



October 2016 Voice of the South African Communist Party

Umsebenzi

CC SIZES UP LOCAL ELECTIONS

**A CLEAR
MESSAGE
FROM**

**Take corrective
measures – or decline
in electoral support
will continue!**

**ALLIANCE'S
SOCIAL
BASE!**

CC reaffirms goal
of revitalisation of
the ANC – based
on principled unity

**But jury is out on
whether the ANC has
the capacity for such
a major revitalisation**

SACP CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Rebuild ANC's ability to lead a second radical NDR phase

The CC's post-local election statement examines the causes of the ANC's dwindling electoral support and the imperative to reinvigorate people's power

Prioritise the struggle against the parasitic hollowing-out of state capacity!

The SACP Central Committee (CC) met over the weekend of 26 to 28 August. A central focus of the CC was an evaluation of the performance of the ANC-led Alliance in the 3 August local government elections. CC members were able to provide detailed insights coming from many localities throughout South Africa, in which the SACP campaigned actively for an ANC election victory.

The CC applauded the activist role played by the SACP and in particular our Red Brigades in campaigning often in the most difficult areas, some of which had otherwise become no-go areas for the ANC itself.

Local government elections – a strong popular message from our core base

These detailed inputs from the ground all confirmed a common thread of serious challenges confronting our ANC-led alliance. As a general characterisation of the election results, the CC endorsed the earlier Political Bureau perspective. The PB had noted that at 54%, the ANC still retains majority support. However, while there has been a steady decline over several elections in the ANC's percentage support, the August 3 results represent a precipitous decline in both urban and rural areas. The CC further observed that, unless serious corrective actions are undertaken, the decline will continue and likely accelerate.

A significant factor in our declining electoral support has been a major stay-away in much of our core social base, which is reflected in our winning the over-

whelming majority of working class township wards but with a low turnout, and consequently losing significant ground in terms of proportional representation. The low general turn-out in our core social bases, the small but not insignificant toe-hold secured by opposition parties like the DA in these bases, and even the scepticism expressed by many who nonetheless voted for the ANC – these are all sending a powerful message to the ANC and its Alliance partners.

Growing numbers of South Africans are tired of being taken for granted. They believe that ANC formal structures are increasingly inward looking, pre-occupied with factional battles and money politics. They believe that the conduct of ANC politicians is often arrogant and aloof. There are tens of thousands of loyal ANC supporters and many veterans who are excluded from branch structures by gate-keepers and fraudulent abuse of membership data. The imposition of unpopular ANC candidates, in defiance of the ANC's own guidelines, was another major weakness.

All South Africans are deeply concerned about corruption. Many correctly appreciate major service delivery advances over the past two decades. However, they increasingly tell us that it is not material issues alone, but a prevailing view

that our liberation movement has lost its moral compass.

The CC also agreed that the manner in which the ANC chose to campaign by foregrounding President Zuma and not local issues and local mayoral candidates played straight into the hands of the opposition campaign. The opposition parties had very little to say about local policy content, focusing instead on our national leadership shortcomings – whether real or alleged.

The CC also expressed some disappointment at the statement issued by the ANC following its recent National Executive Committee. It is not that the statement did not touch generally on many of the challenges and internal weaknesses confronting the ANC. But ever since the early 2000s, successive ANC National Conferences and ANC-led Alliance Summits have raised the same themes – growing social distance from our mass base, gate keeping, factionalism, slate-based campaigning with winner-takes-all outcomes, personality-based politics without any ideological foundation, money politics, and corruption.

What the great majority of South Africans are hoping for is a clear sign of willingness to act decisively against these morbid symptoms. The recommendations of the ANC's own integrity committee are by-passed. Corrupt individuals appear to enjoy cover. One senior leader, in order to explain why there appears to be a reluctance to move decisively with disciplinary action, recently said in public that “we all have small skeletons in our cupboards”. As far as we know, she was not called upon to divulge to the integrity committee (or any other relevant structure) what small skeletons she was

Many South Africans believe ANC structures are inward looking, preoccupied with factional battles and money politics



ANC support: the 2016 local government elections saw a significant stayaway by the Alliance's core social base



aware of, so that the matters could be dealt with.

Notwithstanding all of this, the SACP CC reaffirmed its long-standing tradition to work tirelessly for the revitalisation of the ANC on the basis of a principled unity. We all need to work together to restore the ANC in its ability to lead what its own 2012 National Conference called a second radical phase of the national democratic revolution.

If we are to be honest, the jury is out as to whether there is the internal capacity to carry forward such a revitalisation.

We urge the ANC to convene a non-elective Consultative Conference

In this general context, the SACP has taken note of calls by the ANC Youth

League for an early ANC national elective conference. We are also aware that the ANCYL is being used by others to test the waters in this regard. While any decision on the timing of an ANC national conference must, of course, be made by the ANC itself, the SACP is firmly of the belief that the motivation for this call is

**Together we must restore
the ANC's ability to lead what
its 2012 National Conference
called a 2nd radical phase
of the NDR**

entirely factional. If followed through it will result in deepening disunity within the ANC and across its Alliance. The winners will inherit a shell organisation. Those making this call are not even bothering to disguise their factional intentions. They have learnt nothing from the local government elections. Nor have they learnt anything from the premature convening, against the advice of the ANC NEC itself, of the KZN ANC provincial conference, which has simply deepened divisions within a formerly united ANC province.

The SACP believes there is great merit in considering the possibility of a national ANC Consultative (or Special) Conference prior to the ANC's National Conference. Such a consultative conference should be a non-elective event, with ANC provinces being accorded an equal number of delegates to avoid endless accreditation disputes. The aim of the consultative conference should be to unify the ANC and indeed the broader Alliance on a principled programmatic basis. Agreement should be reached, if possible, on the transition to a new leadership, and, at the very least on mechanisms to ensure that the December 2017 Conference will not be characterised by a shoot-out between winner-takes-all mutually exclusive slates. Regardless of the winning slate, such an outcome will simply accelerate the decline of the ANC.

An effective consultative conference

End the politically motivated harassment of the Minister of Finance!

The CC reaffirmed the SACP's condemnation of the ongoing harassment by the Hawks of the Minister of Finance, Cde Pravin Gordhan. No one, whether Cde Gordhan or Hawks General Ntlembeza, should be above the law. But as numerous commentators have observed, the putative charges against Cde Gordhan are a flimsy concoction without the slightest basis in law. They are designed as a pretext to remove Cde Gordhan from office and weaken Treasury's struggle against corruption and corporate capture.

We have noted the denial of any political involvement in this matter, but also note that after assuring Cde Gordhan that he was not a suspect, and then pausing for the local government elections, the matter is suddenly back on the table. The timing has an eerie similarity with the events that unfolded between 2003 and 2007, when the timing of another prosecution attempt against a senior politician appeared to be coordinated around the political calendar of the ANC.

Over the last decade the ANC has battled to handle effectively leadership transitions. Back in 2003 the head of the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka announced that, while there was a prima facie case against then Deputy President Cde Jacob Zuma, he would not be prosecut-



Cde Gordhan: facing harassment

ed. This statement placed Cde Zuma, the ANC, and indeed the whole country in an untenable situation. The current harassment of Cde Gordhan bears an uncanny resemblance to those events, where judicial processes are used and abused for political ends.

The SACP also notes that the most critical of all issues is getting lost in this affair. It is too often presented in the public domain as a simple standoff between Cde Gordhan and the Hawks. Clearly, the South African Revenue Services (Sars), like any reputable revenue service in the world, needs a financial intelligence capacity. Yes, that capacity needs to be regulated by law to prevent abuse. But the real question in this matter is what did the so-called "rogue unit" in Sars uncover that has made some forces so desperate as to dismantle

effective capacity in Sars, even risking South Africa's economic well-being in the process?

Tax confidentiality prevents Sars from disclosing details of its findings and investigations. But there is much that is available in the public domain. We know, for instance, that Sars has had a major focus on the cigarette industry and tax fraud amounting to billions of rands. We know that one company that has come under scrutiny is Carlinix, owned by Adriano Mazzotti, an Italian reputedly with underworld connections. We know that Mazzotti has connections with convicted drug-dealer Glen Agliotti and that Carlinix employed two of the shooters involved in the death of Brett Kebble. Mazzotti has also publicly admitted that it was he who paid the R200 000 that enabled Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) to register with the Independent Electoral Commission in 2014.

Mazzotti, however, refused to confirm whether he was assisting Malema in paying his R18-million tax penalty agreement with Sars. Malema's association with Mazzotti clearly goes back long before the formation of the EFF, at a time when he was still president of the ANC Youth League and the question arises as to what tendencies Malema has left behind within our movement itself. ●

should also be a unifying space in which we can all reflect upon and take individual and collective responsibility for mistakes we have made. We do not exclude the SACP from this self-reflective and responsibility-taking imperative. We believe that alliance partners should be allowed an active role in the conference. Consideration should also be given to inviting senior and respected veterans of our movement, and even other progressive forces like, for instance, the South African Council of Churches. Let us be prepared to listen to those whose criticism of us is motivated by a genuine concern about the future of our movement and our country, and not by petty

personality hatreds or an inveterate anti-ANC position.

Let us mobilise the key motive forces of our national democratic revolution!

The CC agreed that the democratic transition from white minority rule to a united, non-racial, non-sexist and fun-

The transition from white minority rule to a united, non-racial & fundamentally more egalitarian society is at a crossroads

damentally more egalitarian society is now at a decisive crossroads moment. This is not the first time in its proud history that the ANC has found itself in difficulty, facing internal disintegration. In the first decade of exile, the ANC's 1969 ANC Morogoro Consultative Conference was a decisive moment in rescuing the ANC from decline and irrelevance. It laid the basis for a principled programmatic unity of the ANC itself and it formalised the ANC-led tripartite Alliance.

Of course, the realities and challenges confronting the ANC and its Alliance in 2016 are different in many respects, but the critical imperative remains the same. We have to unite the broadest range of

patriotic and democratic forces in the ongoing struggle to overcome the terrible legacy of colonialism and white minority rule. It is a legacy that continues to reproduce extraordinarily high levels of racialised (and gendered and spatial) inequality, poverty and general social distress. It is precisely these systemic features that the DA is in deep denial about with its guiding individualistic philosophy of “equal opportunities” (and NOT equal outcomes). It is this denialism that accounts for Helen Zille’s inability to recognise the profound impact that poverty has on vulnerability to HIV infection, for instance, leaving it all down to “individual responsibility”.

It is the same denial of a racialised systemic reality that underpins the DA’s ambivalence about affirmative action and broad-based economic empowerment measures, or, for that matter, a state-led re-industrialisation program.

If the ANC’s national leadership proves incapable of leading a national democratic struggle, it does not mean that it is a struggle that does not still need to be waged across a broad, multi-class, patriotic front. The SACP continues to see its role in this context as an independent but non-sectarian vanguard party of socialism in the midst of a broad national democratic struggle. Let us be active in helping to re-build a principled ANC and broader mass democratic movement from the ground-up. We believe that the consolidation of our national and democratic objectives cannot be advanced, deepened and defended without taking on the chokehold of monopoly capital on our political economy.

But we cannot undertake any of these tasks without also prioritising the struggle

Guptas claim to be selling off SA interests

The SACP has taken note of the announcement that the Gupta family intends to sell off all of its assets in South Africa by the end of the year to certain unspecified international interests. Ostensibly, this is for the benefit of South Africa and to save local jobs. Frankly, we treat this announcement with a great deal of scepticism. It comes at a time when Gupta companies are reportedly under increasing scrutiny from the Reserve Bank, Treasury and the Financial Intelligence Centre.

The announcement that the sale will be completed before the end of the year happens to coincide precisely with the 2017 date for the multi-lateral, International Automatic Exchange of Information (AEI) agreement coming into operation. The agreement provides for the automatic exchange of non-resident financial account information with the tax authorities in the account holder’s country of residence. This will facilitate the discovery of formerly undetected tax evasion by way of illicit flows into foreign bank accounts. The AEI will provide South African authorities

with much greater insight into the foreign bank accounts of South African residents.

Given the over-valued and under-traded nature of Gupta-linked JSE interests we doubt that there will be much appetite for purchasing them. There is a strong possibility that the Guptas simply intend to sell their South African interests to themselves through their foreign-based investment venture capital operations.

We call on the Financial Intelligence Centre to satisfy itself that if any sales are effected, the Gupta family or close relatives are not the beneficial owners of the sale. We trust that the Reserve Bank, before approving any sale from a resident to a non-resident, will ensure that there is full legal compliance with capital export requirements. We also believe that our financial regulatory entities should ensure that money is retained in South Africa in a blocked account so that any potential penalties and liabilities are covered should further information emerge in regard to the wrecking-ball activities of the Guptas and their associates. ●

against the most immediate threat – the parasitic hollowing-out of state capacity.

The SACP working with allied and all progressive formations believes that now is the time to reinvigorate people’s power through mobilising the key motive forces of any democratic revolution – the working class, the urban and rural poor. Rural development and land reform, the

struggle for the right to work, the financial sector campaign, community safety, the consolidation and re-building of the trade union movement, solidarity with the aspirations of the youth - these are among the key priorities of our current reality. ●

Issued by the 13th SACP Central Committee 17th Plenary Session

Umsebenzi

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor-in-Chief:
Blade Nzimande

Deputy Editor-in-Chief:
Jeremy Cronin

Editor:
Yunus Carrim

Joyce Moloi-Moropa

Solly Mapaila

Mluleki Dlelanga

Chris Matlhako

Malesela Maleka

Mark Waller (sub-editor)

David Niddrie (chief sub-editor)

Alex Mashilo

Reneva Fourie

RED OCTOBER

Boosting SACP strategic capacity in communities

Reneva Fourie looks at the imperative of this year's Red October campaign to reclaim our townships and villages



This year we broaden the normal call of expanding our membership both quantitatively and qualitatively to emphasising that our campaigns need to be grassroots based and driven if we are to accelerate the building of the strategic capacity of the SACP, under the call for reclaiming our townships and villages.

While the ANC-led Alliance secured a victory during the August 2016 local government elections, it has also experienced a significant setback, leaving members and society generally feeling leaderless and directionless.

While reclaiming could be interpreted as being confined to regaining electoral power, the theme is much deeper. It speaks to the importance of narrowing the gap between our Movement and our people; the need to rebuild trust; and the significance of occupying the leadership gap. Understanding the needs, aspirations, and mindset of the community is placed at the centre of building internal strategic capacity.

The SACP annual Red October was launched on 9 October at In-changa, Moses Mabhida Province. In-changa was one of the areas affected by pre-election tensions, including the killing of comrades.

In line with the directive to localise national campaigns, given the geographic surroundings and its political implications, the launch placed strong emphasis on peace and unity.

Despite a lot of work done by activists in the area, suspicion remains. Taking this year's Red October launch to the area seeks to affirm our empathy with the local com-

munity and to express solidarity with those dissatisfied with the slow pace in solving the issue of political killings in the province. The launch also seeks to complement the on-going efforts by the Alliance in the province to forge unity, noting that unity, peace, stability and healing, cannot emerge through talk alone, but require joint action.

One of the national campaigns that should find on-going local expression is the transformation of the financial sector. The resurgence of the #FeesMustFall campaign by students highlights the difficulties experienced by all strata of society in coping with burgeoning debt, in the context of an ailing economy. The interest rates on unpaid debt have to be reduced.

All abuses of garnishee orders have to be rooted out. The massive abuse of property repossessions and evictions has to end. Developmental financing has to be available and accessible. The second Financial Summit of Nedlac has to be convened as a matter of urgency, in the interests of advancing the struggle to socialise the financial sector.

Every revolution experiences challenges and our national democratic revolution is no exception. When the people are placed at the centre of driving that revolution, it cannot be derailed easily. By building the strategic capacity of the SACP in a manner that reclaims our townships and villages, we hope to regain the confidence of our people, and to become worthy of the title "vanguard of the working class". ●

Cde Fourie is a full-time member of the SACP Central Committee





The SACP and Cosatu fully support the students' struggle

#FEESMUSTFALL

Students' fees struggle is working class struggle

An SACP-Cosatu bilateral meeting in September issued the following statement on the issue of student fees

The South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) have been meeting in a bilateral strategic session to assess the challenges and opportunities and analyse the threats facing the national democratic revolution. The objective of this meeting of the socialist axis of the tripartite Alliance is to develop shared perspectives on the way forward, including immediate tasks.

We communicate our organisations' positions in no uncertain terms with regards to the issue of no fee increase for 2017, the need to accelerate our country's progressive rollout of free post-school education, and address the violent forms of mobilisation violating the constitutional rights of other students.

The SACP and Cosatu are fully in support of the students' struggle, which is in fact a working class struggle, for the realisation of accelerated progressive rollout of free post-school education for students from working class and poor households, including the lower strata of the middle class, who cannot afford to pay. The SACP and Cosatu both believe that the announcement made by the Department of Higher Education and Training on 19

September, that all students in public colleges and universities qualifying for the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), as well as students falling in the category of the so-called missing middle will experience a no fee increase in 2017 is progressive.

The government's intervention represents a milestone while the Higher Education and Training Commission, also known as the Fees Commission, established by the President, conducts its work. The Commission must develop measures to accelerate the progressive rollout of free education for those who cannot afford. This is firmly in line with the Freedom Charter, the country's Constitution and the Polokwane resolution of the ANC on this matter.

Education is and must be seen to be a societal priority. The private sector is disproportionately benefiting from our education and training and is the sole consumer, on a private basis, of the wealth produced by our workforce – minus the cost of production, yet its contribution is almost invisible.

The SACP and Cosatu are urging students to redirect their mobilisation to the door steps of capital – which is where

the problem emanates, rather than fight against the government that is trying its level best to expand access to post-school education as evidenced by the massive progress our country has achieved since 1994 and more so after 2009.

Both of our organisations are pledging their joint support to this mobilisation directed at the exploiters of our education, training and labour power. In this regard, the SACP and Cosatu will fight side by side with students. We have been consulting with students on a national day of action. Cosatu and the SACP have confidence that the leadership of the South African Union of Students (Saus), a body representing universities' Student Representative Councils, has adopted progressive positions on this matter. On 14 October, we will support and march together with students to the Chamber of Mines and other centres of private capital to call on them to make a meaningful contribution from the wealth produced by workers but appropriated by the greedy bosses.

The SACP and Cosatu are calling for a decisively progressive or graduated tax on the rich and the wealthy to finance education as an apex priority. We are calling on the state to move forward and introduce this direly needed tax reform. For the SACP and Cosatu, the pursuit of radical to fundamental economic transformation as the focal point of our Alliance's shared perspective, of the need to place our democratic transition on to a second radical phase remains central in our national project of overarching social transformation.

Cosatu and the SACP are calling on students who want to exercise their right to protest as enshrined in our country's constitution to do so peacefully, observe the rule of law and respect the rights of other students.

The SACP and Cosatu condemn in the strongest terms possible the violent conduct by a few disruptors who found their way among students at Wits University. We are not only concerned about public property but the human rights of other students who are being forced to abandon their studies. South Africa is a country governed by the rule of law. No person has a right to advance their demands by means of violating the rights of others as enshrined in our country's Constitution. A legitimate state that seeks to preserve its democratic integrity has the responsibility, and will undoubtedly exercise its functions and strategic discipline, to protect the rights of all its citizens, including students.

#FEESMUSTFALL

Defend our real gains towards free education!

Mosheshe Mvalo goes behind the fees must fall rhetoric to assess the real transformation taking place in tertiary education



Ernesto Che Guevara in 1963 had some honest and brutal words for a comrade, Lydia Ares Rodriguez, who wrote to him pleading for leniency for her son: "... I must tell you that, in my personal opinion, your son must serve his sentence because the commission of a crime against socialist property is the gravest offence, independent of any extenuating circumstances. I am sorry to tell you this ... but I would not be fulfilling my revolutionary duty were I not to do so frankly".

There is a lesson in this for South Africa today.

Despite the huge tasks we still face of tackling poverty, unemployment and inequality in our society, the ANC-led government has accomplished much since the 1994 democratic breakthrough. Among these achievements has been embarking on building a new education and training system with the goal of meeting the needs of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and united South Africa.

As a country we have been hard at work in democratising the education system, overcoming unfair discrimination, expanding access to education and training opportunities and improving the quality of education, training and research. The majority of South Africans are unanimous that no amount of anger and frustration can justify the reversing of these gains by violating the rights of others and destroying property, particularly as the main beneficiaries of this education and training are the working class and the poor.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) highlights that

the higher education system represents a major resource for national development, and contributes to the worldwide advance of knowledge. The RDP asserts that education and training should be available to all from the cradle to grave. The RDP also took a broad view of education and training, seeing it not only as something that occurs in schools, colleges and universities, but in all areas of our society – homes, workplaces, public works programmes, and youth programmes. The South Africa that we seek to build is loaned to us by generations to come. We must preserve it as such.

It is no coincidence that in the post-2009 education and training landscape, the government established the Department of Higher Education and Training to address the plight of millions, especially the working class and the poor, through providing opportunities for study at our universities, colleges, skills development system, adult education colleges etc.

Education and training in South Africa have a crucial role in social and economic development, empowering individuals to actively participate in all facets of society as well as in advancing the economic growth and development in our country.

Since 1994, the ANC-led government has made strides with regard to improving the plight of all South Africans, es-

pecially the working class and the poor, through education and training. The 2016 StatsSA Community Survey results bear graphic testimony to this:

- The number of people with no schooling has declined from 3,7-million in 1996 to 2,3-million in 2016;

- Those who have completed secondary school education have more than tripled between 1996 and 2016 from 3,5-million to 11,9-million;

- The number of people who completed a bachelor's degree in the two decades has surged from 410 686 to 1,2-million in 2016; and

- Within the 55-64 age group, the number of bachelor's degree holders is more than five times it was in 1996 – up from 33 549 to 171 424.

The Social Profile of Youth, 2009-2014 (StatsSA) shows since 2009, youth with less than matric were most likely to be unemployed. The StatsSA findings show:

- The proportion of unemployed young people with less than matric remained unchanged at 57%;

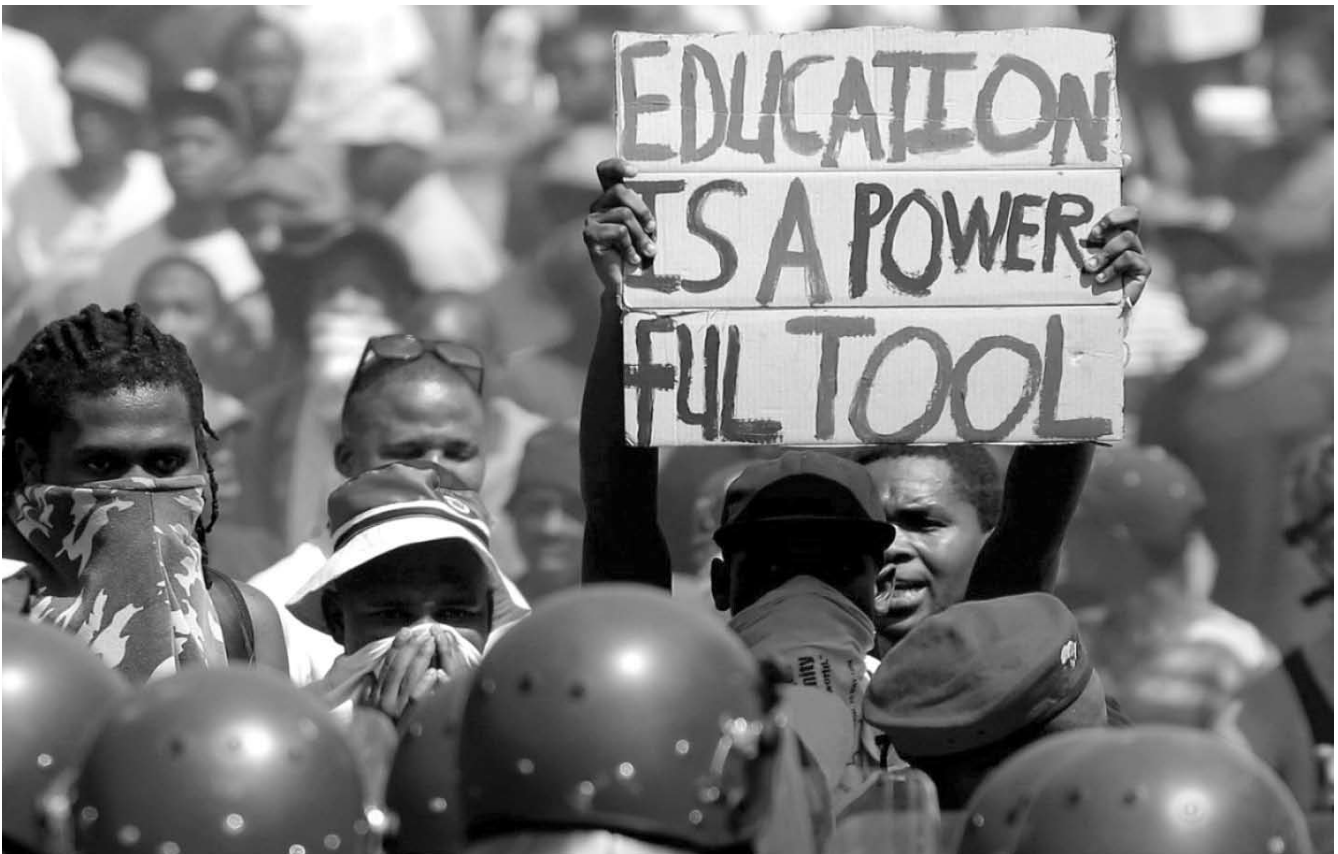
- Young graduates (those who qualified with a tertiary degree qualification) are least likely to be unemployed: the proportion of unemployed graduates remained at 1% over the period;

- There was a slight decline (of 1%) among young unemployed people with a non-degree tertiary qualification.

This also indicates the impact and the value of education and training in every household.

There are gender differences across educational attainment and youth unemployment. Young men without matric or a tertiary qualification were more likely to be unemployed than young women in a similar situation. But more

From 1994 to 2016, the number of people who completed a bachelor's degree has tripled to 1,2-million



The #FeesMustFall protesters' call for a 0% increase for all is misplaced, given South Africa's huge inequalities

women with matric or a non-degree tertiary qualification were unemployed than their male counterparts. Gender disparities are largest among those who had attained a non-degree tertiary qualification, with women almost twice as likely to be unemployed.

The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training points out the significant increase in funds available for student loans and bursaries, particularly through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

Since at least 2011, students from poor families studying at technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges have not had to pay tuition fees. They have also been assisted with accommodation and transport.

The White Paper also recognises the importance of finding ways to assist those students whose parental incomes are too high to qualify for funding from NSFAS, but too low to qualify for loans from private financial institutions (the "missing middle"). This category includes children of teachers, nurses, police personnel and many public servants, clerical workers and skilled manual workers.

Post-school education and training continues to receive the largest increase in funding of any government department.

The Department of Higher Education and Training this year received an additional 18% for 2016/17, with an average annual increase of 9,8% across the Medium Term Expenditure Framework period up until 2018/19. From R42-billion in the 2015/16 financial year, the Department's budget is set to rise to R55,3-billion in 2018/19.

Government has this year provided R1,9-billion of the R2,3-billion shortfall that resulted from the subsidisation of the 2016 university fee increase. More than R4,5-billion in the 2016/17 financial year has been re-directed to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

Expanded funding is targeted to support 205 000 students entering universities for the first time or continuing this year, and a further 200 000 students at TVET colleges. This means that a total of 405 000 students would receive government support to access universities and colleges in 2016. The National Skills Fund (NSF) has allocated R1,4-billion in 2016 towards funding undergraduate and postgraduate bursaries in scarce and critical skills.

This funding is directed at meeting the full cost of study for over 13 500 undergraduate and 1 200 postgraduate students enrolled in programmes at our 26 public universities.

These demonstrate a major commitment to giving young people from working class and poor families affordable or free access to tertiary education, including university education.

As a society we must appreciate the establishment of the Presidential Commission to advance the funding of higher education so that outcomes as envisaged for mid-2017 can be reached. The government has further committed to finding the resources to support children of all poor, working and middle class families – those with a household income of up to R600 000 a year – with subsidy funding to cover the gap between the 2015 fee and the adjusted 2017 fees. This will be done for fee increments up to 8%. The government will pay for the fee adjustment for all NSFAS qualifying students, as well as the missing middle.

The call for zero percent fee increase for all is misplaced in a country with such huge inequalities between the rich and the poor. The call goes out to all, particularly those who can afford to pay fees, to rise to the occasion and defend the unprecedented and revolutionary gains our country has made. ●

Cde Mvalo is an SACP member in Tshwane

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

SACP must contest 2019 elections!

Mpumalanga's 9th Congress stands by the provincial commitment to fielding communist candidates in the next general election, writes Hlengiwe Nkonyane



The Mpumalanga SACP 9th Provincial Congress was held on 9-11 September under the theme Communist Cadres to the Front: Unite the working class, our communities and the Movement!

The Congress was characterised by a high level of discipline from the 408 delegates who packed the plenary and commissions – no delegates could be seen roaming the streets or the surrounding shopping complexes.

This congress came at a time when the broader Alliance is in a reflective phase, after the local government elections.

Provincial Secretary Cde Bonakele Majuba noted the challenges facing the Alliance in the province, citing the incident at the 2015 Joe Slovo commemoration in Nyamazana, when chaos erupted, partly because of existing tensions within the Alliance. Mpumalanga was subsequently named the worst province in terms of Alliance relations. Cde Majuba said the media propelled this, further intensifying tensions between Alliance partners.

National Deputy Chairperson Cde Thulas Nxesi addressed the congress on behalf of the Central Committee. He re-emphasised the CC statement on issues of the elections outcomes and the political onslaught on Finance Minister Cde Pravin Gordhan. Cde Nxesi said: "There is no way a political movement infested with factionalism within the ranks of its top echelons can resolve the problem, its consequences, material bases and driving forces and factors. Since this is a congress of the provincial organ of a Communist Party, let us recall the wise words of one of the world's outstanding revolutionary social scientists Karl Marx in his article The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bona-

parte: "As, in private life, the distinction is made between what a man thinks of himself and says, and that which he really is and does, so, all the more, must the phrases and notions of parties in historic struggles be distinguished from their real organism, and their real interests, their notions and their reality."

Cde Nxesi said that we are in a state of *deja vu* when it comes to the Hawks. Previously, it was the Scorpions being used in politically motivated investigations. He then asked: what was the use of disbanding the Scorpions and relaunching as the Hawks if the *modus operandi* is the same?

Cde Nxesi warned against attacks on General Secretary Cde Blade Nzimande by the leagues of the ANC, singling him out on the #FeesMustFall crisis. The ANC is selective – on other matters it shoulders collective responsibility yet on the fees issue the ANCYL writes open letters to the Minister of Higher Education and Training and the ANC does not call it into order. The SACP will not remain quiet if these attacks persist.

The congress resolution on state power declared: "Congress resolved to reaffirm the SACP Mpumalanga's submission to the Special National Congress of our Party held last year to contest state power through the ballot commencing in 2019. The province will engage in the structured debate on state power as established in terms of the Special National Congress resolution that founded our Central Committee State Power Commission and the discussion documents adopted by the Central Committee soon to be released to guide the debate. As part of the engagement, the province will start lobbying other provinces within the framework of Party Organisation, Disci-

pline and Principles to advance this position in the forthcoming 14th National Congress of our Party in July 2017."

There was an uncharacteristic lapse of discipline during the debate on resolutions in plenary where some of the delegates who expressed a different view faced pressure from some delegates favouring the resolution. A delegate was heckled for expressing the view that the organisational and material conditions were not ready for the resolution to be passed.

The provincial leadership will have to address matters like this that can make some members feel they are not free to express their views. If party discipline is to be maintained there should not be intolerance of differing views. Unless there is an inner-party democracy, it is difficult to have democratic centralism.

Related to this is the need to deepen political education to ensure the numerical growth in party membership keeps pace with the qualitative growth of new recruits. A mismatch in quantitative and qualitative growth can result in serious challenges to the nature and character of the SACP as a vanguard party. In particular, new members can introduce outside practices in the Party inconsistent with the attributes of vanguard cadres.

The principle in the SACP political programme, the South African Road to Socialism, for political education to be institutionalised and strengthened needs urgent attention in view of the Party's rapid growth in the last five years or so.

The congress elected:

- Provincial Secretary – Bonakele Majuba
- Provincial Chairperson – Lucky Mbuyane
- Provincial Treasurer – Fisani Shabangu
- 1st Deputy Provincial Secretary – Mandla Tibane
- 2nd Deputy Provincial Secretary – Nhlakanipho Zuma
- Deputy Provincial Chairperson – Andries Mnisi

Additional members: Godfrey Sibiya, Lindiwe Motshwane, William Lubisi, Delisile Nkambule, Lizah Phiri, Mandla Mapiyeye, Lesetja Dikgale, Frank Mnisi, Justice Masutha, Patience Nxumalo, Meisie Mokone, Emma Phakathi, Mandla Zulu, Fidel Mlombo and Sister Zuma. ●

Cde Nkonyane is SACP national media liaison and communication administrator

COSATU

Mass action for decent work

Federation's back to basics campaign targets nine keys steps for improving status and conditions of work



The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) plans mass action to focus on the challenges facing workers during this year's "International Decent Work Day" on 7 October. Cosatu's August Central Executive Committee resolved that the federation will hold a one-day strike on that day to fight for the following issues:

- Demand the total banning of the labour brokers;
- Demand the scrapping of the e-tolling system including the expensive toll-gates;
- Fight in defence of our jobs and against retrenchments;
- Demand the implementation of the legislated national minimum wage;
- Fight to defend and protect our collective bargaining agreements;
- Fight for compliance with occupational health & safety standards in all workplaces;
- Fight for the implementation of the national health insurance;
- Fight for the scrapping of the Taxation Amendment law;
- Demand the implementation of free education.

Cosatu spokesperson Cde Sizwe Pamla said that decent work has always been a Cosatu campaign, but now there is a greater focus on it. At the last Cosatu congress it was decided to go "back-to-basics" and a listening campaign was



Mass action and a one-day strike: Cosatu's launch of a decent work campaign

launched with Cosatu leaders visiting workplaces to find out what the major concerns of workers. The 7 October decent work strike will take this forward.

Cde Pamla referred to the phasing out of permanent employment and its replacement by casualisation, informalisation and labour brokering. "With labour

brokers, the workers' wages are split with middle-men. They are not working for the company but for the middle-men."

He said the campaign for "decent work" was about "decent wages, decent pensions, decent conditions" for workers. The focus, he said, was mainly on vulnerable workers, especially in the farm, retail, hotel and security sectors.

The campaign was also directed at defending workers' gains since 1994, especially on collective bargaining. Cde Pamla said Cosatu is concerned about proposals to amend the labour laws which would have the effect of weakening trade unions.

He stressed the need to use the campaign to unify workers and strengthen the trade union movement. ●

Cosatu's campaign also focuses on at defending workers' gains since 1994 – and to block new laws that will weaken trade unions

WFTU CONGRESS

92-million workers focus on Durban

This statement was released last month by the WFTU Organising Committee on the 17th World Trade Union Congress in Durban

From 5 to 8 October South Africa will host the 17th World Trade Union Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). South Africa was chosen as the host of the 17th Congress in recognition of its heroic worker struggles and as an expression of internationalist solidarity with the people of the African continent.

It is the first time that a world trade union congress takes place in Africa. Cosatu and the trade union movement of South Africa will, for four days, be the centre of the international trade union movement.

More than 1 000 trade union leaders, representing 92-million workers from more than 100 countries – from wherever the workers are fighting against capitalism including Cuba, Palestine, Vietnam, Venezuela, Greece, and Brazil – will meet in South Africa, to participate in the congress.

The congress will be open and democratic, uniting class-oriented and internationalist comrades. It will honour the 71 years of internationalist struggle of WFTU but, at the same time, respond to the current and future priorities of the world working class. It will also reaffirm internationalist solidarity with Cosatu and all trade union organisations in South Africa, and the heroic working class of this country that continues the struggle for workers' just demands.

It will discuss and declare itself on the need for a stronger, more dynamic, more mass-based, more class-oriented, trade union movement – trade unions with deep and stable roots within industries, within the multinationals and



within all sectors, to defend the rights of the working class and demand “the attainment of its contemporary needs against poverty and wars generated by capitalist barbarism”.

The 17th World Trade Union Congress gives the call to go “forward” to the international working class and the international class-oriented trade union movement. It builds on the successful 16th World Trade Union Congress in Athens in 2011 and on the continuing

upward movement of the WFTU. At the 16th congress the WFTU had 78-million members. The WFTU comes to Durban with 92-million members, a significant increase.

The WFTU and the South African working class have struggled side by side from the very first moment against the racist apartheid regime for a world without exploitation of humankind by humankind and for a socialist world, and will continue to take forward the struggle for the defence of the workers and people’s rights.

South Africa, the land of the heroic liberation struggle, the land of the militant Sactu (the South African Congress of Trade Unions, predecessor to Cosatu), of Cdes Moses Mabhida, JB Marks, Mark Shope, the land of the heroic South African working class is ready to welcome the 17th Congress of WFTU. ●

The 17th WFTU congress in Durban is the first world trade union congress ever to be held in Africa