



5 October 2014

8th National Congress of the South African Democratic Teachers Union

Declaration

held 2-5 October 2014, Birchwood Hotel, Boksburg, Gauteng Province

Preamble

The SADTU 8th National Congress which brings together the National Office Bearers, Provincial Office Bearers, Regional Chairpersons and Secretaries, 1 branch delegate for every 350 paid up members convened from the 2nd to the 5th of October 2014, Boksburg, Ekurhuleni, Gauteng representing more than 260 000 educators and education workers.

We, the delegates to this Congress convened under the theme "Restore the Character of SADTU as a Union of Revolutionary Professionals, Agents of Change and Champions of People's Education for People's Power in pursuit of Socialism" acknowledge the role that we have to play in pursuance of a more radical second

phase of the transition. We hold the view that this phase is necessary as we continuously seek to advance the NDR.

The Congress met after four years bigger and stronger with the greater semblance of unity. The union has grown by almost 15 000 members since 2009. This is clear sign of vote of confidence in the union as a beacon of hope to teachers and education workers. The union remains the only available tool to champion the course of education workers in the country.

We remain inspired by some of our fallen stalwarts in the mould of Nelson Mandela, Matthew Goniwe, OR Tambo and Joe Slovo who, in their own individual way, symbolised the people's quest for justice, equality and access to quality public education for all. These stalwarts of the movement led the way, fought hard battles and showed us what it means to be selfless and dedicated to a course.

We declare that socialism is the future as it guarantees sustainable development and deconstruct the exploitation of one man by another and will end poverty and misery in the world.

The Congress concedes that the National Democratic Revolution remains the shortest route to socialism and should be pursued with vigor. The Congress re-affirms the Alliance as the only reliable structure that has the potential to advance the NDR and to mobilise the entire society towards attaining the National Democratic Society.

The Congress further re-affirms the unity of SADTU, COSATU, ANC and SACP as sacrosanct.

The Congress declares that Trade Unions are not political parties and have no potential of being vanguards of the working class.

The Congress re-affirms the SACP as the only vanguard party in the country with a reliable history of struggle.

The Congress calls on the strengthening of the ANC-led alliance in pursuance of the second radical transition.

The Congress further re-affirms that the united COSATU is the only capable instrument of fighting for the socio-economic rights of all workers in the country and thus call on the re-doubling of efforts to cement the unity of COSATU.

The Congress further re-affirms the founding principle of one sector, one union, one country, one federation and condemns intentions of some unions to broaden their

scopes and thus offend this long held principle of the federation with the possibility of weakening and destroying other unions.

The Congress condemns the super-union mentality.

SADTU demands maximum discipline by all members and leaders at all levels in order to drive the second radical phase of economic transformation and engage in battles against neo-liberal onslaught.

We are all members of SADTU and NOT members of other members and we are bound by the constitution of the union. Nobody is above the constitution of the union.

Our union subscribes to the principle of democratic centralism and re-affirms the NEC in terms of the constitution as the only structure vested with the powers to manage the affairs of the union.

Decisions of the NEC taken after all views were considered are final and binding to all members, leaders and structures of the union.

The Congress condemns the new tendency by some members, leaders and structures abusing courts to resolve the internal differences.

The union further condemns the recent populism, popstarism, demagoguery and love for the media with the wish of becoming celebrities at the expense of the union. The Congress resolved that any structure, leader or member that takes the union to court shall have dismissed and or disbanded themselves.

We therefore resolve that any member, leader or structure that ignores internal remedies and opt for the media as the platform to raise the union's internal affairs shall be deemed to have dismissed and or disbanded itself.

We call on all structures and leaders who have taken the union to court to withdraw such cases with immediate effect.

Congress notes that in recent times the organisation has been exposed to an unprecedented wave of "un-SADTU", counter-revolutionary elements hell bent to destroy us from within.

These elements are characterized by gross organisational ill-discipline and an emphatic disregard for our constitution. Some of them have gone to the extent of organising and attempting to recruit members from within our very own ranks. Some have resorted to subjecting the Union to endless legal processes in an attempt

to de-focus us. They have attempted to undermine our unity utilising all forms of underhand and un-comradely tactics.

These wedge drivers that Cde O.R. Tambo correctly warned us about have a sharp poisonous tongue and instead of allowing themselves to be subjected to the Union's Code of Conduct, resort to populist sloganeering and mobilising internal revolts.

Congress wants to make it clear that it rejects this new found zeal to destabilise our Union and that we will do what is necessary to defend the organisation with equal enthusiasm and will not shy away from this task.

We are determined to defend the constitution of the Union before which all members must be equal at all costs. This profound determination is informed by the recent attacks from within our ranks that we have been exposed to.

Congress notes and welcomes the 2014 general elections results. In any democracy a 62% margin is accepted as a popular mandate. We appreciate the confidence that the people of South Africa continue to show in the ANC led government. We commit ourselves to working very closely with the ANC and making tangible contribution to ensure another overwhelming victory in the 2016 local government elections.

At a broader level, delegates note the recent attacks on Chapter 9 institutions of democracy from those meant to lead them. We are an organisation that fought many other injustices in our past and including the present and we have a moral obligation to protect these institutions even if it is against those that lead them.

Delegates noted the emerging threat of business in trade unions and workerism with traces of ethnic chauvinism within our ever changing political landscape. We view this as a deliberate attempt to divide the working class and derail us from our historic mission as this stratum of society. The view of Congress is that the trade union movement has a specific and critical role to play in terms of advancing and defending the interests of the workers.

We also believe that in pursuing its mission, the trade union movement must have a holistic view of itself as part of a system that includes other strata in society and that it must work with these to achieve its goals. We are thus calling for a stronger Tripartite Alliance at all levels that must start with a united COSATU which we must all defend.

The Congress also deliberated on pertinent issues ranging from the political chemistry, socio-economic, international and Organisational.

The Congress further extensively deliberated on all the matters affecting teachers, learners, education personnel and the country at large, assessed the impact of the all the campaigns directed at defending collective bargaining, which is the essence of our existence. The Congress further took time to reflect on the escalating violence against our teachers and the teaching community in general.

The Congress's focus was on the evaluation of the curriculum transformation and the progress made in relation to Millennium Development Goals.

In view of the challenges that confront us both within and outside the organization and in line with our 2030 Vision which we are firmly re-affirming, we further resolved on the following:

PILLAR NUMBER 1

EFFECTIVE SERVICING OF UNION MEMBERS

On the Government Employees Housing Scheme (GEHS)

- We re-affirm and support the Consolidated Demands as tabled for 2015/16 Public Service Wage negotiations at the PSCBC. This includes the 15% salary increase across the board and for a single term.
- We re-affirm the resolution on GEHS, that each spouse be entitled to the allowance because each contributes separately.
- A portion of the interest of the GEPF must be used to advance the aim of home ownership.
- There be automatic qualification of educators to the housing scheme
- As part and parcel of building communities, we demand houses that are well located and affordable within areas easily accessible to all amenities.

On the clean-break principle of the GEPF rules

- That the 50% allocated in terms of the clean break principle to the spouse in divorce cases should not to be regarded as a loan.
- Engage the Board of Trustees through our representatives to change such provisions.
- That the GEPF uses its stake in the Woolworths to force this retailer to disinvest from the apartheid Zionist Israel and that our trustees must pass such a motion within the board of trustees.

On Government Employees Medical Aid Scheme (GEMS)

- GEMS must remain state controlled in all respects and facets.
- The employer contribution towards medical aid subsidy should be equal among all public service employees including those on private schemes.

- SADTU NEC must develop a campaign to influence the strategic direction of GEMS.
- COSATU must swell the ranks of the board of trustees of GEMS.
- We reaffirm previous resolutions on NHI.

On the Quality Management System (QMS)

- We reaffirm the NGC Resolution on the retention of democratic principles embedded in IQMS.
- We reaffirm the NGC resolution that the current document on QMS should be strengthened and any element of subjectivity to be removed so that the instrument can be more acceptable and credible.

On access to funds managed by the Public Investment Cooperation

- As SADTU we should encourage members to remain in the system and not to access their pension funds that will have detrimental effects at retirement age.
- The union should through COSATU, call for the amendment of the GEPF rules to ensure that while the pension fund is not tempered with the interest that is managed by PIC should be made available for members in time of need.
- Mobilize that excess funds from the GEPF in the PIC be used for infrastructure development and that SADTU must have representation in such projects to ensure that education is the beneficiary.
- We reaffirm the NGC Resolution that we embark on an aggressive financial education programme.

On the Post Provisioning Model (PPM)

- Determination of posts should consider the curriculum complexity in schools.
- The weighting of the subjects that are taught in rural areas and disadvantaged communities must be biased towards the poor.
- The model should be reviewed such that it also incorporates Grade R and ELSEN.
- Call for amendments to the regulations so that MTEF consultations resulting in the post establishments be done over a three year multi-term period in order to create stability in the schooling system.
- Redeployment of Educators declared additional should also be done on a three year cycle.
- Engage in a National Campaign for the implementation of the ANC's Mangaung Conference resolution on post provisioning.

On the concept of an ideal school

- Conduct a research on what constitutes an ideal school and what minimum resources are needed to have such a school performing optimally.

- SADTU warns against the development of standards in a two tiers of inequalities of the haves and the have-nots. (Can't have the same standards for the rich urban schools and the poor rural and township schools)

On Multi-Grade Teaching

- The Union rejects the concept of multi – grade teaching.
- That a revised post -provisioning model be developed to address small schools in order to progressively eradicate multi grade teaching.

On Early Childhood Development (ECD)

- Teachers in this sector must be highly qualified with the relevant competencies in health, social, psychological and educational issues. There must be maintenance of a balance between pedagogy and content knowledge for the teachers. A standardized qualification must be agreed upon in order to establish uniform standards.
- The working conditions are the most important aspects of quality education in the early childhood education and therefore demand the formalization of the employment conditions of the teachers where the government must prioritise this policy level. This must include the internationally accepted class size of not more than ten learners in the ECD class for the four year olds. To this end the Union will embark on campaign to impress upon government to expedite negotiations.

The Union would convene a conference to review the setwork prescribed for learners in the ECD up to Grade 12 in order to review this policy and set criteria that will be biased to African setwork books given the importance of educating a child holistically.

On Adult Education and Training (AET)

- The AET system should be resourced with both human and capital resources so as to enable it to achieve its primary mandate.
- We re-affirm our previous resolutions on AET and call for speedy resolution on the conditions of service for such educators.

On corporate social responsibility

- All Companies including the mines be caused to assist the state in providing adequate school infrastructure to the communities where they're located.

PILLAR NUMBER 2

CREATING A LEARNING NATION

On Inclusive Education

- We demand the full implementation and financing of White Paper 6.
- We call for the re-opening of well resourced special schools to cater for the needs of these learners.
- All schools and not only special schools should be provided with support staff e.g., therapist, psychologist to support teachers to deal with learners with barriers in the mainstream.

On the Incremental Introduction of African Languages

- African languages should be developed up to an extent of them becoming a medium of instruction, especially in the Foundation Phase.
- All schools should be provided with human resources with regards to teaching in that language.
- Colleges of Education must prioritize the training of more teachers on the teaching of indigenous languages.

On the teaching of History

- The teaching of South African history should be made compulsory in all schools.
- Our own African writers should be encouraged to write our history such that our own stories can be told.

On the Annual National Assessment

The Congress re-affirmed the NGC resolution as follows:

- That ANA should remain a systemic evaluation with clear time frames that would allow for prompt feedback to be given to schools before the results are publicized followed by meaningful intervention programmes.
- ANA should not be abused to label teachers and schools, thereby demoralising and de-professionalising them.
- That ANA should be reviewed as an annual assessment as of 2015, and be substituted by a 3 year cycle of assessment.
- In the review process we take a look at all the existing assessment tools with a view of establishing synergy amongst all of them.

PILLAR NUMBER 3

PROMOTING A DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTED NATION STATE

On the suspension of the COSATU General Secretary

- Re-affirm the 2013 NGC resolution on the matter.
- Fight for unity and cohesion in COSATU and its affiliates.
- Re-affirm the NGC resolution on the matter that due processes must be followed to the latter.
- The ANC intervention should be taken into account.

On Racism

- Reaffirm the NGC 2008 resolution on xenophobia and racism
- The Union should cause both the Basic and Higher Education Departments to develop a programme of action to combat racism in schools and institutions of higher education,
- Progressives/activists should be encouraged to make themselves available as SGB members in former Model C schools

On unity and cohesion of SADTU

- Fully supports the NEC decision to dismiss the former president and to ban his membership from union for ten years.
- All members must respect internal union processes and SADTU members must defend their union, its constitution and its leadership.

On the 2016 local government elections

- SADTU and COSATU should support the ANC during the upcoming Local Government elections in 2016.
- The Local Government employees should make comprehensive service delivery reports available ahead of the 2016 local government elections.
- ANC must go back to communities on challenges raised during the 2014 General Elections and constant engagements with communities should be maintained as a build up towards the full-blast election campaign.
- Comprehensive Campaign programmes be developed with the Alliance for the 2016 Local Government Elections and funding be prioritised for such.
- SADTU through COSATU should ensure that our municipalities are efficient in providing services to our different communities and Union structures must engage Councillors on service deliverables.
- SADTU in collaboration with the Progressive Youth Alliance (YCLSA, ANCYL, COSAS & SASCO) should organise political sessions as part of our campaign with young people particularly in our Sector.

On COSAS and SASCO

- We re-affirm our previous resolutions on revitalising COSAS and SASCO structures at schools, TVET's and HEI's.
- Re-affirm the resolutions "Building COSAS and Representatives Councils of Learners" NGC 2008; "Education Alliance" 7th National Congress 2010 and "Friends of the Youth League (FYL)" NGC 2012
- SADTU to develop a joint capacitate building programme with both COSAS and SASCO.

PILLAR NUMBER 4

EFFECTIVE WORKER UNITY

On international balance of forces:

- We pledge solidarity with the people and workers of the countries that are currently experiencing Western driven wars that disrupt normal life.
- All countries have a right to an un-interrupted sovereignty and self determination without any undue influence from Western nations.
- We fully support the participation of SA in the BRICS group of countries and the Development Bank that has been established.
- Condemn all forms of terrorism committed on the most vulnerable in society to drive home political points.

PILLAR NUMBER 5

BUILDING A DELIVERY BASED ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

In relation to building the delivery based organisational capacity, we are re-affirming the Union's 2013 vision in terms of organizational excellence as we believe that we owe it to the membership to ensure that we observe and abide by all the policies of the union and account for its resources at all times without failure.

Conclusion

As we mark World Teachers' Day we want to thank all the teachers for the commitment they have shown for the entire twelve years in learners' schooling life, preparing them for the final Grade 12 examination. We call on society and in particular the parents to support these learners during this time and afford them time and space required to prepare adequately.

Office Bearers elected at the SADTU 8th National Congress

President: Magope Maphila

Deputy President: Mabutho Cele

General Secretary: Mugwena Malukeke

Deputy General Secretary: Nkosana Dolopi

Treasurer: Lindiwe Motshwane

VP Education: Veronica Hoofmeester

VP Gender: Dorcus Sekabate

VP Sports, Arts and Culture: Gloria Kgoleng

