



Workers march against the LRA through the streets of Johannesburg

COSATU opens doors of learning

WORKERS in COSATU recommended an education programme to guide them over the next two years at the 2nd National Education Conference on 20-22 October.

The conference also committed itself to the Education Charter and Literacy Campaigns.

In his keynote address COSATU General Secretary, Comrade Jay Naidoo urged delegates to focus their energies on developing a mass approach to education and the developing of worker educators at every level of COSATU.

Other key points were:

- developing an understanding of the economy especially the form and content of a post-apartheid South Africa;
- debating the ANC's Constitutional Guidelines and the Worker's Charter;
- development of working class culture;
- training of shop stewards leadership and officials.

After three days of intense deliberations, delegates recommended the COSATU education programme cover topics such as political economy and building socialism, National Democratic Struggle, education training, health and safety, and women.

Workers march against LRA

THOUSANDS of workers in different parts of the country marched against the Labour Relations Amendment Act on 14 October.

Some of the other mass actions coming out of the Worker Summit have been a stayaway against the racist elections, workers refusing to work overtime and a consumer boycott against white shops.

Thousands of mineworkers mainly in the coal and diamond-sectors stayed away on September 5 and 6.

Negotiations between CO-

SATU/NACTU and SACCOLA are proceeding with some success. However, other employer and state bodies such as SATS are still refusing to talk to the unions.

Since 22 September tens of thousands of workers around the country have been boycotting overtime work. The overtime ban is mainly in the metal, paper, chemical, food and transport industries.

An important test case in the Bloemfontein Appeal Court found it was the right of FAWU workers at SAB to refuse to work overtime.

About 500 delegates from CO-

SATU, NACTU and the independent unions attended the second Workers Summit on 26 and 27 August.

The government tried to disrupt the meeting by sending hundreds of SAP to surround the venue and saying only trade union members were allowed to attend.

The Worker Summit broke up into small groups to avoid police action, but this led to confusion about some of the planned actions.

Four resolutions were passed; on the LRA, the September elections, working class unity and state repression against the union

movement.

The resolution on the LRA noted that SACCOLA and other employers continued to delay negotiations and called for a programme of sustained peaceful action against the LRA.

The amendments to the LRA make it difficult for unions and workers to strike. They make it easier for the bosses to hire and fire workers.

This makes it more difficult for workers to fight for job security, better wages and housing if there is little job security.

The bosses are using the LRA to stop lawful strikes by going to court for interdicts. Companies

are delaying industrial court decisions for years by using the new appeal procedures.

Ways that workers can fight the LRA are:

- planning all strikes carefully
- considering how to react to interdicts against lawful strikes
- workers representing themselves individually in opposing interdicts in court
- demanding any disciplinary action after mass action must be done collectively

The campaign against the union-bashing Act needs to be advanced and built up at a local level.

COSATU congress says build mass movement

COSATU's Third National Congress in July was attended by 1903 delegates representing 921 497 paid-up members. The NUM had 424 delegates present.

The Congress was significant not only because of its size, but because of the high level of unity and cohesion among COSATU affiliates.

The resolution on the Labour Relations Amendment Act campaign demanded union rights for domestic, farm, public sector and forestry workers. It committed COSATU to intensifying the protest campaign against the Act.

The resolution on building the Mass Democratic Movement said COSATU should extend its disciplined alliance with mass democratic structures at local, regional and national levels.

It called on COSATU locals and union members to support

community campaigns, and aid in the rebuilding of the MDM.

Looking to a post-apartheid society, the Congress called on union members to study and debate the ANC Constitutional Guidelines.

A resolution on economic trends called for developing a good understanding of how the South African economy worked, and how as to restructure it so it met the needs of the people.

Another resolution called for the federation to launch a campaign to discuss and debate a Workers' Charter.

The resolution on building an anti-apartheid coalition called for a conference to unite all forces opposed to apartheid.

Office bearers elected were: President - Elijah Barayi, First Vice President - Chris Dlamini, Second Vice President - John Gomomo, Treasurer - Ronald Mofokeng, General Secretary - Jay Naidoo and Assistant General Secretary - Sydney Mafumadi.



COSATU Wits region salutes SACTU patriots, and thirty five years of proud worker struggle by SACTU. The trade union federation was formed in 1954. COSATU locals are responsible for many activities in the union movement ranging from strike solidarity support to marches in the regions. NUM members must help build COSATU locals with other unions where they do not exist, and make weak ones strong.