectors from energy to finance, transport, ports and manufacturing.
- China-from the unions to industry to government are keenly aware of the need for a just transition to go hand in hand with these economic and structural changes. Particular emphasis and clear programmes to re-skill and retrain and redeploy workers is apparent. Equally clear is a social security programme for unemployment, injury on duty and retirement to ensure workers are protected. China is also actively investing in new economic sectors, enterprises and opportunities to ensure unemployment is kept under control. Currently their unemployment rate is 3%. They have also managed to drastically reduce poverty and inequality levels as well as investing in the social wage e.g. state provided education, healthcare, housing, transport etc.
- The ACFTU is clearly a central part of the Alliance with the CCP in China. This is not only in name but also in practise. ACFTU leaders are senior leaders also in the CCP. But they have not been reduced to conveyor belts.
- The ACFTU is significantly invested in the economy ego owns hotels and is seemingly financially secure.
- The majority of Chinese workers are members of the ACFTU. Though they are struggling to attract young workers especially as the nature of work evolves and increasingly young people are self-employed etc.

c) Recommendations:

- The ACFTU and its provincial counterparts are keen to strengthen and practicalise our bilateral relations. Particular opportunities include arranging for future COSATU and affiliate delegations to undertake study tours and programmes to the ACFTU.



- This could be particularly relevant to such areas as the 4th industrial revolution, a just transition, a just energy transition, reskilling workers, social security, the social wage, financial sustainability of unions, recruitment and political education etc.
- There are opportunities to strengthen bilateral relations with the ACFTU in the BRICS and other international forums, on areas of common interest.
- The ACFTU is keen on visiting South Africa. Special thought would need to be given here on how such programmes should be structured.

11. BRICS – SA Trade Union Forum Presidency in 2018, Brazil (2019), Russia (2020) and India (2021)

BRICS South Africa Presidency

In 2018, South Africa hosted the BRICS Chairmanship and 10th summit under the theme of “BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution”. A number of actors continue to be proactive in the BRICS fora and thus engage through the following tracks of diplomacy: Track I engages formal diplomatic role players at national governmental level; Track II engagement is facilitated through government and non-government affiliated institutions, business councils and academic forums; and Track III engages civil society and the “people-to-people” dimension of BRICS.

BRICS and COVID-19

For some time now, discussions about global political and economic change have been centred on the role played by the so-called rising powers in the world-system – and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in particular. For some, the rise of the BRICS countries heralded the coming of a post-western world in which Euro-American hegemony in the world-system is a thing of the past. For others, the emergence of the rising powers was propelling a new development model that departs from neoliberal orthodoxies by bringing back public welfare and active state intervention in the economy.

However, the BRICS countries are hardly a homogenous bloc. On the contrary, the grouping is arguably frayed by divergent economic and political trajectories. What is more, the narrative of a ‘rising South’ jars with the reality of how the growth processes that have fuelled the rise of the BRICS are shot through with economic and political fault lines. First of all, the emergence of the rising powers has been coeval with the surfacing of a new geography of global poverty, in which more than 70% of the world’s poor now live in middle-income countries. Indeed, impressive growth rates notwithstanding, the southern BRICS countries (Brazil, India, China, and South Africa) are home to more than 50% of the world’s poor. The diversity of locations in the global political economy included in the BRICS countries, together with the similarity of the broad global trends, make for a compelling set of comparisons in relation to the political economy of a pandemic at this time of world system shifts and contestations.

Firstly, the pandemic creates a new political situation in each of these countries, which presents governing regimes with challenges and opportunities as they navigate the complex interface between public health measures and economic measures. How well do they do this, do they emerge strengthened or weakened? Does the crisis present workers with new and fair opportunities? Does it provide regimes with the opportunity to increase repression?

The COVID-19 pandemic has provoked a more extreme version of existing regime politics. For example, China’s initial attempts to conceal the outbreak followed by an extraordinary mobilisation of resources to contain it is consistent with its interests as an emerging superpower whose internal legitimacy and external stature rests on its technocratic prowess in delivering economic growth, the safety of citizens, and preventing dissent. South



Africa's recent return to neoliberal orthodoxy dictated its adoption of a 'global best practice' lockdown tailored for the wealthy societies of the West rather than its own split society and state, and then abandoned this for a shambolic reopening of the economy.

Right-wing nationalist regimes have fared worse. Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro attempted to deny the existence and seriousness of the pandemic with devastating consequences for those he hopes to crush, and his growing isolation from the elites. In India, Narendra Modi has used the crisis to consolidate his Messiah-like image in the public sphere, and there is much that suggests that this has at least been partly successful. In Russia, similarly, it is unlikely that the pandemic will destabilize Vladimir Putin's rule in any substantial way.

Secondly, how does the pandemic affect the dominated classes? It does, of course, have a devastating impact on livelihoods. In fact, in all the BRICS countries the working poor, precarious and informal workers and unemployed have to bear the brunt of both the pandemic itself, and economic devastation. However, the question is also whether or to what extent these scenarios lead to relief measures and expanding welfare initiatives from above, or whether the crisis is characterised by brutal indifference to the suffering of the poor.

South Africa's response was to allocate resources for grants and food parcels for the poor and retrenched workers, but corruption in state institutions is hampering effective and efficient service delivery. The Modi regime in India has systematically disregarded the needs of the country's most vulnerable citizens. The result has been nothing short of a humanitarian crisis. In Brazil, public pressure forced Bolsonaro to order financial relief for the poor, but his brutal indifference to the pandemic is devastating poor communities. In Russia, many vulnerable groups are falling through the cracks of a limited welfare system, and voluntary efforts are unlikely to remedy these shortcomings. In China, the regime's systematic response appears to have protected its citizens, but the comprehensive control over information means it is difficult to tell the situation on the ground, and particularly in the repressed populations of Tibet and Xinjiang.

This takes us to our third dimension: what is the popular response to this crisis and the politics of the regime? Do old and new movements and popular initiatives respond in innovative ways to the crisis? Do they focus on mobilising relief for the poor and marginalised communities? Do they attempt to work with the regime or challenge its responses? To what extent do new demands emerge from below in response to popular desperation?

These questions are important, as inequality and precarity had already thrown up political convulsions across the BRICS countries before the COVID-19 pandemic. In the current situation, the BRICS countries exhibit a wide range of popular responses. In India, there have been scattered protests by desperate migrant workers and extensive relief work by activist and civil society networks, but little by way of sustained organised protest, given the repressive conditions of the lockdown. South Africa, in contrast, has seen vibrant organising and mobilising at national and local levels.

In Russia, protests against the government's handling of the pandemic have taken a variety of forms, ranging from online live streams to mass gatherings, while Russian authorities have responded with a mix of co-optation and repression.

In Brazil, movements and activist networks have organised mutual solidarity, educating, organising food supplies, and demanding healthcare, but with no connection to or response from left-wing parties or Bolsonaro.

The Chinese government tolerated the efforts of volunteers to support health workers in China, but has tightened its repressive control of the internet, information, and the revolt in Hong Kong, where activists and the general public provided a coordinated response to the pandemic in the face of its battered authorities' inaction.

It is important that we look at the other BRICS countries, and analyse the different dynamics, and their points of vulnerabilities. What lessons can we get from each other, so that we can overcome this pandemic and emerge still as a solid bloc?



BRICS Trade Union Forum (BTUF)

2019

The VIII BRICS Trade Union Forum took place in Brasilia, Brazil on the 16th -20th September 2019 under the theme *“The Future of Labour, Social Rights, Multilateralism and the Importance of the BRICS in the Global Context”*. COSATU was represented by the General Secretary – Bheki Ntshalintshali. A Special IRC was convened on the 19th of July 2019, in preparation for the forum. The meeting recommended that a small team of IR practitioners be put together to process inputs to the BRICS Forum, the small team together with the IR department were to then meet with the Department of Labour and Employment, DIRCO and other relevant departments to assess their views are on the current developments in Brazil and India regarding the rise of the right wing governments and the suppression of trade union and human rights, as well and the US-China wars. This exercise assisted in informing COSATU’s overview and position moving forward as well as in the development of inputs to the BTUF.

2020

On the 9th of October 2020, the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting (LEMM) under the Russian presidency took place. In view of the ongoing restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the LEMM was held via videoconference (Zoom platform). Due to an unusual format, and hence very limited time, trade unions (including COSATU) attended as observers only. On behalf of the trade unions, a welcome address was delivered by the FNPR President Brother Mikhail Shmakov as a representative of the host country. The key areas of discussion were the future of work in the digital economy; poverty alleviation through social and economic transformations; and development of a preventative, safe and healthy work culture.

ILO Director-General Guy Ryder has welcomed the commitment made by Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa to take more action to support labour markets in meeting the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19. In remarks to the sixth BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting (LEMM), Ryder also praised the employment and social protection measures already implemented by these five major economies, noting that 121 new social protection measures had been introduced between March and August 2020 as part of the BRICS crisis response. In a Declaration issued at the end of the Meeting, the Ministers made a wide range of commitments intended to support enterprises, stable and inclusive labour markets, and human-centred development.

After multiple engagements, and postponement considerations - the BRICS Trade Union Forum met virtually on the 30th of October 2020. COSATU General Secretary Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali, and International Secretary, Sonia Mabunda-Kaziboni represented COSATU in the engagements which commenced by a presentations on country contexts by the representatives of major trade union centres from Brazil, India, China and South Africa, who spoke in the same vein dwelling on how the pandemic crisis was addressed in the labour markets of their respective countries.. The forum was attended by 106 delegates representing 13 national trade union centres which bring together almost 400 million workers, and by honorary guests from Russia and beyond.

Following the Trade Union Forum, the delegates adopted a Declaration addressed to the BRICS heads of state and reflecting the trade union stance on workers’ most urgent concerns. It is worth noting that in the period of Russia’s presidency at the BRICS in 2020 the Trade Union Forum was for the first time made part of the formal event programme of this international association.

2021

India has assumed the BRICS Chairmanship from the beginning of January 2021. In this regard, the Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST) hosted the first meeting on the 20th of January 2021, to discuss the agenda, priorities, deliverable & events to be organised during India’s BRICS Presidency. Dr Sanjeev Kumar Varshney, Advisor & Head International Cooperation (DST) led the meeting attended by representatives from



BRICS scientific ministries, foreign Missions & MEA. The meeting primarily discussed the finalisation of the BRICS Calendar of scientific events & programs. All countries also agreed upon taking initiatives for flagship projects in the areas that may address the challenges the BRICS countries face, particularly relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

India also proposed to review the progress made in last five years (2015-2020) under the BRICS MOU, its consolidation, and streamline the BRICS cooperation in science, technology and innovation (STI) which has been agreed by all unanimously. Dates for the BRICS Meetings, including the Trade Union Forum are yet to be announced.

The rise of the right-wing governments within the BRICS bloc: Case of Brazil and India

The BRICS are a very heterogeneous group of nations, united neither by ideology or geography. In its conception, however, BRICS countries embodied a form of a leftward political orientation. For instance, the Communist party governed India; Workers Party was in power in Brazil; China and Russia have communist histories and the African National Congress (ANC) has its own ideological roots but leftward leaning. These countries collectively represented a new political left. However, the emergence of the right wing or populist government in two of the BRICS countries namely Brazil and India have proved to be a thorn in flesh not only within BRICS but also among domestic trade unions.

The right wings governments in both Brazil and India have positioned themselves against workers' rights. This has been achieved through the implementation of the bourgeoisie drive to cultivate a cheap-labour haven for global capital. The effects of this drive are seen in a way the governments squeeze labour politics outside mainstream debates and excludes labour in structures supposedly should form social dialogue.

Consequently, this new political path has been nothing but a tool to weaken the worker's power.

Case of Brazil

The inception of BRICS in 2006 and the affiliation of Brazil to the bloc was seen as one of the pillars of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's ambitious foreign policy project. It served three major purposes. First, the BRICS reinforced Brazil's identity as a rising power, not only in terms of economic growth, but also of political influence beyond South America. Second, the BRICS was a catalyst to stronger trade relations with emerging economies, notably with Russia and India. Third, the bloc gave Brazil a "safe space" where it could relate with China as diplomatic equals. That was particularly important as China quickly established itself as Brazil's – and Latin America's – main trade partner. Therefore, BRICS is heavily associated with the left-wing government of the Workers Party (PT).

With the newly elected right-wing government in place under the stewardship of President Jair Bolsonaro, the Brazil has embarked on a radical reorientation of strategic partners, in line with the populist winds that have shaken much of the globe. Bolsonaro's main ally is Donald Trump, followed by Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu and the populist leaders of Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. Italy's Mateo Salvini is already considered a close friend. In Brazil's neighbourhood, he has formed solid partnerships with Chile and Colombia, also governed by conservatives.

The new government rejects multilateralism, the United Nations and global pacts. One of the first acts of the new government was to withdraw Brazil from the recently signed global pact on migration. Therefore, the new Brazilian diplomacy consists of few friends and limited goals, with no global ambitions. One of these goals is solving the crisis in Venezuela, and that, incidentally, is another factor to weaken the links with the BRICS. President Bolsonaro has made it clear that toppling the government of President Nicolas Maduro is a priority, and for that he counts on political and military support from the United States. On the other hand, Venezuela is supported by Russia, China, South Africa and India (although not a staunch supporter) which all are BRICS members. In this regard, the bloc and Brazil are pulling in different directions with respect to Venezuelan issue.



Moreover, the current relationship Brazil has with China exemplifies this abrupt change. In the last decade, the Chinese have become the most important trade partners of Brazil and have been treated accordingly by all previous Brazilian presidents. President Bolsonaro, however, has followed Trump in his criticism of Chinese imperialism. Keeping with this paradox, it is probable that Brazil may abandon BRICS in the long run – either symbolically or officially – on the grounds of a renewed relationship with the West.

To further undermine Trade unions, Bolsonaro’s administration closed the country’s 88-year-old Ministry of Labour thus weakening the institutions responsible for labour regulations including the Labour Court. The administration also lowered the minimum wage (despite inflation). In fact, labour rights, acquired through the struggles of organised Brazilian workers, are one of the main targets of Bolsonaro’s government.

The registration of unions now falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice, overseen by Minister Sérgio Moro, the former judge who jailed former president Lula as an attempt to block him from running against Bolsonaro. This restructuring can be viewed as a move to strip the registration of unions and weaken labour organizing in the country, and thus ‘break the legs’ of the enemy of the government.

The Case of India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Hindu supremacist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were brought to power in 2014 and re-elected in May 2019 in the India general election. Modi’s party has hardly any history of leading a worker’s movement or a peasant struggle. It is for this reason he identifies, embraces and advocates for the leftist ideals.

Labour law reform is a major part of Narendra Modi’s economic reform agenda. This aims at making India the destination of choice for global manufacturing investment by continuing with previous government’s generous subsidies for large corporations and promises to cut government red tape. Industrial conflict and union rights stand in the way of this dramatically ambitious agenda to challenge China’s (India’s South-South strategic partner) domination of global manufacturing.

The most serious threats against trade unions and workers came through amendments to India’s labour laws, many of which the unions rely on for basic protection for their workers, especially limits to how employers lay off their workers. These are all reforms that the capitalists in India have been clamouring for, citing them as the primary reasons that they are unwilling to invest in large enterprises in India. Therefore the right wing government and its capitalist class have used this and other glitches in the economy to argue for their standard solutions—the suite of neoliberal policies: restructuring the working class, especially reducing legal protections on unions and workers; more deregulation and informalisation of production; a further reduction in the regulatory regime and the scope of its laws; an end to what little social welfare continues to exist; an expansion of state-sponsored infrastructure development, but a continuation of the privatization of state-owned industries; and a greater reliance on the state to force through development against those sections of the population that might otherwise resist displacement.

It is in this backdrop that Modi-led BJP government has integrated India, ever more fully, into US imperialism and encouraged it in its reckless drive to offset the erosion of its economic dominance. At the same time, Modi’s right-wing government is seeking to leverage the support and strategic favours accorded by Washington to pursue its own predatory aim. Keeping with the ideas behind the formation of BRICS and particularly the element of balance of power, India is, in other words, colluding with Trump’s administration to counter against BRICS and mainly China.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- The rise of the right-wing government in Brazil and India and what effect this might have on BRICS
- Strained relationship between governments in question and trade unions/workers as result of regressive changes in labour policies
- Development of a working-class counteroffensive strategy to unify workers against capitalism



12. African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

Trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) started from 1st January 2021 onwards in the context of the evolving African and global policy landscape, including the development challenges – highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the responses to it. While the AfCFTA spirit of integration is creditable, the initiative has not started without challenges.

Even at its foundations, the AfCFTA still faces a number of ideological, political and economic hurdles, which are likely to derail the ambition of the Africa Vision 2063. These range from the commitment of African Union Member States to the AfCFTA, to unresolved trade tensions between the regional economic blocs and diplomatic difficulties. It is also worth to note that there are a number of interconnected issues to the AfCFTA, which require focus. Such issues range from understanding the political economy of financing the AfCFTA; implementation of AfCFTA in the context of agendas like the Post Cotonou, Economic Partnership

Agreements, Compact with Africa. Trading under the AfCFTA will also have implications on various critical topical subjects like agriculture, climate, migration and labour. Whether this is a result of variable geometry or putting national interests first, an AfCFTA that has commenced with «cherry-picking» by Member States reveals various underlying challenges. These conversations aim to offer some insights and thoughts towards the areas yet to be negotiated under the AfCFTA that could contribute to addressing Africa's maldevelopment as well as issues with implementing the protocols already concluded.

13. International School to the Central Committee

In the week of the 21st – 25th June 2021, COSATU will convene a very crucial three-day International School in preparation for the Central Committee. The School is part of the work the federation is undertaking to reposition itself as the primary centre of workers struggle in our country and a trusted ally of our friends internationally.

This Session will also afford us the opportunity to reflect, take stock of, and what is happening, what has happened and what might happen in the global geo-politics – and how this affects the working class. We must reposition the federation in a changing country and changing world, but first understand what is changing, and how to navigate workers around this change. Participants of the School will include COSATU affiliates, alliance and international guests and specially selected speakers who are knowledgeable in the different international areas to be discussed. Further information regarding the School will be provided in due course.

14. South Africa's AU Chairmanship: Silencing the guns

President Cyril Ramaphosa took over as AU Chair in February 2020 and was welcomed to the position at the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The year that followed tested the African continent on several fronts as the pandemic highlighted gaps in Africa's health care systems and lack of economic and social development. In 2020, Africa was also burdened by conflicts that arose in the eastern and western parts of the continent, including civil disputes that the United Nations' deemed a "full scale humanitarian crisis" in Ethiopia's Tigray region, and Nigeria's #EndSARS protests which garnered international attention.

At the beginning of 2020, Ramaphosa's priorities as Chair of the African Union included furthering peace and security on the continent, promoting women's economic empowerment, and deepening intra-state economic integration. As the pandemic persisted throughout the year, these priorities naturally had to shift to include Africa's pandemic strategy and continental relief from the pandemic's impacts.

Here are some key things that South Africa managed to achieve in its one-year term as chair of the AU:

Securing 1 billion COVID-19 vaccines

In the latter half of 2020, Ramaphosa established the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT), a group of 10 individuals from across the continent whose main goal is to secure enough COVID-19 vaccines to achieve continental herd immunity by 2022. The establishment of the AVATT came in response to the vaccine nationalism taking place around the world, where wealthier countries have bought more than enough vaccines to inoculate their total populations, without consideration for middle- and low-income countries who cannot afford to acquire enough vaccines for their citizens. To date, the African Union has secured over 1 billion doses of the vaccine through the AVATT's efforts, which will be distributed among the member states of the AU.

COVID-19 debt relief and financial assistance

As AU member states acknowledged the serious impact that the pandemic would have on the continent, under Ramaphosa's leadership, several prominent Africans were appointed as special negotiators who communicated with international financial contributors and institutions to discuss financial support and debt relief on Africa's behalf. This achieved debt relief for many middle- and low-income countries — such as Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Kenya — and secured financial assistance for Africa's pandemic response and future economic recovery.

Building on Africa's economy

In 2020 the AU was finally able to launch the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTFA), which had been in development for over two years.

This launch worked in line with Ramaphosa's economic integration priority. According to the World Bank, the establishment of the AfCTFA will create the largest free trade area in the world connecting 1.3 billion people. The success of AfCTFA could potentially lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty.

Promoting peace in Africa's east

The continent saw several civil conflicts arise in 2020 and part of the AU's purpose is to unite nations and help bring an end to conflict. In his first weekly newsletter for February, on Feb. 1, Ramaphosa confirmed that the AU has been actively involved in negotiations around the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in order to achieve a ceasefire in Libya and promote peace in South Sudan.

The Democratic Republic of Congo's President Félix Tshisekedi, who will succeed Ramaphosa as AU Chair this week, will continue these efforts to achieve peace, and is also expected to address the long-standing unrest in the Great Lakes region. The African Union also established the African Medical Supplies Platform as well as a continental COVID-19 response fund to help ensure that all African countries could respond immediately to the pandemic without having to wait for international assistance.

Decade of Women's Economic Financial Inclusion

Ramaphosa championed a 10-year continental declaration aimed at gender equality and women's empowerment that was introduced in February 2020. This declaration, called the Decade of Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion, sees African leaders commit to taking action for gender inclusion towards sustainable development at national, regional, and continental levels.

In his acceptance speech on the on the 9th of February 2020, President Ramaphosa reaffirmed the principle of finding African solutions to African problems as the fundamental approach to addressing all conflicts on the continent, working within the frameworks of the AU and UN.



He further called on the AU to continue to support the just struggles of oppressed people elsewhere in the world; reiterating unwavering support for the people of Palestine in the legitimate quest for an independent and sovereign state and the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination.

In calling for support in the realisation of these priorities, President Ramaphosa said *“the African continent is on the ascent. It is indeed a regeneration moral and eternal, as described by the South African revolutionary Pixley ka Isaka Seme. If we pursue our objectives with diligence and determination, and mobilize our fellow African countries to support them, I am certain that ours can be a meaningful, effective and impactful Union Let us build the Africa we want. Let the Guns be Silenced. Let our swords be beaten to ploughshares, and our spears turned into pruning hooks. It is the actions we take from this day onwards that will determine our continent’s destiny”*.

COSATU under the banner of the ITUC-Africa Team of ATUDCN, attended the Seventh Virtual Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-7) on the 1st – 4th March 2021, hosted in Brazzaville by the Government of the Republic of Congo. COSATU was represented by Deputy International Secretary Cde Zanele Mathebula.

The Regional Forum is an intergovernmental platform convened annually by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations system to review progress, share experiences and lessons learned and build a consensus on policy options and actions in the form of key messages to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063. Accordingly, the Forum serves as an important mechanism to ensure integrated monitoring and evaluation of the impact by supporting countries in unlocking bottlenecks in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 as stipulated in the AU–UN Development Framework on the implementation of the two agendas.

ARFSD-7 also prepared African countries to articulate Africa’s priorities at the 2021 High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) to be held in New York from the 6th -15th July 2021. In this regard, the key messages adopted by the Regional Forum will also serve as Africa’s collective input to the 2021 HLPF.

15. COSATU Labour Migration Policy Position Paper

Labour migration in Africa is largely intra-regional and mainly characterized by the migration of low-skilled workers. 7.9% of workers in Africa are migrant workers. Of great importance in the region is the consolidation of significant Southern African migration corridors to neighbouring labour markets in the search for a job and better wages. Indeed, today, there are few African countries not participating in migration flows, whether as countries of origin, transit or destination. Demand in economic sectors such as agriculture, fishing, mining and construction as well as services such as domestic work, health care, cleaning, restaurants and hotels, and retail trade are significant drivers within the continent. African migrants, asylum seekers and forcibly displaced persons often use the same migration routes. Growing inter-regional corridors and the significant increase in the movement of persons is noteworthy

The International Labour Organization (ILO)’s strategy on labour migration in the African region is guided by its International Labour Standards (ILS) and Decent Work Agenda, and implemented in close collaboration with the World of Work actors (Ministries of Labour and workers’ and employers’ organisations from the 54 African countries). ILO’s rights-based approach takes into consideration labour market needs and covers all migrant workers irrespective of nationality, skill level and immigration status.

In Southern Africa, South Africa is the magnet for millions of migrants but countries like Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, DRC also host many. Migrants already face a slew of challenges, including accessing healthcare, even in normal circumstances due to lack of health insurance, cost, administrative hurdles, lack of access to facilities, and language barriers. Additionally, some migrants are frontline workers who keep people healthy, safe, and fed. Social protection for these workers, if received at all, is typically limited to some work injury compensation or health benefits, and almost never includes unemployment assistance.

The Covid-19 pandemic has once more highlighted the vulnerabilities of migrant workers to informal contracts, exploitative employers, unsafe work conditions, and restricted access to basic services. It is important that COSATU continues to campaign for the basic rights of migrants, to ensure that no one is left behind. It has been the South African government's long-standing objective to reduce migration, and the pandemic has provided a cynical opportunity to do so. There is a danger that post Covid-19, most migrant workers from the region will find themselves jobless if countries insist on inward-looking policies to try and placate local populations with populist, nationalist solutions.

COSATU must take the union position that is anchored on the conceptual analysis that acknowledges that the unequal global production system breeds an underdeveloped labour market orientation whose manifestations among others resonant into labour migration.

It is on this basis that the Collective Bargaining Conference which took place on the 11th – 13th November 2020, took a resolution that the federation should:

- Do an extensive study that will lead to a consolidated programme to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers in all sectors including the informal sector. Including assisting them to get permits and legal documents to comply with the law.
- Develop a programme to defend migrant workers and organize them into unions here and in their home countries, with due consideration to the evolving character of the total workforce and migrant worker perspective.
- Campaign for a policy or legislation at SADC.

COSATU has since vigorously engaged in processes which advocate for the integration of labour migration in the current development frameworks in the SADC region, and recommend the best possible ways of engagement on labour migration and rights of migrant workers' development initiatives that could be implemented at sub-regional level. In further implementing these resolutions, a *COSATU Labour Migration Position Paper* is being developed, in collaboration with labour migration experts from the Chris Hani Institute (CHI), funded by the ILO through their Southern Africa Migration Management Project (SAMM). The Policy Position Paper will take into consideration the following key areas:

- labour rights of migrant workers.
- labour migration and social protection portability
- labour migration information support systems.
- labour migration/the brain drain.
- role of remittances in development.
- feminization of labour migration and gender.
- informal cross-border trade and labour; and
- labour migration and xenophobia (SATUCC, 2020)

A coherent comprehensive policy around labour migration is therefore imperative to allow unions to speak with one voice. CHI will carry out a multistage research process aimed at the development of such a policy that reflects the experiences and best practices of affiliates most affected by labour migration as well as the progressive, inclusive ideals of the Federation.

The initial phase will comprise secondary data analysis of labour migration, primarily government and trade unions labour migration policy. The focus will specifically be on the Department of Employment and Labour's Draft Labour Migration Policy, the Department of Home Affairs White Paper on International Migration for South Africa and COSATU and its affiliates existing documents on labour migration. The researchers will also review recent ILO publications related to labour migration in South and Southern Africa, particularly the work ongoing under its SAMM (Southern African Migration Management) Programme.



The second phase will involve primary data gathering with affiliates and key stakeholders; this will necessitate consultations in the form of focus groups with all affiliates, followed by interviews with affiliates that are most heavily impacted by labour migration (including SATAWU, SACCAWU, SADSAWU, NUM and AFADWU). It is also proposed to interview representatives of other organisations that deal with migrant workers, both labour service organisations and non-profits (including MAWUSA, Community Worker Advice Office, the CCMA, the SAHRC, Wiego and Street.net as well as the SACP).

This phase will form the bulk of the work undertaken by CHI, and it is proposed that focus groups be held with a mix of affiliates in order to allow for discussions and sharing of experiences and best practices as a way to ensure that all parties gain something from the engagement: the researchers are able to gather valuable data and the participants are able to benefit through a sharing of knowledge and experiences. As it is important to speak to both international officers as well as organisers, so the proposal is to have multiple focus groups, with follow-up interviews with the affiliates and other organisations as specified above. It is envisioned that there will be four (4) focus groups: One with international officers of public sector affiliates; one with international officers of private sector affiliates; One with organisers of public sector affiliates; and one with organisers of private sector affiliates. This will be followed by the key informant interviews which will target the International officers, education officers and organisers of SATAWU, SACCAWU, SADSAWU, NUM and AFADWU, as well as representatives of other organisations that work with labour migrants. Engagements in the form of key informant interviews with representatives of the labour movement in key sending countries in the region and on the Continent will also be pursued. This will be facilitated through SATUCC structures. It is important to note that COSATU will lead the process of arranging the engagements with the affiliates in order to ensure participation and consultation.

This will then feed in to the third and final phase which is the development and articulation of a COSATU position on labour migration which will guide both the Federation and its affiliates in dealing with issues involving migrant workers in South Africa. It is important to note that the following the submission of the Draft Policy Position Paper in September for the Central Committee Meeting.

16. MIS Programme

The year 2021 is the last year of the current 5-year partnership program between the CGSLB and COSATU – through the Belgium Development Cooperation, on the objective of Decent Work through social dialogue for vulnerable workers. We are proud of our long-standing solidarity partnership with the CGSLB since 2012 and have achieved a number of good results and learning opportunities from each other. The MIS Programme has enabled us to carry out some of our very core functions as a worker's movement working closely with the COSATU Organising, Gender and International units.

However, since the beginning of our current program, which started in 2017, a number of elements have changed in the Belgium Development policy. The most important is that since 2019, South-Africa is sadly no longer one of the 14 priority countries for Belgium. And from 2022, South-Africa will also no longer be on the list of 30 countries where Belgium non-state actors can apply for development cooperation funding. This will sadly have an impact on the development of a new 5-year program for the period 2022-2026.

To foresee an overbridging strategy the Belgium Government allows the non-state actors (like MIS) to have an exit program based on the two Belgium development cooperation transversal themes, namely gender and environment-climate.

On this basis, COSATU has agreed to continue working with MIS/CGSLB on a new exit 5-year program (2022 – 2026) based on these two areas. Unlike the current program, this new program proposal will unfortunately not be able to cover any fix cost like salaries or investments. The possible future funding can only be used for training/workshops (capacity building), lobby actions, campaigns or exchange of good practices.



17. International Workers Day Celebrations

COSATU joined several progressive trade union federations from all over the world to observe the international workers day on May 1, 2020 through a Mayday International Solidarity Concert under the theme "The Crisis Should not be Paid for by Workers". Represented in this programme were progressive unions from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Uruguay, Spain, France, Italy, Russia, Portugal, South Korea, Filipino and others. The virtual Mayday concert was the project of LabourStart, the trade union movement and GUFs.

Each Federation sent a 3min video message and a struggle song that represents workers the country to be featured in the concert. The General Secretary Cde Bheki Ntshalintshali sent the video and South Africa (COSATU) shared the song "Yibambeni" by Chicco Twala featuring Nokwezi Dlamini. The Concert was shared on different social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, twitter, and websites of participating organisations.

The Concert collaboration was a success accessible on <https://www.labourstart.org/mayday/>

18. International Solidarity Campaigns

Swaziland

The developments in Swaziland over the period under review 2018 and 2021 has brought the world's attention to the growing unrest of the people in pursuit of multiparty democracy, comprehensive social security and the rule through the will of the people.

The majority of the Eswatini's employment is provided by its agricultural and manufacturing sectors. With the increasing climate and environmental changes the agricultural sector suffered a massive blow as the two cyclones hit Mozambique and affected Swaziland as well noting that majority of unemployed depend on farming for food and many employed in the Agri sector suddenly found themselves vulnerable, while the royal family and its elite friends flaunted their wealth on the faces of suffering Swazis.

Among issues concerning citizens is the brutality of police, the issue of funding of education, the socio-economic issues like poverty, unemployment, health care and public workers remittances deficits where the government deduct and tax monies due to workers. Noting that Swaziland fiscal revenues largely depend on Southern African Customs Union (SACU) revenues, which are formed by developments in South Africa. As South Africa experienced the downward spiral with economic crisis so did Swaziland however the Monarchy continued to deep its hands on moneys meant to improve the lives of ordinary Swazis with this persistent behaviour of the king, poverty and hunger deepened in Swaziland.

For a long time, the heavy handedness of the monarchy against the people of Swaziland has pushed the people to a corner forcing them to rebel and retaliate for their own better good. Over the past 3years they monarchy deepened the police state where contrary view was equalled to a terrorist act and many who opposed the status quo found themselves harassed, arrested without trial, tortured and some disappeared without a trace.

With COVID 19 in 2020 as the situation in South Africa worsened so did the situation in Swaziland however the situation in Swaziland was worse than that in South Africa. Tied to the crisis of the pandemic was the crisis of self-serving monarchy and the crisis of poverty hunger and unemployment.

Following a long illness comrade Mario Masuku succumbed to his illness and is passing marked a new era in Swaziland political landscape with PUDEMO taking a resolve to bring cde Mario's wish to fruition.

In May 2021 the student movement at UNESWA organised a protest action to confront injustice and police brutality, calling for Justice for Thabani Nkomonye who is believed died by the hands of the police. The students together with SWAYOCO went on the streets to demand justice for one of their own and the monarchy instructed police to deal with the protesters many students were shot at one losing an eye and many hospitalised for injuries.



The reaction of the police did not deter the students who continued every day to call for justice for Nkomonye this call resonated with many citizens in Swaziland and the mass democratic movement mobilised behind the students to stand against the injustices. In June PUDEMO and other political and civil society mobilises a day of action which for the first time was supported throughout Swaziland by both young and old including some who are distinguished public servants. They have sustained this protest action to date with a number of activists killed and others arrested including the President of PUDEMO Mlungisi Makhanya. The SG of PUDEMO had to skip the country following threats and harassment by the police.

The response of Embassies like the U.S. leaves little to be desired and they suit up and protected their embassy. The most disappointing of all was the response of the SADC in the growing unrest which presented the SADC as a community of friends (a brotherhood) hell bound to protect each other. They turned a blind eye to the legitimate claims of injustice and human rights violations in Swaziland and disappointed the people of Swaziland. To date the MDM in Swaziland has no hope for real and impartial intervention for them and look up to the rest of ordinary people and organisations to speak up in their support.

In this regard, it is against this background that COSATU has engaged in a number of virtual meetings in sharing of information and mobilising solidarity for our comrades in Swaziland. A meeting held with the ANC and a number of civil society groupings yielded positive commitments from lawyers for human rights, doctors without borders and all Alliance partners to get involved in supporting the civilians and activists in Swaziland. The Doctors without Borders and the Lawyers for Human Rights committed to attend to the issue of Amos Mbentsi in order to assist him with both medical and legal aid.

COSATU engagements with TUCOSWA led to the understanding that strategically the labour movement will support the uprising behind the scenes however reported that they would call a stay away in support of the civil unrest behind PUDEMOs call. They also called for the boycott of the Sugar from Swaziland majority owned by the monarch. They also call for mobilisation for border blockades not to allow deliveries into and outside Swaziland. COSATU continues to engage its counterparts in the Human and Trade Union Rights within the ITUC and other solidarity organisations to mobilise and help keep the momentum going for the comrades inside Swaziland. Concerning throughout the current situation in Swaziland is the issue of unity among the MDM which may require us to engage with all parties to understand the dynamics on the ground.

Further engagement will be done on other areas of support that may be required. PUDEMO has requested audience with COSATU leadership with hopes of updating COSATU on the current situation and also seek advice on way forward.

Zimbabwe

The situation of Zimbabwe remains dire in the period under review it seems the situation has become even worse than before. With part fatigue of the international community to support the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe the comrades in Zimbabwe find themselves in repression where harassment, human rights violations and unlawful arrests and torture are the order of the day.

In this period almost all the trade union leaders have been arrested, harassed and tortured by police, incarcerated without trial. The right to strike has been rescinded and basic human rights a luxury for majority of Zimbabweans.

In 2018 when President Munangagwa, there seemed to be real hope for change and the people of Zimbabwe held on to a promise of progress that never came. Instead Zimbabwe is ruled through fear. The brutality and corruption of the current government is on another level. The freedom of speech is a punishable offence. The state owns the media and operates the access to internet as a light switch, turning it on and off as they please.

Following the elections in Zimbabwe the newly elected government launched its austerity measures under the Transitional Stabilization Programme in October 2018 when it presented the 2019 national budget. The time frame of the programme was scheduled to run from October 2018 to December 2020. The purpose of the austerity measures was meant to implement cost cutting measures, and to reduce the public sector wage



bill. In addition to that, austerity reforms are aimed at increasing tax revenues by introducing the unpopular 2 % Intermediated Monetary Transfer tax, restructuring the civil service and the privatization of ailing state enterprises and parastatals.

These reforms were meant to bring about fiscal balances in the public sector, reduce government spending, increase tax revenues or to achieve both. The International Monetary Fund is keeping an eye on these reforms through a Staff Monitored Programme which covered a period from May 2019 to March 2020. These measures were very unpopular with the masses as they have proved to be anti-developmental, self-defeating, and have an adverse effect on the toiling working class. For the many public sector workers this meant a drastic change to their lives and living standards. The Masses mobilised against the unilateral change to conditions of employment many of whom were harassed together with their families by the state police and the military.

In October 2019 there was a clampdown on protest action "stay away" organised by the trade union and civil society in demand of improved socio economic situation and observing of human rights however many organisers were arrested and the day declared a public holiday by the government to cover up the unrest. Munangagwa administration found every trick in the book to dispel that there was unrest in Zimbabwe. Similar to SADC response to Swaziland, SADC treated the situation with kid gloves representing itself as a dog without teeth.

To date Zimbabwe is in the throes of its economic decay in a decade characterized by acute shortages of cash, medicine, fuel and rolling power cuts of up to 20 hours a day. Inflation skyrocketed to 481.5% in November 2019, in the process eroding salaries and decimating pensions. Zimbabwe is also grappling with price increases which are changing every day. In the interim, salaries have remained depressed, with consumer spending severely curtailed.

The United Nations experts reported that Zimbabwe is on the brink of starvation, a crisis that has been compounded by poverty, hyperinflation, natural disaster and economic sanctions.

Without stabilization in Zimbabwe, ordinary toiling masses will continue to die of starvation and forced to migrate to survive.

One of the key question that remains unresolved is the issue of whether there must be a campaign to stop the sanction against Zimbabwe or to keep them with fear of super corruption that has been at play of the years. Further to this there is a need for a sustainable approach to the calamity in Zimbabwe, unless Zimbabwean economic situation improves the pestering problem of poverty, hunger, xenophobia will never be addressed and sustainable livelihoods will not be achieved, not only in Zimbabwe but in SADC as whole.

There is a need for this Central Committee to discuss the role of SADC in promoting peace and security, upholding human rights and dignity as well as ensuring accountability of each state in the region.

Palestine

One of the wide-spread and talked about campaigns internationally is the struggle against the apartheid state of Israel for freedom of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The global Zionist movement today has tactically set in motion a robust strategy to counter and push back extensive advances made by all progressive forces including the BDS movement. The strategy is characterized by the following elements:

- Enacting new apartheid laws to further institutionalized Zionism and racial supremacy
- Massive deployment of financial, political and material resources to organize groups that are in favour of Israel and criminalize the cause of Palestinian people
- Waging of a legalistic and ideological warfare against activists, institutions and bullying certain countries to enact laws that criminalize activism against state of Israel



In addition to these strategies, the US under the administration of Trump has been central in enabling full application of these strategies. This was also evident in the pronouncement of recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and relocation of the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Subsequent to this, the administration proposed a flagrant bias peace plan which will ensure that 1) Israel keeps the vast majority of Jerusalem as its sovereign capital; 2) Palestinians get no right of return; 3) it redraws borders mainly between Israel and the West Bank; and 4) does not allow for Palestine to create a fighting force to defend itself.

These developments insinuate that all social forces and progressive organisations across the world should redefine and practice contemporary and effective forms of internationalism and solidarity that will help identify new inputs to shape global connections and campaigns against the Israel apartheid state.

Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) 2019-2021

COSATU has pledged to discharge its international solidarity duty and rally behind the struggle of Palestinians by lending its unmeasured support to BDS and its campaigns. Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) has been an effective tool to bolster support for the BDS campaigns and widely amplify the Palestinian struggles. COSATU in this regard undertook several activities to mark IAW which include pickets at the US consulate, virtual discussions and endorsing the IAW through press statements.

Affiliates committed to undertake the following:

- To release statements of support for IAW
- Release a communique to their structures (branches, regions, provinces and etc)
- To organize events/actions during and for IAW
- Use their social media accounts to follow the IAW South Africa accounts and promote the IAW campaign by sharing information

We are deeply impressed by the consistency, activeness and involvement of unions in real practical solidarity work of the IAW and the general support for the cause of the Palestinian people. However, we are concerned that some affiliates are not equally involved in the overall IAW campaigns and we, therefore, urge all affiliates to take an effective role in the IAW activities.

Split of Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Coalition and Africa 4 Palestine (A4P)

In the 11th National Congress, COSATU took a resolution to “Support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign as initiated by the Palestinian progressive movement. The BDS call is not simply a principle but rather a political movement and campaign strategy”. From 2013 COSATU has unwaveringly supported the BDS movement and its campaigns and participated actively in annual Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) activities organised by the BDS-SA. However, for the first time since the adoption of this resolution, the BDS SA did not lead in the South African IAW activities in 2020 as per usual.

In 2019, the BDS-SA took a decision to detach from the BDS National Committee (BNC), which is based in Ramallah, Palestine, and operate independently. This follows a series of disagreements built over the years, which led to this breaking point. Therefore, the BDS-SA felt that its political, ideological and other positions are not really aligned with BNC. For instance, BDS-SA felt that it did not have the autonomy to carry out or do not carry out certain campaigns, events and/or activities; to publicise or do not publicise certain statements, articles, images, organisations or policies; too much interference from BNC in its internal organisational processes; and dictate who BDS-SA can or should not be friends with.

BDS-SA was renamed to Africa for Palestine. They are the exact same organisation as before with the same office, structure, board of directors, staff and same members. The current board includes cdes Sheila Barsel, Bram Hanekom, Farid Esack, Kwara Kekana, Muhammed Desai, Khaya Xaba and Michia Moncho. The reasons for the rebrand included expanding into Africa.



The BDS office in Palestine on the other hand, appointed certain people to create an organisation called “SA BDS Coalition”. The coalition has an interim structure and is in a process of establishing itself. The CEC took a decision that COSATU should continue to work with the former BDS Coalition Cdes, under the rebranded Africa4Palestine, and remain open to working with other progressive pro-Palestine movements such as the new South Africa BDS Coalition.

Reactionary Remarks by the Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng on the question of Israeli and Palestinian conflict

On the 26th of June 2020 The Chief of Justice released a statement that reads as follows: The Jerusalem Post Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng expressed support for the state of Israel guided by his Christian beliefs and biblical texts. He stated his disappointment with the South African government’s position vis-à-vis Israel and its tacit support for the Palestinian side, calling for it to rather promote peace guided by its rich experience of reconciliation.

As South Africa, we now have a serious dilemma where our chief justice implicitly supports a modern-day colonial genocide with disregard for the human rights of the native Palestinians. In concrete terms what are the implications for our judiciary where the highest official of the land is guided by religion in his political opinions and actions? How could this possibly not influence crucial cases that land up in the Constitutional Court — many of which relate to the unfinished business of apartheid and colonialism such as the land question, housing, discrimination? What are we to expect on other issues relating to the right to life and abortion or the death sentence? More specifically, there are cases relating to Israel-Palestine in our lower courts such as the Palestine Solidarity Campaign vs the Labia Theatre destined for the equality court and the South African Human Rights Commission and the Jewish Board of Deputies vs COSATU and Bongani Masuku, which could end up in the Constitutional Court. COSATU is committed to undertaking committed actions to deal with such reactionaries within the country and ensure that the Palestinian rights can no longer be exceptions to the rule of International law.

Cuba

CTC – COSATU MOU

In 2019, COSATU participated in the CTC Congress with a delegation led by the President Zingiswa Losi. During the Congress the Memorandum of Understanding was signed and activated the cooperation between our two federations (see MOU addendum).

Owing to the outbreak of the pandemic a number of planned exchanges as per the MOU could not take place however solidarity work continued through the close working relationship with the embassy of Cuba.

COSATU has convened a number of webinars in 2020 and 2021 in support of Cuba as well as issuing of statements and pickets at the U.S embassy and consulate.

Over the past 3years there has been more awareness of the situation of Cuba both in South Africa and internationally. The observation though is that there is a growing movement that is organising against the close exchange programmes that South Africa enjoys with Cuba. This requires COSATU to look into this and devise a way to educate South Africans about the importance of Cuba in South Africa and the role Cuba has played in our struggle, over and above this we need to root out the stirrers of this growing concern about Cuba’s involvement in different sectors in South Africa.

Continued US imperialist aggression towards Cuba

The trade embargo imposed by the US has not strayed Cuba from its socialist ideals. The relations between Cuba and the US took a little shift from sanctions during the Obama administration towards engagement. The



renewal of ties between Cuba and the US promised a government-to-government relation that was facilitated by multiple dialogues and bilateral agreements.

The normalization has brought no change in the US aggression towards Cuba. Amidst the dialogues and bilateral agreements, Cuba has remained unshaken on socialism. On the other hand, the US, under the Trump administration backtracked on all the engagements and from the period 2019 to 2021 intensified sanctions on Cuba to put pressure on the Cuban government and weaken its ties with the Nicolas Maduro-led government in Venezuela.

In 2019, the US imposed sanctions on shipping companies that transported oil from Venezuela to Cuba to isolate and destabilize the economies of Cuba and Venezuela. The US also prohibited the traveling of Americans to Cuba for educational and cultural exchanges. Flights to Cuba from the US to Cuba were banned only allowing flights to Havana. The US imposed restrictions on travel are aimed at destabilizing the tourism sector of Cuba, which is the key contributor to Cuba's economy. Cuba, however, remained resolute and maintained solidarity with Venezuela. The Cuban Revolution is still in the correct course and presents a model for South and Africa. The Cuban socialist values extend beyond its boundaries towards improving the lives of the working class and poor people of Africa.

Despite all that has been done to cripple Cuba, Cuba remains a beacon of internationalism and solidarity. Cuba leads in medical technology and in 2020 was one of the first countries to announce a vaccine against Corona Virus. It led in the planning and fighting the pandemic and entered where others retreated this is what all humanity should aspire for.

The end to the US blockade has never been more urgent and the calls for the nomination of the Cuban Medical Brigade for the Henry Reeves Nobel Peace Prize must be supported and strengthened.

Call for the nomination of the Cuban Medical Brigade for the Henry Reeves Nobel Peace Prize

Cuban internationalism continues to teach all of humanity "ubuntu". Despite not being supported to end the embargo Cuba still practiced its internationalism by going to help the countries and territories that stood against it.

Despite the difficulties Cuba is faced with, Cuba has shown a selfless character by deploying its doctors known as the Cuban Medical Brigade across the globe to fight the spread of Covid-19 in badly affected countries. Such an act of selflessness underpinned by socialism cannot go unnoticed and this act deserves a Henry Reeves Nobel Peace Prize.

Western Sahara

Over 40 years of occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco, the people of Western Sahara continue to suffer human rights violations under Moroccan rule. Morocco continues to claim sovereignty over Western Sahara. Currently this conflict continues to result in the injustices of the Saharawi people, forcing them to flee from their country and seek refuge elsewhere. Currently a great number of Saharawi people live as refugees in camps as they watch their homelands being exploited under the control of Morocco.

Over the past three years COSATU has participated in a number of activities which sought to give beyond solidarity through statements and visits but sought to coordinate humanitarian aid and building capacity of the leaders of Polisario. In an Exchange programme hosted by DIRCO in 2019, the leaders from the occupied territories and from the camps highlighted the need for humanitarian aid and also empowerment to allow them to prepare for the day they take back their homeland. Emerging from these discussions which was attended by the alliance partners, civil society and students was that South Africa through DIRCO and the Western Sahara Embassy would collect non-perishables, clothes, toiletries, books, pencils and pens and send them to the camps. They also pleaded for help in terms of Capacity building in terms of governance, politics, policy development.



While these calls were taken up and discussed by the alliance in the NEC Sub Committee, the campaign never took off the ground.

Further to this, Western Sahara remains the least supported struggle and the admission of Morocco back to the AU dealt them a blow as the support for their struggle is now suppressed from within the AU. There has not been much appetite to build on the work already done. In the past two years outside attending virtual commemorations and events hosted by the Saharawi comrades, not much has been done. COSATU has planned a solidarity event during its international school to update on current situation and consolidate strategies to mobilise against Morocco for the sovereignty of Saharawi people.

Venezuela

COSATU recognize, at least in a context of Venezuela, that today two economic models are in open dispute: on one side, the model of parasitic and destructive capitalism; and on the other, solidarity and social equality based economic model of socialism. The epicentre of the contention between these two models is now being waged between the United States and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, whose interests are diametrically opposed.

The U.S government under Donald Trump has waged an unconventional war against Venezuela whose purpose is to overthrow the government of the Constitutional President of the Republic, Nicolás Maduro, as an imperative step to exterminate Chavismo, end democracy and seize the wealth of Venezuela. In keeping with these plans, the US has implemented various set of unilateral coercive measures; threatened to invade the country militarily and with exceptional force; applied inhumane economic, financial and commercial blockade that aggravates the Venezuela's problems. This translates into substantial losses that prevent the acquisition of food, medicines, inputs for production, raw materials, among other items essential for the population of Venezuela.

The current character of capitalism is assuming an unprecedented voracity that affects the working class and humanity as a whole. Neoliberal capitalism has engulfed the world economic-financial system, pursuing a ceaseless search for profit through the conquest of new markets. It strengthens the dominance of finance capital and intensifies the plundering of nations and the exploitation of labour.

At present, US imperialism is capitalism's staunchest defender. Latin America is the main theatre of operations where it undertakes its offensive to maintain its global hegemony and impose its model. The restoration of neoliberalism on the continent means that Latin American and Caribbean states suffer the threats of unilateral use of force to the effective loss of their sovereignty. The region's natural environment is currently suffering the destructive ravages of neoliberalism. The working class, especially women and children, are increasingly being exploited.

In the face of this imperialist onslaught, COSATU stood together with the people and government of Venezuela. It has expressed its solidarity with the Venezuelan people through the following activities:

1. Picket outside U.S consulate

On February 2019 COSATU along with the SACP, the ANC, NEHAWU, and other civil rights groups staged a picket outside the U.S Consulate in Johannesburg and in Cape Town.

• Expected outcomes

The picket was intended to call for the U.S government to stop pushing for a "regime change" in Venezuela and to stop undermining the Venezuelan people's right to self-determination. It also intended to show solidarity with the Venezuelan people, and to call for the U.S government to end the imperialist behaviour against Venezuela, as well as to stop interfering in the internal affairs of Venezuela.



2. Solidarity assembly with Venezuela

On March 2019 the Tripartite Alliance which includes the ANC, the SACP and COSATU, gathered to show solidarity to Venezuela, along-side Venezuelan Foreign Minister.

- **Expected outcomes**

The solidarity assembly intended to show solidarity with Venezuela and to condemn U.S former president Donald Trump's sanctions against Venezuelan.

3. Statement on the attempted coup of 2020

On May 2020 COSATU released a statement, after the attempted coup on the Venezuelan government in order to show solidarity.

- **Expected outcomes**

To show solidarity with the Venezuelan government, and to denounce the inhumane and murderous stance taken by the U.S to force sanctions against Venezuela preventing the supply of basic necessities and much needed equipment to fight against the Covid 19 pandemic.

COSATU also:

- Demands respect for the sovereignty of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and we ratify the support for the Bolivarian Revolution, and we salute the efforts of Constitutional President, Nicolás Maduro, to maintain peace in the South American nation.
- Salutes the Bolivarian Revolution for the implementation of a political-social model that not only protects the working-class confronting imperialists aggressions, but also makes it participant of the decision-making process.
- Condemns the imperialist policies and their neoliberal project in the most energetic way because they undermine the sovereignty of nations in terms of the plundering of their wealth and the exploitation of workers.
- Rejects the militarization of Our America and especially the presence of US and NATO military bases in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Repudiates the use of force and the implementation of unilateral coercive measures used to subdue our peoples and the working classes.
- Stands together with the peoples and governments of the world in struggle against imperialist policies and in defence of their sovereignty. We specially express our solidarity with the Venezuelan people in their struggle for self-determination.

Black Lives Matter and Anti-Racism Campaigns

On May 25, George Floyd a 46-year-old black man was killed in Minneapolis when a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes. The death of Floyd sparked months of global Black Lives Matter protests and a worldwide racial justice movement that has continued since then. What links people all over the world today is rage and anger against the system that has caused serious precarity, poverty and disturbed livelihoods of people of colour in the world. The murder of George Floyd spun the world into action and was observed by the Alliance (ANC, SACP and COSATU) as a campaign to be adopted in support of the anti-racism struggle in the U.S, here in South Africa, as well as anywhere else in the world it happens.

COSATU participated in two webinars organised for the campaign. The first was an ANC hosted webinar that was addressed by activists Keith Jennings, John Taylor, Martin Luther King III, Ms LaTosha Brown, and Antoinette Keith. This panel represented different levels of activism from community, church, unions, women, and students.



The second Webinar was hosted by COSATU addressed by the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU). The Durban +20 meeting which took place in December 2020 presented an opportunity for a joined programme to raise our voices on the issue.

Following the interaction of the Special IRC held on the 30th of June 2020, it was resolved that a follow up session should be held, and a joint programme developed in solidarity with CBTU that will focus on this campaign. The call from CBTU is for the South African voice to be increased in support of the campaign. CBTU has moved past the demand for equality to the struggle for equity. They called for solidarity through open letters, pickets at the U.S. Embassy, guidance, and sending messages of solidarity and encouragement. COSATU will continue to contribute and participate in the Alliance activities on the campaign.

In addition to this, COSATU has condemned the heavy-handedness and racial profiling by law enforcement when responding to protests by unarmed poor people. The federation has also called for an end to this act of undervaluing the lives of poor black people. We have also called for justice for the slain poor black people protesting for a better life.

More recently in May 2021, COSATU Deputy International Secretary participated as a panel discussant at the TUC Black Workers Conference. The focus for this discussion was how the trade union movement can build an international Black workers' movement against racism that protects Black communities from state violence and economic exploitation. The TUC uses the term Black worker to describe workers who are viewed as culturally and intellectually inferior because they are perceived as non-white and often share a common history and experience of oppression and exploitation through colonialism, imperialism, and contemporary capitalism.

SATUCC – success of SATUCC since 2018

During the period under review SATUCC has been visible in the region and the continent under the leadership of President Losi and the newly appointed Executive Secretary Mavis Koogotsitse.

There are serious issues around the collection of subscriptions as affiliates are not paying the affiliation fees which hinders operations within SATUCC. SATUCC has played a great coordinating role during the breakout of the Pandemic in collecting data and communicating it with relevant structures and contributing to trade union responses during the pandemic. SATUCC has been vocal in holding governments and business accountable in regional meetings in terms of implementation of decisions particularly those benefiting the workers in the region.

SATUCC has strengthened its relations with ILO and is working with its affiliates to champion ratification of conventions and promoting human and trade union rights. In this regard, SATUCC launched formerly the Human and Trade Union Rights Network in the SADC region. Further SATUCC is engaged with the development of the SADC Regional Migration Policy with ILO and the SADC ELS.

SATUCC has played a role in the interventions during the unrest in Zimbabwe in 2019 where a delegation for ITUC Africa and SATUCC went on a fact finding mission where the delegation was harassed and retained for no reason however they managed to collect the information they needed to support the trade union in Zimbabwe.

During the current unrest in Swaziland SATUCC has not only released a statement but convened a webinar in solidarity with Swaziland a first for SATUCC.

The Presidency of COSATU has somehow impressed clearly upon the trade union in the region to begin to stand strong and speak out on injustices. There is a difference in how SATUCC response to, approaches regional struggles and campaigns comparatively.



COSATU CENTRAL COMMITTEE 20 – 23rd September, 2021

Programme

DAY ONE – 20th SEPTEMBER 2021		
Chairperson – 1 st Deputy President, Mike Shingange		
Registration	ALL	08h30 – 9h30
• Opening and Welcome	1 st Deputy President	09h30 – 9h40
• National Anthem (e-rendition)	ALL	09h40 – 9h50
• Moment of Silence (to honour those who have departed)	ALL	09h50 – 9h55
• Presentation and Adoption of Credentials	Deputy General Secretary, Solly Phetoe	09h55 – 10h15
• Adoption of the Agenda	General Secretary, Bheki Ntshalintshali	10h15 – 10h30
• Presentation and Adoption of the Central Committee House Rules	Deputy General Secretary, Solly Phetoe	10h30 – 10h45
• Acknowledgement of Guests	General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali	10h45 – 11h00
• Confirmation of the Minutes of the 6 th Central Committee (2017)	General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali	11h00 – 11h30
• Opening Address by COSATU President	President, Zingiswa Losi	11h30 – 12h15
• Message of Support by the ANC	ANC President, Cyril Ramaphosa	12h15 – 12h45
LUNCH	LUNCH	12h45 – 13h45
• Presentation of Secretariat Report (Political, organisational, Socio- economic and International)	General Secretary, Bheki Ntshalintshali	13h45 – 17h00
DAY TWO – 21st SEPTEMBER 2021		
Chairperson – President, Zingiswa Losi		
• Message of Support by the SACP	General Secretary Dr Blade Nzimande	09h00 -9h30
• Presentation of the Discussion Documents and outline the process of Commissions	General Secretary, Bheki Ntshalintshali	09h30 – 10h30
• Break into Commissions	ALL	10h30 – 17h00
• Resolutions Consolidation & Drafting Begins	Resolutions & Drafting Committee with Scribes and Rapporteurs	17h00 – 20h00
DAY THREE – 22nd SEPTEMBER 2021		
Chairperson – 2 nd Deputy President, Louise Thipe		
• Report back from Commissions and Resolutions Discussions	Chairperson	09h00 – 11h30
• International messages of Solidarity	Fraternal organisations	11h00 – 12h00
LUNCH	LUNCH	12h00 – 13h00
• Report-backs from Commissions and Resolutions Discussions (Continue)	Chairperson	13h00 – 17h00
• International messages of Solidarity	Fraternal organisations	30 mins
• Resolutions & Drafting Committee Continue	Resolutions & Drafting Committee Convenor Solly Phetoe	17h00 – 20h00
Day FOUR – 23rd SEPTEMBER 2021		
Chairperson – 1 st Deputy President, Mike Shingange		
• Presentation of Draft Declaration for consideration	Chairperson	09h00 – 10h00
• Discussions and Adoption of Declaration	Chairperson	10h00 – 11h00
• Closing Remarks by COSATU President	President, Zingiswa Losi	13h00 – 13h30

Head Office

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