

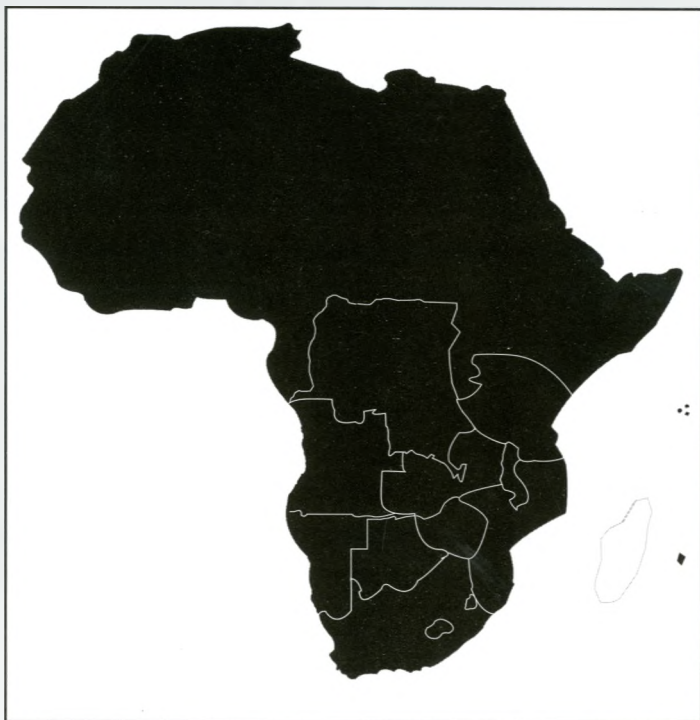
The background of the image is a collage of three distinct textures. On the left, there is a close-up of a yellow, chunky-knit fabric. In the center, a patterned textile with red, black, and white geometric designs is visible, with a white fabric strip featuring a small black mark draped over it. On the right, there is a reddish-brown surface with a fine, cracked leather-like texture.

# **Maputo Declaration on the Textiles, Clothing and Leather Industries**

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## **MAPUTO DECLARATION ON THE TEXTILES, CLOTHING AND LEATHER INDUSTRIES**



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***We, worker representatives from Mozambique,  
Zimbabwe, South Africa, Mauritius, Zambia,  
Swaziland, Lesotho, Tanzania and Malawi,  
having met on 8 – 10 May 1999  
in Maputo***

**NOTING**

*The massive job losses and factory closures in the clothing, textiles and leather industries in almost all countries in the region*

*The low wages that continue in our industries, resulting in a low and, in many instances, declining standard of living of workers*

*The crisis which face unemployed workers who have no income, no social security net, and no immediate prospect of a job.*

**BELIEVING**

*It is a fundamental responsibility of governments in the region to work with trade unions and employers in order to develop appropriate policies to secure a future for the industries and to improve the conditions of workers*

# **FURTHER BELIEVING THAT OF THE MANY PROBLEMS WE FACE ARE THE FOLLOWING:**



## **1. Erosion of labour standards**

Many employers have lobbied governments to reduce labour standards, in order to increase their rates of profit. Some governments have done this through limiting trade union rights in law, excluding unions from some export processing zones, reducing the budgets of the inspectorate sections of Departments of Labour and Ministerial interference during industrial action.

In this way, governments have sought to make countries more attractive to business people. Workers and poor communities pay the cost. It is women who are underpaid and exploited. It is local children who are pressed into work. It is workers who face their families with little to offer.

## **2. War and corruption**

Our region and our continent face many man-made disasters. These include war and corruption. Governments commit huge resources to armed conflict, in a battle which has nothing to do with improving the lives of people. Officials undermine their countries through accepting and demanding bribes, diverting public resources to their own pockets and filling public posts from their circle of family and friends.

### **3. Structural adjustment policies (SAP)**

Many governments have followed SAPs geared towards meeting the demands of either the Bretton Woods institutions, or the sentiments of foreign investors, through tight monetary policies, conservative fiscal policies, tariff reductions and privatisation. Some of these have been accompanied by repression of trade union rights.

Many of these policies are directed at cutting social subsidies for poor people and retrenching public sector workers when no alternative employment is available.

The social impact of these policies is devastating.

### **4. Export Processing Zones**

Many countries have introduced export processing zones as a means of developing our economy. These zones are directed at exports to developed countries. The zones pose many problems for national economies. They often are crude production enclaves that fail to build the technological and skills base of an economy. They rely in some instances in denial of freedom of association and collective bargaining.

### **5. Tariff reduction**

The Uruguay Round of GATT was used to pressurise many African countries to agree to reduce our bound

rates on clothing, textiles and footwear. It has been calculated that Africa as a whole will lose as a result of the Uruguay Round of trade liberalisation.

Some countries have decreased their tariffs even faster, or their bound rates even lower, than required under the terms of the GATT agreement.

The result has been substantial closure of factories, huge job losses, pressure on local labour standards and a flood of imports from Asia into Africa.

## **6. Smuggling of goods**

Vast quantities of goods enter southern Africa illegally, by-passing the tariffs in place. Many of the goods originate in east Asia, including China.

This smuggling is made possible by corruption in Customs and Excise in most countries in the region and by inadequate resources to policing our ports of entry and borders

This results in loss of much needed revenue to government, and massive destruction of jobs.

## **7. Second hand clothing**

The trade in second hand clothing has caused damage to Africa. Charities and churches in north America and Europe collect clothing for donation to Africa. This has now become a major commercial enterprise, with

dedicated companies set up to exploit this opportunity.

The result is job losses in almost every African country. Factories are closed, workers retrenched, and the local economy plunges deeper into crisis, requiring more "charity" with more disastrous results. Africa must break out of this spiral by building our own manufacturing capacity. Imported second hand clothing is false charity.



# **WE NOW CALL FOR THE FOLLOWING POLICIES**

## **1. Appropriate macro economic policies.**

Our countries and the region require macro economic policies directed at employment growth and the improvement of standards of living. Every element of policy, be it fiscal, monetary, trade or industrial, should be developed within a framework to grow more and better jobs.

This requires a break from policies of fiscal contraction, blind tariff reduction programmes and tight monetary policies irrespective of actual conditions in an economy.

The Bretton Woods institutions (IMF and World Bank) should not pursue their current policies which are destructive and devastating in both the social and economic spheres. Our region needs sustainable and effective policies, and while doing this, Governments in particular should not surrender the sovereignty of their people.

## **2. Debt cancellation**

The costs of debt servicing severely restrict our capacity to expand needed social services – in fact, it imposes reductions on education and health budgets at precisely the time when our economies need investment in skills



and people. Debt write-offs and the cancellation of the external debt are vital to our successful development. We believe the current HIPC initiative does not go far enough in addressing the crisis of debt. In this regard we support the Jubilee 2000 campaign of a debt write-off.

### **3. Promotion of workers rights**

Worker rights are basic to building and sustaining democracy, to modernising our economy and to expanding our domestic markets for goods and services. Trade unions are instruments of such development.

Our experience is that many governments pay lip service to labour rights – the right to strike exist on paper, but as soon as it is used, government Ministers ban strikes on the grounds of 'national interest', which is a way of describing the interest of corporations.

Child labour where it exists, should be abolished, and children should be educated. This is the best investment in ensuring a strong economy in the future.

We believe the core ILO Conventions covering freedom of association and the right to effective collective bargaining, an end to child labour, no forced labour and no discrimination, are the minimum requirements for every country to comply with. We call on governments to support and endorse the ILO Declaration on Principles and Rights at Work adopted in June 1998.

## 4. Trade and labour rights

As representatives of workers in the developing world, in the lowest paid part of manufacturing, in the sector of the economy most exposed to globalisation, we live daily with the real link between trade and labour standards. As soon as we improve wages for our members, companies move across borders to a country without labour rights. Our members work long hours, often in unsafe conditions for very little wages. We see our countries becoming havens of exploitation and poor working conditions. We see our countries remaining at the bottom of the industrial value chain, reinforced by governments who call on investors to exploit these conditions.

We call therefore for the World Trade Organisation to recognise the link between trade and labour rights, and to ensure that all countries participating in the world trading system abide by a rules-based system which include labour rules – namely, compliance with the core ILO conventions. This should be a minimum requirement for countries to receive all the benefits of membership of the WTO. As a first step, we will campaign for the WTO to set up a working committee to discuss the matter of labour rights.

As representatives of those who produce, and who are affected by trade policies, we are excluded from the WTO. We call on governments to support the call for the WTO to be restructured to include representatives of organised labour and business, so that a tripartite

forum can develop global trade policies.

In the immediate period, we call on governments to include trade union representatives in their country delegations to the Ministerial Meetings of the WTO.

## **5. Trade policy and tariff reductions**

Faced with mounting job losses in one of the poorest parts of the world, we note that our economies are not well-placed to benefit from the "open" trading system. This is partly the result of liberalisation forced on our economies by the industrialised world. Many developed countries, and Asian countries, developed strong industries behind high tariff walls, and then liberalised. We were asked to liberalise before we modernised our industries.

We call therefore on governments not to reduce tariffs where there is massive unemployment, and instead to use industrial policy tools to improve the performance and efficiency of industry. This requires too massive investment in human resource development in our industry. The achievement of this goal will require that we approach the WTO and call for a special development trade deal which recognise that tariff reductions are often very damaging to local economies. It means too that we should not decrease tariffs faster than required by the WTO programme in our sector.

We call on all SADC countries to seek further preferential access for clothing, textiles and footwear into the

US, EU and Japanese markets. Such preferential access should be given to all SADC countries which respect basic worker rights. We are concerned at the content of some aid packages offered to Africa, which call for multi-national corporations to have greater power over our economies, and for a package of reforms in areas such as public ownership, corporate taxation, tariffs and procurement policies, which will hurt poor people and domestic industries.

We note that the regional integration process should develop all countries in the region. We strongly urge governments to ensure that our industry is treated as a sensitive industry, with a special internal tariff arrangement that will protect jobs in all countries. We see no benefit, only pain and social damage, in policies which pit workers against each other in the region.

## **6. Export processing zones**

Any geographic enclave directed at exports only is inherently weak. Integrated national and regional development policies are more effective in the long term. As unions, we do not support the extension of export processing zones of the traditional type. At the same time, we need to deal with zones where they currently exist, while we campaign for a different growth path for our countries. Where special zones exist therefore, which receive subsidies or exemptions in order to promote industrial development, we call for its integration into the national economy. This means



ensuring that companies setting up operations should be required to sign technology transfer agreements, to develop the human resource base of workers, to build local managerial skills, to pay wages which will expand the domestic market and crucially, to move such production to value-added products to ensure our economies are not marginalised .

Worker rights applicable in the national economy, together with the content of all national collective bargaining agreements should equally apply to such zones, and at a minimum, all the core ILO Conventions should be applicable to all parts of the country, including such zones.

## **7. Multinational enterprises.**

We recognise that local companies are increasing their cross border operations, and that we are seeing the development of southern African based multinational enterprises. In addition, companies based outside the region are targetting investment in a number of countries in our region. This requires a co-ordinated response from governments and trade unions.

We call on all governments, and SADC, to endorse, and implement the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, adopted by the ILO in 1977. This covers employment promotion, equality of opportunity and treatment, security of employment, training, wages and conditions of work, safety and health, freedom of

association and the right to organise, collective bargaining, consultation systems, grievance procedures and machinery for settlement of industrial disputes.

We call for the right to cross-border organisation for the labour movement at multinational enterprises, through inter alia, a protocol of SADC to require companies to facilitate and finance regular joint meetings of shop stewards in all organised workplaces across national frontiers, owned or controlled by one company. Companies should be prepared to enter into regional collective bargaining agreements where their operations are in more than one country. Governments should ensure a realignment of national laws to facilitate and encourage such agreements.

## **8. Promoting tripartite interaction and negotiation**

Our countries and our region can benefit greatly from increased tripartite dialogue and negotiation. African workers are a vital part of the wealth-creating machinery of every society. Our voices should be heard in the formulation of all social and economic policy, not only on matters affecting the labour market.

We call therefore for a genuine process of engagement between government, labour and business, on all economic policy issues, on social policies and on labour market matters. Consultation and discussion on an adhoc basis is not sufficient. A real interaction should be based on respect for the autonomy of each constituency, and should seriously seek through

negotiation, to develop agreements.

This need to be done at both national and regional level.

## **9. A development region**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) was founded as a special union of nations – it was not set up as a ‘free trade zone’. It is our historic task to unite the people of southern Africa through the integration of all policies. This means we need to ensure a convergence over time of social and labour policies, of monetary and fiscal policy, and of trade and investment policy. Many governments have been pressurised by corporations to focus only on the trade and investment dimensions – stripped of its social pillar, it will not be a development community, but simply a bigger market for corporations to maximise their profits.

We call on all governments to remain true to the original goal of the Community – and to build and strengthen the social pillar through promoting worker rights across the region, and through including tripartite delegations in all discussions on trade, investment issues, and all other areas of policy.

All governments should compile information on the existence and operations of multinational corporations within their borders, and forward such information to the SADC Labour Commission on an annual basis.

Our region requires strong and functioning institutions to manage the social and economic integration challenge. Clean and democratic governance is a basic requirement for an effective development community. Effective controls over imported goods at the customs posts is vital to ensure protection for local industry.

We call on governments to join hands with trade unions to develop a coherent industrial policy for the region. This means that we need to ensure we do not become the place in the world where crude production techniques continue while the rest of the world constantly revolutionise their technology and know-how. Southern Africa should not become the base for low value-added goods, or for trans-shipment of goods manufactured elsewhere. We call on regional governments to agree to a "local content" definition for goods which will ensure that goods produced outside the region are not passed off as locally produced. In this regard, we support the concept of at least the last two full processes of transformation in the region, and at least 90% of value added in the region, be required for goods to be classified as locally manufactured.





# **WE NOW HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE FOLLOWING ACTION**

## **1. Building organisation**

We will use our resources and energy in a renewed drive to build strong, financially independent organisations, controlled by members and run in a democratic manner.

To this end, we will co-operate in programmes to increase paid-up union membership in every country, with the target to organise annually at least 20% of ununionised workers in every country where fewer than 70% of workers are unionised.

We will build strong shopfloor structures, to allow members to develop the power to challenge unfairness at work and in the society, and to sustain democracy in their union.

We will share information and build a comprehensive database on every company in the region, and on wages and working conditions applicable in every country and every workplace.

## **2. Day of action: Jobs, Wages and workers rights.**

We agree to unite our actions across national frontiers in defense of jobs, a living wage and workers rights.

This will take place through regular activities, and an annual day of action.

We now agree to take action in the form of stoppages, pickets, placard-demonstrations, and other mass activities, on 18 July every year, or the next normal working day. For 1999, the protest will be set for 19 July.

### **3. Co-ordination of work**

We agree to meet as a regional structure at least twice every year, to build the organisation of workers in our sector, to unite labour in the region and to give effect to the contents of this declaration.

We will build the structures of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) in the continent, and will seek to build links of solidarity in concrete ways with ITGLWF affiliates in all parts of the world.

### **4. Focus on corporations**

We agree to meet with all companies operating on a cross border basis, to put to them our proposals for a region-wide relationship.

We undertake to put resources into campaigns to address those employers who have anti-union policies, whose conditions of employment are very low and whose corporate philosophy is based on job cutting and constant relocation to avoid fair working conditions.

## **5. Role of governments**

We undertake to meet with our national governments immediately after this Consultative Meeting, to bring to their attention the contents of this Declaration, and to call on governments to give effect to the proposals herein. We further will urge governments to promote tripartite dialogue on the development of national economic and social policy, and the development of regional policies for SADC.

## **6. Empowering our shopstewards**

We commit ourselves to build a strong shopstewards movement in the region. This requires that we build structures at the shopfloor, in the local area, at national level and for the region.

We will therefore ensure that we put resources into building our stewards base through education activities, campaigns and shop steward rights in our collective agreements. We will convene meetings of shop stewards in the region from the same companies, and undertake campaigns to be run across national frontiers.

## **7. Uniting the union movement.**

We acknowledge the importance of unity among workers as the vital basis for improving the conditions of work, and the social policies in the region. This requires that we unite and that we build joint activities of unions in order to achieve one union for the industry,

one federation for each country. We will engage in talks to bring together all unions for textiles, leather and clothing workers in each country to create one union.

## **8. Building support.**

We will not achieve our objectives on our own. We undertake therefore to strengthen our national centres, and regional structures. We will table the contents of this Declaration to our respective national trade union centres/federations, and call for the solidarity of unions in all sectors, and of the federations, to achieve the goals of the Declaration.



### Participating unions:

- Lesotho Clothing and Allied Workers Union,
- Textiles Garments Leather & Security Workers Union (Malawi),
- Mauritius Free Zone & Secondary Industries Employees Union,
- Textile & Garment Workers Union (Mauritius),
- Sindicato Nacional dos Trabalhadores da Industria Textil, Vestuario, Couro e Calçado (Sintevco, Mozambique),
- National Union of Leather and Allied Workers (South Africa),
- Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers Union (Sactwu, South Africa),
- Swaziland Manufacturing and Allied Workers Union,
- Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers,
- National Union of Commercial & Industrial Workers (Zambia),
- National Union of the Clothing Industry (Zimbabwe),
- Zimbabwe Leather Shoe & Allied Workers Union
- Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union.

Signed on behalf of our organisations:

*[Handwritten signatures and names of representatives from various unions, including Lesotho Clothing and Allied Workers Union, Textiles Garments Leather & Security Workers Union (Malawi), etc.]*

*[Handwritten signature]*

9 MAY 1999,  
Maputo, Mozambique.

