

First draft

## **Building COSATU in the mid 1990's Back to Basics Campaign**

### **1. Introduction**

*Elections are now behind. For the first time in our history we have a government elected by the majority of the people. There is no doubt the ANC fed government will be sympathetic to labour in particular COSATU.*

*The time is has arrive to build COSATU. The challenge facing the leadership of COSATU is how do we maintain the high moral ground we have occupied since COSATU was formed in 1985. How do we continue to be a strong organisation and how to we improve on the strengths we have.*

*The role of COSATU after elections is dealt with in the discussion paper "Towards the long term strategy". With apartheid behind us and with the programme in place dealing with what we are going to replace apartheid with, the focus of all is what COSATU's role going to be.*

*The main function of COSATU will remain coordination of work of its affiliates. The main work of affiliates will be collective bargaining, living wage campaign and meeting basic needs of our people.*

### **2. Building COSATU**

#### **2.1 Realignment of structures**

*The proposals in the draft restructuring paper urges that we should limit the number of constitutional meetings we have at all levels. This will allow more time to implement decisions, better preparations of meetings, allow more time to discuss organisational issues and allow more time to report back and receive mandates. Affiliates national, regional and local structures should be consciously linked to the COSATU year planner in order to facilitate mandating and report mechanisms.*

##### **2.1.1 National level**

*The proposal is to have two CEC meetings a year instead of three. The CEC will continue with its powers as prescribed by the constitution.*

*We should return to the constitutional provision with regard to EXCO. We should however maintain the representation of the regions. EXCO should continue to be an administrative arm deal with urgent policy matters and campaigns.*

### 2.1.2 Regional level

*The proposal is that we should hold one regional congress a year over two days. Currently we are holding three regional congresses and due to logistics we end up having two hours of real discussions. These congresses are completely a waste of time and resources.*

*We should hold one REC at two months intervals. All REC should be linked to EXCO's in order to streamline mandating and report back.*

### 2.1.3 Local level

*The constitution need to be fundamentally amended to give clear guidelines at the local level. A proposed resolution of the 1991 congress has been circulated to affiliates on two occasions. Affiliates should look at that resolution discuss in preparation for the September 1994 congress.*

## 2.2 Geographical demarcations

*The change in the demarcations arising from the new political order has thrown back to the agenda of COSATU the issue of regional demarcations. Below is the table illustrating differences between our demarcation and the new provincial provinces:*

COSATU Demarcations	OFFICE	POLITICAL Demarcations	OFFICE	COSATU Membership	ESTIMATED POPULATION
1. W.CAPE	Cape Town	1. W.Cape	Cape Town	172 989	3 633 077
2. B/KEI	East London	2. Eastern Cape	King W.T.	67 607	
3. E.Cape	Port Elizabeth	2. Eastern Cape	King W.T.	73 917	6 436 790
4. OFS.NC	Kimberly	3.Northern Cape	Kimberly	132 617	737 306
5.		4.Orange F. State	Bloemfontein		2 726 840
6. W.TVL	Vereeniging	5. North West	Mmabatho	123 091	3 252 991
7. Wits	Germiston	PWV	Jo'burg	337 462	6 669 103
8. N.TVL	Pretoria	6. N.TVL	Pietersburg	131 804	5 201 630
9. Highveld	Secunda	7. E.TVL	Nelspruit	95 081	2 921 559
10. S.Natal	Durban	8.Natal/KwaZulu	P/Maritzburg	192 095	8 505 338
11. N.Natal	Empangeni	8.Natal/KwaZulu	P/Maritzburg	23 376	

*Notes on the boundaries*

1. *COSATU's Western Cape*

*Includes the far Northern part which are now part of the Northern Cape.*

2. *OFS.NC*

*COSATU does not have an office in Orange Free State. Its office for this region are in Kimberly*

3. *Western Transvaal*

*Our region includes the Vaal Triangle with offices of the region in Vereeniging. We do not have offices in the new North West.*

4. *Wits Region*

*Our Wits region excludes Vaal and Pretoria. COSATU's membership is concentrated in this area = 337 462.*

5. *Northern Transvaal*

*COSATU includes Pretoria which is now part of the PWV in terms of the political demarcations. It also includes Odi Moretele, Hamanskraal-Babelegi, Rustenburg and Zuurist, Garankuwa, Britz, Lethlabile, Mahopane*

6. *Highveld*

*The proposal for the name change should be endorsed. Highveld is one part of the Eastern Transvaal. This region has not been affected by new demarcations.*

The proposals for changes are contained in the draft restructuring document circulated in the 13 May 1994 EXCO.

### 2.3 Industrial Demarcations

A detailed paper was developed by NALFEDI. The CEC discussed the options presented and decided on this interim measure:

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. SACTWU:                 | Clothing and textiles excluding farm workers   |
| 2. NUM:                    | Mining and energy excluding Anglo American<br>Private security which shall be transferred to<br>T&GWU.                       |
| 3. SARIWU&T&GWU:           | Mergers to go ahead, security and cleaning to<br>be transferred to SACCAWU   |
| 4. PPWAWU&CIWU             | The unions to meet and explore mergers   |
| 5. POTWA,SAMWU&<br>NEHAWU: | The mergers to go ahead, SAIDTU to join<br>the process later.  |
| 6. SACCAWU:                | Commercial and retailing, to be broadened to<br>include services including petrol attendants.                                |
| 7. SADWU:                  | Domestic workers, should in the long term be<br>included as part of the services in SACCAWU.                                 |
| 8. CAWU:                   | Construction   |
| 9. FAWU:                   | Food excluding farm workers  |
| 10. FARMS                  | Union to be launched not later than February<br>1994.  |
| 11. NUMSA:                 | Metal, Engineering, Motor excluding energy<br>and petrol attendants. Petrol attendants to be<br>part of services in SACCAWU. |

The unions affected by minor or major changes should come to the next CEC with full mandates for the matter to be finalised.

Unions should discuss all options in the demarcation paper. The September congress should finalise the matter.

### 2.4 Improving internal democracy

Our members are miles behind their membership. The speed of transition and the complexity of issues at negotiations has the development of a negative culture. Members play very little role if any in the development of policy. The danger of this is that COSATU can unwittingly become a yellow within the next few years. We need proper workable mechanisms to avoid this and return to the culture built in FOSATU days - "worker control". Below are some suggestions on how we can improve.

### 2.4.1 Re alignment of structures

*This matter has been dealt with in point 2.1 above. Better preparations with timeous notices, documentation and time to report back and receive mandates are by nature mechanisms that can be used to improve internal democracy.*

### 2.4.2 Coordinated year planner

*As raised above, affiliates must link their meetings at all levels to those of COSATU. As COSATU regional meetings are linked to the national constitutional meetings, affiliates regional and local structures should be linked to their national structures.*

### 2.4.3 Active shop floor

*Lessons drawn in the past campaigns is that attendance in all levels in particular in locals improves dramatically where there is a major campaign COSATU is fighting. Without campaigns our structures collapses and resuscitate with another campaign. The signals seems to be clear "give us something to fight on or we are not attending your meetings" The other lessons seems to be that our members are just too materialistic. They fight for something that they now will benefit them. Policy matters which will have no immediate effect on them seems not to be that much important.*

*Defiance is on the veins of not only workers but the entire democratic movement. For example you can organise a march and announce that permission has been granted, there will not much attendance. When a march is organised and you announce that it is a defiance march as the permission has been refused, attendance improves.*

*This throws some form of a dilemma for the leadership of COSATU. It needs strategic and creative thinking.*

#### 2.4.3.1 General meetings

*Locals has inconsistently and not un-uniformly calling for local general meetings. Depending of the issue, some have been very successful some became big flops. The issue is that although general meetings can be useful but they are not a solution. These meetings are called during week-ends with very limited time for discussion. They end up being lecturing forums as regional congress are, due to time constraints.*

#### 2.4.3.2 Workers forum

Workers forums are by nature general meetings. They had a different flavour during elections and though attendance was not hundred percent they were generally well attended during the elections campaign.

The issue facing us is whether these workers forums will be a viable option in a changed atmosphere.

#### 2.4.3.3 Solidarity

Though the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all" is our universal slogan, we have failed in many occasions to implement it. This is the area we can keep our shop floor active. Nobody can argue that workers are not prepared to take actions in solidarity with each other. We need to inculcate this culture. Solidarity should not be only practised internally within the unions or in COSATU, we should begin now to assist Southern African, African and international workers.

#### 2.4.3.5 Flow of information

This is the area where we are weak. There is a room for improvements. For example:

- \* we decided on a "Shop steward" magazine. It is not effective as not all shop stewards receives it. There is no effective distribution mechanisms, and there is a problem of resources

- \* we decided on a summary to be produced after each constitutional meeting. This is just not happening.

- \* We decided on a new brief/letter for the leadership, it was inconstant and now it is now longer being produced.

- \* we used to have a campaign bulletin, it is no longer happening, as we are running too few campaigns with involvement of members.

- \* we negotiated a radio slot, which in some regions is not effectively used. Negotiations on TV slot have been interrupted by elections and needs to be finalised.

All the above points if effectively used, can make a difference. We need to decide which of the above we can still afford and how best we can use them.



### 3. Servicing of members

*The warning is there; if we do not immediately improve on this issue, there will be no COSATU and no union within the next two years. Workers joined unions primarily to be protected against the bosses, but many joined as they correctly believed that they were making a contribution to the struggle for liberation.*

*The lessons are there, when Nelson Mandela was released, the attendance in our meetings took a big knock and we have not fully recovered from that. With the election behind our backs and with Madiba and the ANC now in power, things will become less.*

*During the period of workers forums, the leadership of COSATU found an opportunity to discover how wild spread is the dissatisfaction about lack of service our members had. Some of our members expectations of a ANC government is that it should ensure that they receive service from their unions.*

*Listed below are suggestions on how we can improve our service to members:*

#### 3.1 Building Structures

*Though structures are meant to maintain internal democracy, past experience has shown that they are the most viable means to service membership. The service of membership does not rely on best negotiators the union have as organisers on in the collective bargaining departments.*

*Our back to basics campaign component should revolve around ensuring that we have vibrant structures at the factory floor. We should ensure that we have regular factory general meetings which feeds to the structures of the union at all levels.*

*Attempts should be made for these general meetings to focus on service, policy and solidarity within the union, COSATU and the internationally.*

#### 3.2 Capacity building

*We have over years trained thousands of shop stewards, organisers and officials. It is now time for every union to check its resources. How many shop stewards have been trained what courses they have been trained on? Where are they and what role are they playing in the union? Are they utilising the skills they have or it was training for fun? Each union should undertake internal investigation to establish these facts.*

*We should relook at the curriculum that we have developed over the*

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past few years. Does our modules meet the expectations and needs of the mid 1990's. Can our officials deal with new challenges and complex negotiations.

Capacity building should not only be meant for shop stewards, organisers and other officials. We need to also look at the new leadership elected in the past few months. Means should be made to ensure for example that there are special courses designed to train the new office bearers on economic issues and negotiations, on labour market issues and negotiations. These are the people who should be interpreting our policy at the public level, they should be the people that leads COSATU or union negotiations teams.

### 3.3 Rural and Small Towns

COSATU is basically an urban and blue colour federation. We have very limited presence in the rural and small towns. At March 1994 CEC we for the first time in our history confronted this weakness and adopted measures to combat the problem we face.

Central to the discussion held at the CEC and the meeting of the affiliates national organisers that followed was a call to return to the tradition of COSATU. A tradition of practical solidarity and brother/sisterhood.

Faced with the reality that almost all affiliate do not have big potential in the rural towns and small towns. There is a need for sharing of resources in order to give a qualitative service to our members in these areas.

Below are some suggestions made in the CEC workshop held on the 04 March 1994:

#### 3.3.1 Resources

- \* Need to put more resources into the rural areas where the bulk of our membership lies.

- \* Need to pull the resources of affiliates and COSATU together. For this to happen we need to:

- i) Do an audit of existing resources
- ii) Additional staff either as regional organisers linked to locals or affiliates but assisting all unions in a particular area.

#### 3.3.2 Education



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- \* COSATU and affiliates need to improve and coordinate the education and training aspects.

- \* Prevent duplication of education programmes and pull together education budgets.

### 3.3.3 COSATU's Servicing affiliates

- \* Consider establishing units in COSATU for specific issues e.g. legal department to assist affiliates.

## 4. Education

The main focus of our education strategy should be on the future role of the trade union movement: They are as follows:

### 4.1 Collective bargaining

The complex issues which are firm on the agenda of any future negotiations are the following issues:

- \* Industrial restructuring
- \* Living wage including social wage
- \* Job creation and defence of the present jobs

### 4.2 Policy development

- \* Labour market
- \* Trade and industry
- \* Public works programmes

### 4.3 Development of leadership

As dealt with in point 4.3 above.

### 4.4 Training Schools

We should move very quickly in ensuring that we have a trade union school of our own. All the issues dealt with in this paper will be pipe dreams if we do not have capacity to train cadres. Ideally COSATU should have a trade union school in each region.

We should begin to explore ways of getting funding from the democratic state or using the existing institutions without any charge.

## 5. *Building women leadership*

Since our inception we have made the issue of women development a slogan. Though there is an improvement in the number of women occupying senior political and other positions in COSATU and affiliates, we still have a huge task to perform. The real question is how do we practically develop women leadership. The EXCO workshop to be held in June should answer this question.

One policy question to be finalised in the September congress is, does COSATU support quota system for women or not.

## 6. *Self sufficiency*

Our 1991 national congress resolution directs us to self sufficiency by 1996. The question that faces is what is our strategy to reach self sufficiency by 1996? Self sufficiency should mean self reliance in operational and projects expenditure. This should include all projects like PRU, Metric, international work, and mergers. The picture does not look bright now. Our budget is unrealistic in some areas including regional budgets.

With apartheid now history, South African trade union movement will not receive the sympathy it has been enjoying over years. The Denmark government has for example refused to contribute to the operational budget of COSATU this year. How many governments will adopt the same line in the coming year is every bodies guess.

Herewith some of suggestions and decisions raised in various meetings.

### 6.1 *Membership dues*

Our budget with its weaknesses is R13 961 923 for 1994, R15 479 686 in 1995 and R16 219 788 in 1996. Our membership contribution is projected to be at R4 320 000 with a R7 544 806 shortfall for in 1994, R8 640 000 with a R5 321 923 shortfall in 1995, and R16 560 000 with R340 212 surplus in 1996.

We have agreed to gradually increase membership dues to meet this scenario. It means that our subscription per member will be 60,00 cents 1994, 80,00 cents 1995 and R1,15 in 1996.

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## 6.2 Investment Strategy

*The EXCO held on the 13 May 1994 agreed to establish a COSATU investment company. This is still very much unclear as to whether it will be a viable source of funding or not*

## 6.3 Government Contribution

*We should explore the practical angles of what this means. There is a government of national unity, and no doubt some elements within this government will resist any move to fund COSATU's projects.*

## 6.4 Levy on former COSATU members in Parliament

*There are about 70 former COSATU members who are MPs. EXCO discussed this and a further discussion should be held followed by meeting with the ANC and MPs*

## 6.5 Membership growth

*It is hoped that the system Metric project is installing will trace membership and contribution easier. Our membership must continue to grow, not only as a financial source but as organisational requirement.*

## 6.6 Stop order facilities and percentage systems

*All affiliates should be encouraged to move to percentage systems. A suggestion was made for a percentage systems to be paid to COSATU. Details has not been worked. Stop order forms should be signed with all affiliates in facilitating speedy transfers and avoidance of interceptions and fraud.*

# 7. Staff

## 7.1 Motivation of staff

*COSATU has employed about 62 members of staff. There is hardly any contact with between the national office bearers and almost two thirds of the staff. The only time they meet is when there are problems or disciplinary hearings or in national staff meetings.*

*This is completely unhealthy and the national office bearers in particular the secretariat should develop a plan on how best the relationship with staff members can be improved from the current to the won of confidence, friendship, mutual respect and teamwork.*

*The suggestion is that we should adopt some of the following ideas.*

*7.1.1 Periodical come together*

*National office bearers meetings can be linked to the occasional staff come together gatherings at the head office level. The worker national office bearers should at least be part of the regional visits, have time with the regional staff in a relaxed environment.*

*7.1.2 Job Appraisal*

*conditions, motivations, salaries*

Which issues are not dealt with in this paper, send your comments to Zwelinzima Vavi, feel free to fire it into peaces, we just want the best workable plan.

INTERNAL MEMORANDUM - 11 MAY 1994

**VACANCY GENDER CO-ORDINATOR**

We are looking for a dynamic, and hard - working person to fill the above post. The vacancy exists in the Organising Department at our Head Office. The position entails:

- \* Research local and international experiences of different approaches in dealing with gender inequalities.
- \* Facilitate discussions and debates around these options within affiliates and COSATU.
- \* Ensure the implementation of COSATU's women resolutions
- \* Monitor affirmative action programme within affiliates and COSATU
- \* Assist with research into such areas as the affirmative action, job grading, child care, equal wages.
- \* Liaise with the relevant forums / structures within affiliates and COSATU on gender issues
- \* Develop women leadership programme
- \* Represent COSATU in other structures

Interested applicants should possess the following:

- The ability to work in and contribute to team building
- Knowledge of gender issues
- Be creative have an ability to initiate
- Knowledge of and commitment to the labour movement
- Computer literacy and good reporting and writing skills
- A valid drivers licence will be an advantage
- Report to the Organising Secretary

The position is available from the 1st of June 1994. The closing date for applications is May 27, 1994

Please submit your applications in writing accompanied by a CV to:

The General Secretary  
COSATU  
P.O. Box 1019  
Johannesburg 2000

