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3 year strategic plan**

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State withdraws 'treason' charges against ZCTU leaders

as union prepares for mass action

THE Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) is whipping up its structures and affiliates for a mass action in the next few days over the economic meltdown and deteriorating human and trade union rights situation in the country.

Dates and the form of mass action are still under wraps but affiliates have since been advised to mobilise their members and structures in preparation for the clarion call.

The fresh calls for mass protests came a day after the ZCTU President and secretary general Peter Mutasa and Japhet Moyo had charges of subversion against them were withdrawn by the state had been given the green light by the ZCTU's highest decision making body in between congresses, the general council. The council resolved to stage national protests after receiving reports on the state of preparedness towards action against poverty, the deteriorating and unstable macro-economic environment.

The General Council noted that working people of Zimbabwe have suffered immensely as wages have failed to keep pace with the inflationary trend. The situation has worsened rendering it practically impossible for workers across all sectors to earn the current salaries and sustain their families or be able to go to work.

The upward adjustment in fuel prices has had knock on effects on the prices of basic goods and services, worsening the impact of the already depreciating exchange rate on the general level of prices.

Since the scrapping of the multicurrency, despite government propaganda, prices have remained high

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ZCTU Sec General - Japhet Moyo



ZCTU President - Peter Mutasa

BY ADMORE MARAMBANYIKA

The state has withdrawn charges of attempting to overthrow a constitutionally elected government that were being levelled against the ZCTU President and Secretary General Peter Mutasa and Japhet Moyo respectively for a calling for a stayaway in January this year.

The two were arrested on separate incidents following their clarion call for

workers and citizens to a stay away after the government had unilaterally hiked fuel prices.

The stayaway which was supposed to run for three days from the 14th -16th of January turned violent after a military crackdown on protestors which left 17 people dead hundreds injured and incarcerated. Police and soldiers, responding to mass demonstrations also used live ammunition on protestors. The country was then shut down for a week

and authorities disconnected internet services to the public to cut off communication as part of measures to contain information flow at the peak of the protests.

The government then moved in and arrested the organisers of the stay away and Moyo who was not in Zimbabwe at the time of the strike call was arrested at the Robert Mugabe International Airport on his return from China where he was attending an international trade union

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Shinga Mushandi Shinga, Qina Sisebenzi Qina

DOCTOR'S STRIKE

ZCTU demands Obadiah Moyo's head

By Staff Reporter

THE Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) has demanded the resignation of the Minister of health Obadiah Moyo over his failure to reasonably handle the doctor's strike.

In a statement the ZCTU Secretary General Japhet Moyo said the labour body was greatly disturbed by the government's lack of seriousness in resolving its dispute with the striking doctors.

Doctors have been on strike for over 90 days and the ministry of health has chosen to be 'tough' by firing the striking doctors instead of responding to their labour grievances and alleviate the suffering of many Zimbabweans failing to access healthcare.

"The ZCTU observes with sadness that Zimbabwe's public health system has deteriorated significantly under the stewardship of Dr Obadiah Moyo. In real democracies, the Minister should have resigned for failing to resolve this impasse. It is in this vein that we call upon Dr. Obadiah Moyo to be man enough and call it quits," said Moyo.

The government has not shown its willingness to negotiate in good faith choosing to be confrontational and threatening the striking doctors while ignoring their grievances. The interference of the executive into labour disputes is also a worrying trend which the ZCTU views as a strategy to silence the striking doctors.

"Even President Mnangagwa was quoted in the press warning the striking doctors that the Government was aware of external forces propping up their illegal industrial action'. This is a paranoid government that sees

any genuine action as meant to topple it from power," said the ZCTU.

The strike has seen the closure of almost all central hospitals, children's units, provincial hospitals and cessation of emergency life-saving procedures throughout the country and the few doctors who have remained at work are failing to cope.

"The continued strike by the doctors is causing untold suffering and unnecessary death of ordinary Zimbabweans as the strike has paralyzed operations at state-run hospitals. What is more worrying is that for the past 15 years or so, doctors have been striking almost every year without their issues being addressed. The strikes have become an annual event, and the government has been failing to find a lasting solution," said Moyo.

Doctors have been lamenting poor salaries and working conditions and have said they are incapacitated to go to work. They are also demanding that the salaries be indexed to the prevailing interbank rate and that government must fulfill its promise to provide sufficient drugs and equipment at the public hospitals.

"These are genuine reason and any reasonable government would attend to these issues. Instead of looking into the grievances, the government has responded by dismissing some of the doctors and threatening those who dare join the strike," said Moyo.

The ZCTU demands that government urgently address the needs of striking doctors in order to avoid further loss of lives and find a lasting solution to this perennial problem which has seen doctors going on strike year after year.

The government has so far fired about 500 doctors and more

are set to appear before disciplinary hearings.

Health Service Board chairperson, Dr. Paulinus Sikosana, said more doctors are expected to appear for disciplinary hearings following the industrial action, which began on September 3, and has devastated state-owned hospitals.

"In line with section 4 of the Labour Act (National Employment Code of Conduct), the disciplinary hearings continue, whereby 516 out of 1,601 medical doctors employed in the public sector are expected to appear before the disciplinary tribunals," he said.

He said the Health Service Board has tried, in vain, to negotiate with the striking doctors, who have vowed to continue with the industrial action until their grievances are met.



Obadiah Moyo

In September junior doctors earned about 400 Zimbabwean dollars (\$33) as basic salary and an "on-call allowance" of approximately 1,000 Zimbabwean dollars (\$83) a month. In October

the doctors rejected a 60 percent salary increase offered by the government and pledged to press on with the industrial action.



Doctors demonstrating over Dr Peter Magombeyi's abduction. The abduction fueled the doctors' resolve to press ahead for better working conditions

ITUC – Africa dismisses Zim government's human rights report to ACHPR

ZIMBABWE government's report to the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) apprising the continental organ on the improvements made to date on human rights issues is a misrepresentation of the situation on the ground, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Africa has said.

The continental organisation, which represents 56 national trade union federations with a total membership of 15 million workers from 45 countries, made the remarks in commentary addressed to ACPHR chairperson.

"We wish to reiterate the position raised by the Zimbabwean Civil Society

Community that it was not consulted to participate and contribute to the development of this Government report as provided for by the reporting conditions set out by this Commission," ITU-Africa said.

The continental labour organ said government's exclusion of key incidents on rights abuses as "deliberate and reflective of the current state of intolerance to critical voices and non-state actors with dissenting opinions even when such opinions and suggestions are intended to improve the situation of the rights of Zimbabweans."

The report, whose copy is in our possession, was prepared in response to observations made by the ACHPR on its fact-finding mission 2006 visit.

Part of the submissions made by

government are that Zimbabwe Republic Police members are overwhelmingly equipped with human rights knowledge enabling them to deal with members of the public ethically.

"So far we have trained 30 000 police officers on human rights since January 2014. In 2018 alone, 45 584 police details were trained in human rights including an additional 7 220 who have been trained to date," Justice Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi told the Commission.

Government said the events associated with August 1 killings were not sanctioned by the State and as such, must never be classified as "an act of extra judicial killings" as has been alleged by some international media forums.

Ziyambi said: "Zimbabwe

judiciary has been consistent in the condemnation of the practices of torture. This point is made clear in the celebrated case of State versus Jestina Mukoko where the judiciary reiterated that no person should be subjected to physical or psychological torture, or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment."

Government's report claims efforts have been made to guarantee freedoms of expression and assembly following the recent repealing of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and Public Order and Security Act (POSA).

He also highlighted that it has now become the norm to carry out public consultations prior the implementation of policies and laws affecting the people.

However, ITUC-Africa

dismissed most of the details submitted by government arguing they contradict the exact situation obtaining in the embattled Southern Africa nation.

"Chairperson, we desire that this Commission extract a genuine commitment from the Zimbabwean government to a follow-up process necessary for the attainment of the effective implementation of the outstanding issues contained in the state report.

"We desire to ensure that Zimbabwe returns to the path of normalcy, stability and progress. We are committed to genuinely partner our government and other stakeholders towards this task," the labour confederation said. (Newzimbabwe.com)

Mutasa blasts Ncube over anti-worker budget

By Own Correspondent

ZIMBABWE Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) president recently told finance minister, Mthuli Ncube in his face that the recently announced 2020 national budget is anti-worker and will exacerbate poverty among the country's workforce.

Mutasa made the bold remarks during the post 2020 budget breakfast meeting which was held at Harare International Conference Center a day after the budget presentation.

Ncube and other high ranking ruling party officials were also present at the event where the ZCTU president was not deterred by the tense atmosphere and registered his displeasure.

He said the post budget dialogue was different because unionists are used to dialogue with policy makers at very funny places either Chikurubi or at Remand prison.

Said Mutasa, "If they (government officials) do not want to dialogue with us they send some guys with teargas and canisters so this is a development that is well appreciated where we are in a better place. I therefore hope there will be freedom after this speech."

Mutasa said labour would have appreciated the post budget dialogue if the process had started off with widespread consultations.

"With respect on behalf of labour there is nothing much for workers and poor citizens, we take the mantra associated with this document as rhetoric since we have heard it before. It can only be



Finance minister Professor Mthuli Ncube

pro-poor when we taste it on our tables.

"Currently we can't buy bread, clothes and rentals but these were the major issues that we thought will be addressed. We have seen a lot of complicated statistics in the budget. We were expecting to see figures on the numbers of people who have dropped out of school because of austerity and the previous budget but we did not get those," he said.

The labour president described the national budget as "elitist and bookish leaving out what the ordinary folk down in Nyanga and Mahenge will think about it."

He bemoaned the fact that the budget came at a time when the country is going through a second major economic crisis the first one having been in 2008.

"We were therefore expecting a paradigm shift, but worryingly the

budget is premised on illusionary stability and purported successes of the Transitional Stabilisation Program similar to "kuzvifonera" (beating your own drum).

"There is no stability minister, I know you are a professor and if I write an exam and say this economy is stable, you will definitely fail me."

Mutasa said labour was expecting the issue of currency to be resolved and reminded the treasury boss that workers who were earning US\$400 before adopting the mono-currency regime are now getting an equivalent of US\$ 40 while pensioners are getting US\$5.

"Without national cohesion and ownership, this budget is only going to be guaranteed through the use of baton sticks, teargas and canisters," he added.

Social partners brace for 4th generation DWCP

BY OWN CORRESPONDENT

SOCIAL partners are bracing for the fourth generation Decent Work Program (DWP) which is expected to achieve opportunities for work that is productive delivering a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families while offering better prospects for personal development and social integration among others.

Speaking to The Worker recently, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions national organiser, Michael Kandukutu said the program will run over a four years period.

"The DWCP for Zimbabwe 2019-2022 will serve as a framework to support government of Zimbabwe to achieve its national development policy, the Transitional Stabilisation Programme, October 2018 – December 2020 which aims to ensure fiscal consolidation, economic stabilisation, and stimulation of growth and creation of employment," he said.

According to the implementation of the DWCP will be undertaken by the National Steering Committee, which is a sixteen member committee, comprising the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and other key Ministries, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ), with the ILO CO-Harare as the Secretariat.

The Committee will also be charged with the responsibility to address operational issues relating to the DWCP, ILO interventions in Zimbabwe as well as plan or adjust concrete activities aimed at assisting the constituents.

Thus, it will oversee the formulation and planning of projects and activities developed within the framework of the DWCP and to approve projects before their implementation. It will also guide the resource mobilization efforts.

The committee will also oversee the work of the tripartite structures created for the management and implementation of all the technical cooperation projects, for example tripartite project advisory committees

Zimbabwe adopted the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organisation in 2005 and has implemented it in three phases from 2005-2008, 2009-2011 and 2012-2017.

Over the years, the focus of the country's Decent Work Country Programme has been on growing the economy through sustainable enterprises and job creation for poverty alleviation, while upholding international labour standards.

In 2005, the country prioritised poverty reduction through employment creation, and the fight against HIV and AIDS at the workplace as well as strengthening social dialogue. In 2009, the country undertook a review of the first cycle which was instrumental in developing the second cycle.

The review enabled the tripartite constituents to revise focus areas and the DWCP prioritised employment and poverty reduction, while also giving attention to social dialogue and social protection.

ZFTU SG backs ZCTU's vision, castigates government for anti-labour policies

By Own Correspondent

ZIMBABWE Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) Secretary General Kenias Shamhuyarira indicated to be in a major paradigm shift when he delivered a speech in support of Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) while castigating President Emmerson Mnangagwa's anti worker policies.

ZFTU, a rival unions' federation formed during the late former President Robert Mugabe's tenure to counter the ZCTU politically, has in the past identified itself with the ruling party ZANU- PF policies.

But the remarks made by Shamhuyarira at the national labour symposium on the future of work held in the capital recently, proved the rival union has had a "Damascus moment" and is equally fed up of government's anti-worker policies.

He predicted it will be difficult for Zimbabwe to move on with other nations into the fourth industrial revolution because of the current overwhelming economic problems.

Said Shamhuyarira, "For us to talk about the future we must talk about the past which has been unfortunately bleak hence the big question is what dowe do now with the type of leadership we have in the country?"

"The problems bedeviling the country's workers are being caused by a few individuals who are continuously muzzling us, including employers who are connected to few

politicians."

He said politics in the long term does not sustain an economy hence the need to be simple and clear.

Added Shamhuyarira, "Even as we prepare for the fourth industrial revolution we need a situation whereby government must urgently work towards retooling industry as well as

making sure that resources which lift the country's economy are well funded."

Also speaking at the occasion, EMCOZ executive director, Nester Mukweva said the future of work discourse is important because of the impending technology's transformation.

Said Mukweva, "Critical questions on whether employers and

employees going to be organised as they are today? This simply calls for the need to craft a resilient social dialogue through the TNF because the fourth industrial revolution is coming against a background where there is high unemployment, low productivity and power outages."

ZCTU secretary general, Japhet Moyo said industrial revolutions are inevitable as businesses try to improve productivity and enhance profits.

He said unfortunately these revolutions are coming with far reaching changes to patterns and nature of production.



State withdraws 'treason' charges against ZCTU leaders

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meeting and was charged with subversion. He was remanded in custody for two weeks at Chikurubi, the country's maximum security prison.

On 15 January, police raided Mutasa's home and destroyed property and severely beat up his brother. Mutasa who was in hiding at the peak of the protests fearing for life surrendered himself to the police and was also charged with subversion, his "crime" was based on recording and circulating a video calling on workers to take part in the protest action.

The arrests sparked outrage and the government was condemned internationally for failing to uphold human and trade union rights particularly the right to peaceful assembly and association.

Protest letters directed at President Emmerson Mnangagwa flooded from across the globe from trade unions, progressive governments and institutions. Demonstrations were held at Zimbabwe embassies in some countries including Nigeria and Botswana.

International trade union bodies including the ITUC, TUC, FNV Mondiaal and Solidarity Centre launched international solidarity actions to complement the ZCTU efforts demanding the unconditional

withdrawal of charges against the two. The ZCTU reported the matter to the International Labour Organisation and the case was put before the ILC in June 2019.

The ILO's Committee on the Application of Standards (CAS) found Zimbabwe guilty of violating labour rights and went on to recommend that government accepts a high level mission visit to follow up on progress of implementation of recommendations from the committee. The government however, rejected the request.

When CAS heard the Zimbabwe case, the International Trade Union Confederation had raised all violations concerning arrests of workers and their leaders, dismissals of workers representatives, deaths of protestors, damage to ZCTU property, injuries of staff members and the delays to reform labour laws among others.

The ITUC had ranked Zimbabwe 10th among the worst violators of labour and human rights.

The ZCTU also took the matter to the United Nations Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Association and Assembly seeking intervention over the deteriorating human and trade union rights situation in Zimbabwe.

Preliminary findings by the UN Special rapporteur gave a damning

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The Worker

Voice of the Labour Movement

Comment

2020 Budget: Nothing for workers

In the 'normal' days, Zimbabweans would look forward to the presentation of the national budget anticipating better provisions like tax relief, tax free bonuses.

This was so because of the beckoning festive season. But this is no longer the same.

The 2020 National Budget Statement presented by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Professor Mthuli Ncube on November 14, 2019 under the theme 'Gearing for Higher Productivity, Growth and Job Creation' was one of those "damb squibs".

As noted by the ZCTU, the budget was not inspirational at all and there is nothing for workers. The tax relief measures proposed in the budget are nothing in real terms for workers are being paid peanuts to say the least.

Spare a thought for a farm worker who is earning less than \$300 per month who is expected to buy in the same store with you and me? Three hundred dollars can hardly buy five items these days.

Prices have continued to rise while wages and salaries are far way behind. Do our authorities ever think how Zimbabweans are managing to pay for food, transport, accommodation, education, health and social protection?

The Minister claimed that he is moving from "austerity" to "prosperity" and that his focus is 'Gearing for Higher Productivity, Growth and Job Creation'.

We have heard this before, eve promises of creating 2 million jobs. He based his improved growth on a favourable rainfall season, improved macroeconomic stability through continued

austerity; improved electricity supply through imports and other alternative sources of power; supportive tax and non-tax incentives; continued ease of doing business reforms and investment. The man is hallucinating. Weather forecasters have already predicted 'Normal to below normal' rains which we all know by our experiences mean poor rainfall. With little rains, where the hell does he think we will get electricity from? Kariba Dam is drying up.

What we need are realistic ministers who do not play with people's lives claiming budget surpluses when the country failing to provide basics like water and sanitation, proper health services, and electricity shortages is tantamount to murder. The Minister should wake up to reality!

VMCZ
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ATDU Network promoting stronger unions and better development policies in Africa



Alex Nkosi

From the 20 – 21 November 2019, trade unions from across the African continent will gather in the Nigerian capital of Abuja for the 4th Ordinary Congress of the Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa). Held every four years, congresses are a defining moment for trade unions in general, and by extension, the environment in which they operate.

As one of the oldest civil society bodies on the African continent, trade unions played a critical role in shaping the evolution and developmental trajectory of modern Africa. For many years trade unions have represented the interests of workers, while in some cases serving as avenues through which leaders of public office receive training and are able to prepare for political office.

But as the world of work undergoes massive and continuous changes – most of which undermine the tenets of decent work – the trade union movement has to change its rules of engagement if it is to remain effective and relevant. Our remit is no longer limited to better working conditions and to engaging with employers and governments. African unions are now also calling into question and confronting the fundamental issues that foster income inequality, poverty and the neoliberal onslaught against workers' rights.

It was in this context that ITUC-Africa passed a resolution to create the Africa Trade Union Development network (ATUDN) during the last ITUC-Africa

Congress which was held in Dakar, Senegal in November 2015, with the aim of bringing the trade union perspective into the international development policy discourse, especially in relation to their role in implementing and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ATUDN's approach to work is premised on four principles: reinforcing capacity for African trade unions in all matters development; strengthening the critical role of research and policy analysis in social dialogue; underlining the importance of evidence-based advocacy; and emphasising the cardinal role that partnerships play in advancing a common cause.

These four principles have been instrumental in advancing the network's work streams that range from work on the aspirations of Africans as articulated in the Africa Union's Agenda 2063, to ensuring that there is accountability in the involvement of the private sector in development, work on South-South cooperation and finally on development financing. But it is the SDGs that have been the biggest preoccupation of the network. As a global development framework, all the other work streams fall squarely under its tentacles.

The ATUDN has also established working relationships with various multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the United Nations, the European Union, the Southern Africa Development Cooperation, the East Africa Community and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to name but a few. Through these networks, spaces for meaningful policy dialogue have been established and policy perspectives from ITUC-Africa have been sought on several important issues pertaining to development.

Capacity building and research For the last four years, the

network has been reinforcing the capacity of African trade unions on several development-related subjects. In relation to Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, our aim has been to make African workers appreciate their role in the implementation of both agendas, especially on holding their governments accountable for their commitments to decent work and lifting millions of Africans out of poverty.

The network believes that people must be able to organise themselves (freedom of association) through trade unions to negotiate a living wage and defend decent working conditions on an equal footing with their employer (collective bargaining). The network has held a number of thematic workshops geared to strengthening the work on these twin agendas, and as a result, African trade unions are mainstreaming the SDGs into their day-to-day priorities, are able to articulate their key 'asks', and can also ably produce SDGs shadow country reports – a trade union SDGs monitoring tool that complements the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) which are the official government reports on the progress of SDGs implementation.

More importantly, the network has identified various ways to advocate and communicate its priorities more effectively at national, regional and global levels. The network has also carried research on a number of pertinent issues, from development effectiveness to a yet-to-be-published nine-country study on the state of African Trade Unions to research on South-South and triangular cooperation.

While the year 2015 was pivotal in setting the global sustainable development agenda, it also occasioned the heightening of the reconfiguration of development financing in the context of the SDGs. The script goes like this: Agenda 2030 is an ambitious

ZCTU warns gvt over wage, price freeze

BY Staff Reporter

The ZCTU has warned the government against pushing for a wage and price freeze as it battles to contain runaway inflation which has eroded household incomes and left many employees unable to afford transport costs to get to work.

Information minister Monica Mutsvangwa, during a post cabinet briefing early in November said government was putting measures to "contain loss of the workers purchasing power and request worker representatives to provide three nominees to attend a Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) Technical Committee workshop."

"The workshop is aimed at coming up with a Social Contract that is aimed at bringing the parties to a common position...This may result in the freeze of incomes and prices," said Mutsvangwa.

The ZCTU reacted to Mutsvangwa's utterances with a warning that such an agenda at TNF force the ZCTU to call for protests.

"Any discussion at the TNF on wage freeze is tantamount to murder in this hyper-inflationary environment. We will not only reject that agenda but also ask workers to stop going to work. All



Information Minister Monica Mutsvangwa announced government's intention to introduce income and prize freeze

workers are incapacitated," tweeted the ZCTU.

The plight of workers and citizens has been worsened by the introduction of several financial policies largely from February 2019 which have triggered uncertainty and instability in the financial sector thereby fuelling inflation.

Month-on-month inflation stood at 17.7 percent in September 2019 while year-on-year inflation, which is no longer officially published, is estimated to have reached over 400 percent in the same month.

The last official year-on-year

inflation figure stood at 175.6 percent before Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube banned publication of annual inflation figures saying they were reflecting the truth of prices on the ground.

Retailers and service providers are however resisting the banning the use of multi-currency system and when they are not charging in US dollars, they are indexing prices to the prevailing unofficial exchange rate while the majority of workers continue to earn in local currency.

.....as TNF partners disagree on key issues

By Own Correspondent

DISUNITY continues to haunt the country's social dialogue platform, Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) after representatives from labour, government and business abandoned a recent meeting over failure to agree on priority issues.

A TNF insider who spoke to The Worker on condition of anonymity said the platform continues to face challenges in deliberating key issues affecting the country's workforce.

"Representatives from labour tabled an agenda on the need to urgently resolve the current persecution of union leaders by government while business representatives set the agenda on the discussion centered on recent government's economic sabotage accusations of their constituency

in the wake of price hikes," said the source

She explained that government's representatives were more interested in the issue of health delivery and due to the differences, the meeting could not proceed.

Added the source, "So the representatives could not proceed with the meeting because government did not bring background papers on the discussion topics, prompting the adjournment of the meeting before discussion because the government representative could not provide concrete solutions on issues raised by labour and government."

President Emmerson Mnangagwa launched a legislated TNF in June this year but the platform has not made any meaningful progress since then.

Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions president Peter Mutasa told employers at the Employers'

Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ) 37th congress held in Bulawayo last month that there has been no progress on the negotiating platform due to the lack of trust among the tripartite partners and lack of consultation by government.

He pointed out that social partners are not consulted and are taken by surprise when policies such as Zim Asset and TSP are announced by government.

Even EMCOZ president, Israel Murefu told the same congress on the need for more consultation by government particularly in the crafting of statutory instruments.

He said, "So many statutory instruments are being crafted by the authorities without the input of the other parties that is business and labour. It is like the country is being run on statutory instruments."

ZCTU prepares for mass action

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beyond the reach of many while inflation continues to go up. The General Council reiterated its call for wages and salaries to be paid in the United States Dollars or its equivalent at interbank market rate.

Hopes for change had been pinned on the Tripartite Negotiating Forum (TNF) but it has proved to be in a false start as partners are not agreeable to issues that need to be attended to urgently.

Labour is petitioning for an end to the harassment and torture of trade unionists, business wants government to retract the 'terrorist' label it tagged on business as prerequisites for genuine dialogue while government wants to press ahead negotiating basing on its newly introduced policies which business and labour are agreeable that they are not working.

State withdraws 'treason' charges against ZCTU leaders

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report of the new dispensation's iron-fisted rule.

Presenting his preliminary report at the conclusion of his 10-day visit to Zimbabwe, UN Special Rapporteur on Peaceful Assembly Association, Clement Nyatsososi Voule criticised the deployment of the army and police during peaceful protests.

"The involvement of defence forces in managing assembly contradicts the guideline for the policing of assembly by the enforcement officially in Africa as they provide that military forces must only be used in exceptional circumstances and only if absolutely necessary," he said.

"I beg the government to amend laws that are not in line with the constitution and to make use of independent institution which are designed to facilitate the exercise of human rights and reports in order to make sure that human rights are enjoyed by all that are in the jurisdiction," he added.

In the course of the year, while on routine remand the two ZCTU leaders have been subjected to serious threats warning them against making any 'unreasonable' decisions or actions within their work mandate.

They received death threat letters accompanied with live bullets, threats on text messages with one of the messages threatening to rape Moyo's young daughter.

ZCTU pushes for additional powers to the Labour Court for enhanced social justice in labour matters

The ZCTU has proposed the establishment of a labour division within the Supreme Court and conferment of additional powers to the Labour Court to enhance the dispensation of social justice in labour matters.

In a letter to the Minister of labour, the ZCTU urged the labour minister to urgently engage their justice counterparts to expedite the issue.

"As you are aware in our labour law reform principles, we agreed to review the powers of the Labour Court so as to give it power to enforce its own decisions and confer it with additional powers like the power to issue declaratory orders, interdicts etc," wrote the ZCTU.

The ZCTU said there was serious miscarriage of justice as judgments were not factoring in the social justice component hence the need for a specialised labour division.

'Kindly note that the multiplicity of courts handling labour disputes is a cause of concern among workers and amounts to forum seeking causing unnecessary delay of labour justice and clogging of the Magistrate and High Court case rolls. The application of different rules governing different courts is also a cause for concern as unsophisticated workers are not able to comply with the rules of the magistrate and High Court," said ZCTU.

The labour body proposed that labour cases must be dealt with and be completed by the labour court except where an appeal is in the Supreme Court and constitutional court.

"We are of the view that the Supreme Court must be administratively divided so as to have a labour division with judges who are specialised in labour law and international labour standards. We note over the years that decisions of the Labour Court which are premised on the notion of social justice lie on appeal to the Supreme Court that largely administer common law principles save where the statute is clear," said ZCTU.

THE ZCTU cited the famous Don Nyamande and Kingstone Donga vs Zuva Petroleum case in which the Supreme relied on the common law principle and ruled in favour of termination on notice. The ruling triggered a carnage and more than 27000 workers had their contracts of employment terminated within a week without adequate compensation. Employers terminated them on two weeks' salary for every year served as compensation. Employers took advantage of the provision to offload long serving employees who would have been well compensated.

Parliament had to intervene with the enactment of the Labour Amendment Act No 5 which provided for compensation in retrospect to cushion the affected workers from the injustice they had suffered as a result of the Supreme Court ruling.

"The granting of additional powers to the labour court and a specialised Supreme Court labour division will help in the effectiveness of our courts in dispensing social justice for socio-economic development," said ZCTU.

COLA for catering industry

BY GIFT KAPEKO

Zimbabwe Catering & Hotel Workers Union (ZCHWU) employees have been awarded a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) back dated from 1st September 2019 up to the 31st December 2019.

The allowance shall be paid to every employee in the particular class of establishment irrespective of grade, occupation or length service. \$304.00 shall be paid for employees in Class 2, \$342.61 for employees in Class 1 and \$384.69 for employees who fall under Class 1a. The least paid employee in the Industry will now receive a total of \$750.00 per month; basic pay will be \$321.00, transport allowance of \$70.00, housing allowance of \$55.00 and COLA of \$304.00.

According to the COLA agreement the minimum wages for each class of establishments and allowances shall remain unchanged, and no deductions such as pension fund, council levy and trade union shall be made from the COLA. Parties to the agreement agreed to review wages and salaries if the economic environment continues to deteriorate.

435 doctors fired over strike so far

Zimbabwean doctors who have so far been fired has reached 435 as government remains unmoved to the protracted industrial action by its hospital staff.

Acting Information Minister, Mangaliso Ndlovu said the sacked medical practitioners were at liberty to reapply if they still wished to be reengaged.

"The strike by the doctors over conditions of service has now gone beyond 77 days," said the government Minister.

"A total of 480 disciplinary cases have so far been heard, an additional 149 doctors have been found guilty and discharged and the cumulative total of doctors discharged is 435."

Only 45 doctors have been found innocent, said the minister.

The disciplinary hearings will be concluded on the 27th of November.

"Government will not rescind its position on the fired doctors," he said.

Despite the sackings by government, doctors have defiantly stuck to their job action.

Zimratu launches strategic plan document



Strategic plan document launch

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Zimbabwe Revenue and Allied Workers Trade Union (ZIMRATU) has launched its strategic plan for the period 2019 to 2022 that would guide the union's operations and provide direction for transitional mechanisms to take the union to another level.

The three year strategic plan was drafted at a workshop which ran from 29 January -2 February 2019 attended by the elected national executive members committee leaders, regional representatives and staff members following the union's November 2018 congress and 1st national executive meeting of January 2019 which resolved to have a strategic plan.

Facilitating at the launch, ZCTU PAED head of department

Vimbai Zinyama, who facilitated the drafting of the strategy at the union's last national executive council meeting said the union had managed to reach the first milestone towards building a stronger union.

"You have had a congress and the process you have put together needs to be worked on. I trust that come 2022....you will be here and more would be following the union as a result of the implementation of this strategy. Now that you have reached this stage we have achievements to expect and some work to do to create a formidable force out of ZIMRATU. As you nurture each other and grow, value the commitments that you have made to this document for yourselves, the union and the country at large," she said.

She urged the union to focus on its future and the future of trade

unionism as workers are currently feeling the pinch of the 4th industrial revolution threatening job and income security.

Officially launching the strategic plan document, ZIMRATU President Dominic Manyangadze said if you don't plan you are planning to fail.

"We are reformulating and refocusing our vision in the labour movement. We have made a commitment which we are going to use to measure our performance. This document will be used up until the next ZIMRATU congress. We have looked at a variety of issues, scanned the environment for the threats. We have looked in all directions and our findings are in this strategic plan," he said.

He said all budgets and actions of the national executive should speak to the strategic plan adding that in light of current challenges, the union needs to foster strategic alliances with other like minded organisations in the country.

The union now has a new vision, mission and running from 2019-2022.

Its new vision reads "A formidable force in championing the rights and interests of workers in Zimbabwe and beyond"

"We now need to respond to violations within the country and even outside the country," said Manyangadze.

The new union's mission now reads "To Safeguard, Promote, Advance And Protect The Constitutional Freedoms, Needs, Interests And Rights Of ZIMRATU members through constructive engagement and in solidarity with the labour fraternity."

The success factors key to the strategic plan include increased membership, mainstreaming of democracy and good governance and empowerment for employees among others.

ZCTU Gweru district restructured

BY GIFT KAPEKO

The ZCTU Gweru district has restructured its committees after losing most committee members through termination on notice which left the structures depleted.

The district women's and main committees were operating with a skeleton staff because most of the elected committee members contracts of employment were terminated on notice during the Chidyasiku era.

Fresh elections for gap filling were held to enable the committees to run smoothly. Gweru district women's and main committee elections were held on the 24th and 26th September 2019 respectively. Enitha Nyati from Zimbabwe Security Guards Union (ZISEGU) was the retaining officer during the Gweru District Women's elections. Rumbidzai Gadzani from Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railway's Union (ZARU) was elected the Chairperson, deputized by S. Ngwenya from Zimbabwe Urban Council Workers Union (ZUCWU). The other elected executive members of the district women's committee were; I. Mutema secretary from ZISEGU, C. Moyo vice secretary from ZUCWU, B. Macherera treasurer from Zimbabwe Education Scientific Social and Cultural Workers Union (ZESSCWU). Elected organizers were T. Mashonganyika and S. Chikumba.

While on the other hand Noel Mano from Zimbabwe Construction and Allied Trade Union (ZCATWU) presided over the elections of the Gweru Main District Committee where Moses Gwaunza from Commercial Workers Union of Zimbabwe (CWUZ) retained his previous position



Moses Gwaunza ZCTU Gweru District Chairperson

as the Gweru District chair and was deputized by Melphina Gwabeni from ZUCWU. Bernard Sibanda was elected the district secretary and Precious Mujere from National Mining Workers Union of Zimbabwe (NMWUZ) was elected the vice secretary. The previous district secretary Eustina Kamuka from ZESSCWU was elected the district treasurer while David Tsanana from Zimbabwe Catering & Hotel Workers Union (ZCHWU) and Roseline Madondo were elected organizer and deputy organizer respectively.

The elected committees attended an orientation workshop which was held at Empumalanga Lodge in Gweru on the 9th and 10th October 2019. At this workshop committee members were equipped with tactics and skills on how to run workers events in the district. (Print Version)

UNION BRIEFS

FFAWUZ affiliates new sector union

BY STAFF REPORTER

THE Food Federation and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe (FFAWUZ) has bagged another affiliate, the Brewing and Allied Workers Union to increase its sector unions to nine.

FFAWUZ general secretary Runesu Dzimiri said his federation was slowly achieving its growth targets.

"At our last congress we were mandated to increase membership from five sectors and from 2015 we have managed to rope in four more new sectors into the FFAWUZ family. Our target now is to have a huge presence in the food sector as the lead union. The Brewing sector comes in as a critical sector with a huge potential. Though it is still in its infancy FFAWUZ is prepared to nurture it into a giant," he said.

He said the food sector has huge potential and FFAWUZ was now working towards increasing membership in its sector unions.

"We have a challenge of multiplicity of unions within the food industry. These unions are always scrambling for membership and our drive now is to go for membership servicing and retention. We have made some strides in some sectors where our sector unions command huge numbers and we are now focussing on the same where we are lagging behind. We cannot afford to relax," he said.

Dzimiri said FFAWUZ's presence at the shopfloor and the various capacity building and educational programmes the federation has been carrying out for workers have boosted workers confidence in the union.

"There were some workplaces where FFAWUZ had become very unpopular but through continuous engagement we have managed to sanitise our image and the workers now appreciate the union. From those companies we have harvested membership and shall continue to respond to the needs and aspirations of workers accordingly," he said.

ZCTU GBV Education & training manual finalised

BY STAFF REPORTER

The ZCTU Education department has finalised the Gender Based Violence Education and Training Manual.

The first draft of the manual was completed in May last year and the final writing and editing process was completed last month at a two-day workshop in Mutare.

The process analysed the content, relevance and flow of the 1st draft with a view to enrich and make it more user friendly. The manual will be a tool to be used by the ZCTU and its affiliates in combating GBV at the workplace and in the communities.

Main objectives of the manual would be to examine the extent of the problem of GBV in the workplace, trade unions and communities and offers remedies. It also has aspects of the new ILO instruments on violence ZCTU GBV Education & Training Manual completed and harassment, Convention 190/19 and Recommendation 206. The manual also explores the role of trade unions in the elimination of GBV

Civil servants demands to be paid in forex

BY STAFF REPORTER

Civil servants have expressed dismay over new budget provisions which require workers to pay import duty in foreign currency and are now demanding to be paid in forex.

Through the Apex Council which represents civil servants, responding to the budget a few days after Finance and Economic Development Minister Mthuli Ncube presented the 2019 National Budget, civil servants have expressed their displeasure.

The Apex Council, an umbrella body for civil servants unions was dismayed by Mthuli Ncube's decision to cut the bonuses of civil servants without any consultation.

The Apex Council was also particularly irked by the decision to introduce foreign currency only duty for motor vehicles and other goods, and as a result, has demanded that the civil servants should also be paid in foreign currency in order for them to be able to enjoy these goods as well.

"If workers are going to pay duty in forex then it follows that salaries should be paid in forex. This proposal can only entail that civil servants will not be able to buy vehicles and some unmentioned stuffs," reads the statement.

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ZCHWU shopstewards rejuvenate union popularity in Victoria Falls



ZCHWU shopstewards' certification

BY STAFF REPORTER

The Zimbabwe Catering and Hotel Workers Union (ZCHWU) has trained identified members with strength and ability to lead and better represent the workers and the trade union in the Victoria Falls region who underwent a three-phased, week long training programmes per month.

The phases offered different facets of trainings focussing on worker education and building working class unity, power and collective education.

Speaking at the last phase training the ZCHWU Acting General Secretary Enock Mahari commended the participants for putting to action the knowledge they had gained over the previous phase trainings.

The participants had managed to recruit 173 members during the 3 month period which reflected the effectiveness of the training.

"The recruitment speaks for itself that the programme has been effective. We need to maintain the momentum and continue to engage and train membership at all times to maintain the much needed visibility of the trade union in the Victoria Falls region. If resources permit we intend to roll out the programme countrywide," he said.

He encouraged tea work among union members in the face challenges that were affecting the country, the region and the trade union.

The first module which ran from 14 -17 March 2019 covered topics that included trade union organisation, trade union shop steward, Labour law, Collective

Bargaining, Leadership skills, Organising techniques and effective Effective Organising.

Module Two which was from 15- 18 May encompassed Trade Union organising(Walking the road), One on one organising conversation, Negotiating techniques, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) walk through survey and Identification of OSH hazards

The last module was conducted from 23-26 July covered Occupational Safety and health, Accident investigation, compensation and rehabilitation, Fundamentals rights of workers, Participation and democracy, Organising strategy, Decent Work Agenda, Gender issues in the world of work and sexual harassment

Chief programme facilitator Michael Kandukutu said the

modules were influenced by the need to create and develop an organiser who would be an all-rounder and were satisfied that workers in the Victoria Falls region were empowered.

He said trade union organisers at the shopfloor level are the first line of defence for workers and any first encounter of the union at the workplace should be through an organiser who has been thoroughly capacitated.

"Our view is that the training managed to change the face of the. Victoria Falls region when it comes to trade union organising and recruitment. The pilot experience will now be replicated in the different regions where the union commands membership. The first such training will be in Bulawayo in the third week of October going forward."

"That was shown by the reports we got during the course of the training modules as participants went about implementing the work plans which they developed during the course. Some of the workplans entailed that he participants addresses and shares with the colleagues some of the course contents. That has also seen the multiplier effect of information transfer and sharing," he said.

He said the trainees understood and managed to define concepts and principles of the subjects.

"In OSH, Interestingly the participants indicated that all the

six categories of hazards could be identified at their work environments and went on to discuss the principles of hazard control focussed on control at the source where the hazard is emanating from," he said.

He added that participants were also capacitated on how they could deal with grievances and fundamental rights violations utilising the legal instruments recognised within the hotel and catering industry to achieve decent work.

"The industry suffers from serious decent work deficits and the topic proved to be very popular. The discussion on the decent work agenda ended up highlighting recommendations that could be implemented in order to ensure that workers achieve decent work provisions which included the need to make social dialogue a practical tool to build consensus on contemporary issues such as unemployment playing particular attention to youth employment and the gender issues and a review of collective bargaining agreements to reflect new issues for negotiations," he said.

Kandukutu said of the 18 only one participant dropped out due to some management responsibilities which he had been allocated.

The programme was financed by the Fagligt Faelles Forbund (3F) which availed two trainers from Denmark. (Print Version)

ILO conveys industrial revolution through art

THE International Labour Organisation (ILO) has taken the awareness on the impending fourth industrial revolution through the lens of art after its recent efforts of rewarding artists producing informative pieces on the subject.

The five winning artists who pocketed US\$ 3 000 each include Martina Gruber who scooped the best photography award, Wadzanai Tadhuvana (poetry), Webster Mubayirenyi (Illustration & painting), Daniel Chandimhara (music) and Victor Nyakauru (Mix & Other Visual).

Speaking at the awards ceremony which ran under the theme, "Appropriately so, as you join us At this Fast Forward; The Future of Work in a Green Economy Competition of the Arts" ILO country director, Hopolang Phororo described the awards as the first of a kind.

She said, "The event is the first and one of its kind bringing together artists from across Zimbabwe showcasing talent around the future of work through varying lenses of visual arts, performing arts, literature and a combination.

"Credit goes to the government of Sweden for supporting the ILO to fulfill a crucial and necessary task through creating green, decent and sustainable jobs in a nation endowed with so much sunshine encouraging innovation since a business as usual approach no longer works," she said.

The ILO director said a hundred years ago, jobs sufficed but hundred years later, the landscape has changed with jobs evolving at a rapid pace occupying different spaces.

Added Phororo, "The ILO recognises the transforming world of work .Greening of economies was unheard of in the past, today, it is a buzzword unsurpassed sustainable practices and clean technologies are imperative."

Also speaking at occasion, Sport Arts and Recreation Commission secretary, Thokozile Chitepo urged stakeholders to appreciate the economic contribution of the creative industry.

Said Chitepo, "The cultural and creative industries is a critical sector in the Zimbabwean economy matrix, it creates jobs and grows the economy. Between 2002 and 2015, the contribution of the creative economy globally grew from \$208 million to \$509 billion.

"For Zimbabwe, according to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation Country report, the sector contributed 6.98 % to the Gross Domestic Product.

Zimbabwe adopted the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organisation in 2005 and has implemented it in three phases from 2005-2008, 2009-2011 and 2012-2017.

Zimbabwe is set to implement the fourth generation of the decent work program.

In 2005, the country prioritised poverty reduction through employment creation, and the fight against HIV and AIDS at the workplace as well as strengthening social dialogue. In 2009, the country undertook a review of the first cycle which was instrumental in developing the second cycle.

Cote d' Ivoire to host ILO's 14th African Regional Meeting

By Own Correspondent

THE 14th African Regional Meeting is set to held in Cote d' Ivoire's capital city Abidjan during the first week of December and high level guests from the continent's 54 countries are expected tackle labour related issues bedeviling Africa.

The high level convention which brings together the political, economic and social actors from countries of the region at four year intervals coincides with the global organ's centenary celebrations. "As decided by the Governing Body of the ILO in November 2018, the 14th African Regional Meeting will take place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from Tuesday, 3 to Friday, 6 December 2019. The Meeting will be attended the ILO's tripartite constituents from the 54 countries of Africa as well as representatives of international organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental, invited by the Governing Body," said ILO in a statement.

The agenda of the Meeting is to discuss, on the basis of the Director-General's Report and the 2015 Addis

Ababa Declaration, the progress made by countries over the last four years regarding the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the African Union Agenda 2063. Particular attention will be given to an integrated mix of policies conducive to the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda and more specifically to promote inclusive development, full and productive employment, and decent work for young women and men in the current and future labour markets.

ILO's Director General, Guy Ryder said the event comes at an opportune moment.

"The 14th ILO African Regional Meeting (ARM) brings together the tripartite constituents in this special Centenary year which also coincides with the 60th year of the ILO's presence in Africa. The timing of the meeting is also particularly significant, coming as it does at the culmination of a process in which the organization has been considering the transformative changes taking place in the world of work and how best to prepare itself and its constituents for

its second century," he said.

Ryder said these preparations were launched following the discussion of his report to the 102nd Session of the Conference in 2013 entitled "Towards the ILO centenary: Realities, renewal and tripartite commitment."

"I said in that Report: "The lessons of the ILO's past are that its future depends on constant renewal in the face of evolving realities and the active commitment of its tripartite constituency to unchanging values and goals," he said.

Ryder said the ILO's centenary has provided the opportunity for renewal, with special focus on and taking as its unifying theme the future of work which means a future of work with social justice in a continent which has developed socio-economically.

"With Africa's 1.3 billion inhabitants – a largely young and energetic population – the continent's steady economic growth has been, and is, driven by the dynamism and vigour of its people, displaying immense diversity, creativity and innovation. The continent is also endowed with a plethora of natural resources," Ryder said.

ZCTU holds women's rights symposium

BY STAFF REPORTER

The ZCTU has held a Women's Rights Symposium to sensitise working women on their rights, analyse current challenges and assess the impact of the fourth industrial revolution on marginalised social groups.

The symposium discussed the role of women in the changing world of work, assessed vulnerabilities and came up with strategies for empowerment in the prospects of women losing more jobs as the fourth industrial revolution creeps in.

Held under the theme "Break the glass ceiling: Create Change in the world of work" the symposium sensitised women of the obtaining rights, challenges causing inequalities, impact of gender based violence and the fourth industrial revolution and its impact on the rights of women, youths.

The symposium drew participants from the SADC region with the Trade union congress of Swaziland (Eswatini) TUCOSWA in attendance. Locally the ministry of women's affairs was represented by Faith Bhunu and the Women Aids support network (WASN) had two representatives.

Speaking at the workshop ZCTU secretary General Japhet Moyo said the symposium was to discuss the status of women's rights including those of young people and people with disabilities.

"It was important for reflection on ZCTU's gender initiatives, policies and women empowerment programmes as well as those of the country and to discuss challenges that are derailing us from achieving gender equality. Women's rights are fundamental human rights and must be respected and enjoyed by all. These rights include the right to live free from violence, slavery, and discrimination; to be educated; to own property; to vote; and to earn a fair and equal wage. That is to say, women are entitled to all of these rights. Yet almost everywhere around the world, women and girls are still denied them, often simply because of their gender," he said.

He said the theme, "Break the Glass Ceiling: Create Change in the World of Work" reminds us of many obstacles that women and other marginalised groups have to cross in order to claim their space.

"It is evident that the operating space is not even, hence there are serious inequalities, gender based violence and discrimination particularly in the workplaces.

He said Zimbabweans are faced with serious hardships as our socio-economic environment continues to deteriorate spurred by austerity measures coupled with cash shortages, high taxation and high prices of basic commodities and police brutality have become the order of the day.

"Women have been on the receiving end as they are burdened with care work and other dual responsibilities in the homes.

Winning rights for women is about more than giving opportunities to any individual woman or girl; it is also about changing how countries and communities work. It involves changing laws and policies, winning hearts and minds, and investing in strong women's organizations and movements," said Moyo.

The delegates from TUCOSWA said Zimbabwean women and their Eswatini counterparts were facing the same challenges hence the need for close cooperation for the exchange of ideas and solidarity on issues of women rights and elimination of gender based violence at the workplace and in society.

The Ministry of women affairs representative said it was time for women to focus on becoming more productive and taking up leadership positions.

"Where women are productive the nation prospers. Your theme is in tandem with the ministry's 50 - 50 objective on representation and it is important to note that we are all focussed on the same challenges affecting women as stakeholders. Challenges include the burden of unpaid care work which hinders their participation in most facets of life and sexual harassment which debilitates against fair participation in the world of work. We now need to strengthen measures against GBV through clear policy formulation, compensation, sanction and deterrent sentences," she said.

The symposium was spiced up



Mama Africa - ZCTU women after showcasing their modelling skills at the symposium

by a drama play performed by Savanna Trust drama club which performed a drama which outlined the levels and circumstances of

workplace gender based violence and its effects.

FFAWUZ embarks on targeted recruitment

BY JOKONIAH MAWOPA

The Food Federation and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe (FFAWUZ) has embarked on target based organising to increase its membership.

During its annual review workshop in May 2019 FFAWUZ set annual membership growth target of 10 percent both for affiliates membership and general membership. If achieved by end of the year FFAWUZ would have at least 10 affiliates with active

membership of at least 13200.

In a memo to the Regional Organisers the FFAWUZ General Secretary said the union intends to fortify its position in the industry and was focusing on intensive membership recruitment.

"Having reviewed our organising strategies and targets for the year 2019 during the FFAWUZ review workshop it becomes imperative that as a department we set short term targets in order to meet our yearly targets. In pursue of this we have employed a new strategy of setting

organising phase targets in an endeavour to achieve the set growth of 10 percent by December 2019," he said.

The strategy has three objectives which are to increase income for the organisation, to increase union visibility and to ensure membership retention.

As part of the strategy FFAWUZ is facilitating registration of sector unions in the food industry.

The Federation has so far facilitated the registration of a union for the Brewing and Distilling sector.

BCC employee sent on 3-year leave

By Own Correspondent

A Bulawayo City Council employee has been sent on a three-year leave to compensate for overtime worked for 25 years.

The employee Lizwelethu Ncube accumulated 5 387 hours of overtime after he has been working a 44-hour week instead of a 39 hours 10 minutes week as from October 1993. The irregularity was discovered by the local authority last year.

According to information obtained from council reports, the municipality opted to grant Ncube 1 036 vacation leave days instead of compensating him in monetary terms.

"Mr Ncube joined BCC on 11 October 1983 as a labourer, he was promoted from labourer on a 44-

hour (five-day) working week to clerical assistant on a 39 hours 10 minutes working week with effect from 1 October 1993. He had been working for 44 hours, five days a week from 1 October 1993, to 19 April 2018 when the error was discovered.

"The staff member has been obliged to work 44 hours per five-day week as his job was strategic as it entailed the manning of the front office which was pivotal to the various operations. Following his promotion there was an omission of aligning his working hours resulting in the member of staff working overtime of 4 hours 50 minutes per week from 1 October 1993 to 19 April 2018," reads part of the report.

Organising precarious workers in Africa

From Page 11

imports. The union also adapted its structures. It developed specific trainings for self-employed tailors, such as seminars on new trends in fashions and financial literacy, and began to address their problems. It also prioritised education and capacity development for female members as a way of promoting women's participation in the union. They amended the constitution to increase women's involvement in leadership structures at all levels of the union, aiming at a target of 40% women representation.

This was a big step up for the self-employed tailors in comparison to their older associations, which lacked political influence. Showing a union membership card, on the other hand, diminished police harassment significantly. This allowed the associations and the unions to recruit thousands of self-employed tailors countrywide.

Organising locally in global industries

A lot of ink is spent discussing the impact of globalisation on local workers, but reports on how those workers fight back are rarely seen. However there is plenty of movement there if one cares to look. What's especially important to see is how trade unions change when they begin to advocate for informal workers as well. They often become 'hybrid' organisations, which include different forms of organisations and blur



The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Union, the largest workers union in Zimbabwe has said that citizens have to be capacitated to defend themselves against state brutality.

The Union speaks after state police violently dispersed MDC supporters who were gathered at their party headquarters in Harare where party leader, Nelson Chamisa was delivering his Hope of The Nation Address.

Posting on Twitter, ZCTU suggested that it was a waste of resources to train security personnel. The Union said: "Wasted resources. We always argue that instead of wasting resources on perpetrators of violence and brutality against citizens, better use those resources on the victims. Best way forward is capacitating citizens for them to stand against the dictatorship.

Time out for pension payout reviews

BY STAFF REPORTER

A review of pension payouts by both private pension funds and the government is now long overdue as the meagre stipends being paid out can no longer sustain yester year labourers in the current hyper inflationary environment.

Life after work is proving to be difficult with some pensioners receiving as little as \$30-00 per month, with private pension funds largely guilty of underpaying. The payouts can hardly sustain a person for a day considering that the family food basket hit \$RTGS1 684, 45 as at July 2019. This is despite that the pension funds would have made huge investments from workers' contributions over the years but the payouts are not correspondingly reflective.

According to the insurance and Pensions Funds commission (IPEC) pension funds have posted huge profits from investments in the first half of 2019. Membership has also increased within the same period.

"During the six months ended 30 June 2019, stand-alone pension funds reported a surplus of \$130.70 million compared to \$62.71 million for the corresponding period in 2018. The relatively higher total income was on account of higher investment returns," reads part of IPEC 2019 second quarter report.

Total membership for stand-alone pension funds increased from 335,394 as at 31 March to 336,127 members as at 30 June. IPEC attributes the increase to new entrants totalling 2,340 members, of which 1,571 were joining the Clothing Industry Pension Fund.

"Self-administered funds reported a surplus of \$870.81 as at 30 June 2019. The surplus was higher than the \$57.58 million reported for the same period in the year 2018 and was mainly driven by fair value gains amounting to \$656.08 million. Resultantly, the sector reported total income of \$945 million for the 6 months ended 30 June 2019," reads the



Bank queues have afflicted pensioners forcing them to spend days waiting to access cash

report.

Membership rose from 118,564 as at 31 March to 120,378 as at 30 June spurred by 3,209 new entrants outweighing exits for the quarter.

The total membership for registered occupational schemes excluding NSSA and was 798,400 as at 30 June 2019, increasing from 793,618 members reported as at 31 March 2019. The increase was mainly a result of new entrants totalling 9,385 members for the quarter.

While IPEC contends the pension industry had been saddled with several challenges including low values caused by hyperinflation and dollarisation in February 2009, change of benefits from US dollar to RTGS in June 2019, late payment of benefits and lack of expertise on the part of trustees to safeguard member interests analysts feel the pension funds are short-changing beneficiaries by continuing to pay meagre payouts when they are posting huge profits.

At the moment National Social Security Authority (NSSA) pensioners are getting \$80 while survivor pensioners get \$32.

The government has indicated that it plans to review pension payouts. Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare Minister Sekai

Nzenza told the media that government was in the process of coming up with decent pension payouts.

She said the government was also looking at ways in which banks could ease challenges currently being faced by pensioners in accessing their payouts. Pensioners have complained over the unavailability of cash from banks which sometimes force them to wait for several days to access the few dollars.

ZCTU health and occupational safety head of department Nathan Banda attributed the low pension payouts to misplaced priorities by pension houses.

"We have a situation whereby pension houses prioritise investments at the expense of paying better payouts to yesteryear contributors.

Commenting on the issue, ZCTU head of safety and health which covers the social security portfolio, Nathan Banda said the differences of the schemes were the major handicap to pensioners getting meaningful payouts from pension houses.

"First and foremost we need to differentiate between the various pension schemes. Private Occupational pension schemes

have never been pro poor no matter how much you contribute; the contributor is always the loser. The Pension houses are there to make profits at the expense of workers or contributors. The existence of board of Trustees then left a lot to be desired as some of them allowed the management or employers to abuse pension funds only to discover that their funds have been abused at the time of need for a pension payout," he said.

He added that the majority employers have not been remitting contributions to the Pension administrators leading to the majority of pensions not being paid up upon retirement for contributors.

He said private occupational pension schemes were very exploitative in nature as they have opted for a Defined Contribution (DC) Schemes whose risk transfer is on the contributors giving the employers an advantage. Most Private Occupational Schemes have migrated from Defined Benefit (DB) to DC schemes.

"Defined Benefit Schemes made it mandatory to pay a pensioner his pension at retirement again based on an agreed formula as opposed to DC," he said.

Banda also blamed the low payouts to former minister of finance Tendai Biti who reversed the

decision to raise the cap of insurable earnings for NSSA contributions.

"When NSSA raised the contributions to a 4 percent, and removal of an insurable earning cap, NSSA payouts were now going to be higher than the Private Occupational Pension Schemes. That move did not go down well with Pension Houses which quickly summoned the then Minister of Finance Tendai Biti who reversed the decision. The current position obtaining at NSSA is that those on a higher pension payout were those who retired before reversal by the then Minister of Finance pitting the majority of pensioners to low payouts," said Banda.

IPEC instituted an inquiry on pension lost value whose recommendations have called for pension houses to pay contributors their lost pension value.

Local laws force pension houses to invest 50 percent of their capital in public institutions that generally are loss making entities.

Banda said the investment laws on pension and social security needs to be reformed to safeguard pension investments and the value of payouts.

Ncube sets aside \$300 million for decent work

By Own Correspondent

FINANCE Minister, Mthuli Ncube managed to set aside \$300 million which will go towards the implementation of the Decent Work Country Program (DWCP) in the 2020 national budget.

Speaking during the budget presentation recently, the treasury boss said the will be extracted from Labour Ministry's total budget.

"Out of the \$2.4 billion allocated to the Labour Ministry \$300 million will go towards the implementation of the Decent Work Country Program while food for work program will get \$50 million," he said.

Ncube allocated \$500 million towards harmonised cash transfer, Basic Education Assistance Module \$450 million, management information system \$10 million while

food deficit mitigation got \$1 billion.

The DWCP will be undertaken by the National Steering Committee, which is a sixteen member committee, comprising the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and other key Ministries, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and Employers Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ), with the ILO CO-Harare as the Secretariat.

The Committee will also be charged with the responsibility to address operational issues relating to the DWCP, ILO interventions in Zimbabwe as well as plan or adjust concrete activities aimed at assisting the constituents. Thus, it will oversee the formulation and planning of projects and activities developed within the framework of the DWCP and to approve projects before

their implementation. It will also guide the resource mobilization efforts.

The committee will also be responsible to oversee the work of the tripartite structures created for the management and implementation of all the technical cooperation projects, for example tripartite project advisory committees.

Zimbabwe adopted the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organisation in 2005 and has implemented it in the phases from 2005-2008, 2009-2011 and 2012-2017.

However, over the years, Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions has criticised treasury for allocating paltry funds towards welfare expenditure while prioritising non-productive portfolios like the security sector.

NSSA reviews pension payouts

BY STAFF REPORTER

The National Social Security Authority (NSSA) has reviewed upwards pension payouts following an outcry over the meagre stipends the authority was dishing out to the majority of pensioners.

The lowest earning pensioners will be getting \$200, up from \$80.

In terms of the current compensation framework for NSSA, pension payouts depend on contributions, since there is a ceiling on payouts, the highest-earning pensioners are getting about \$2 000.

"The minimum pension has moved from \$80 to \$200 starting from this month," said NSSA senior benefits officer Rodwell Jariremombe during an Insurance and Pensions Commission - ZimSelector workshop recently.

NSSA's Accident Prevention and Workers' Compensation Scheme has also been reviewed upwards.

"Our funeral grant, which is given when one passes on as a result of a workplace accident, has also been reviewed upwards from \$300 to \$2 000," he added.

He said the review followed the completion of an actuarial evaluation that

was carried out by NSSA over the past few months.

Following the ravaging inflation wiping away the buying power, pensioners were severely affected as they could not access cash for days after travelling to the cities. Some pensioners had to sleep in bank queues for days waiting to access cash.

The recent currency reforms left the pensioners worse off as the local depreciated against the US dollar most pension houses have not reviewed their payouts accordingly to retain the value they had during the multi currency era.

Most pensioners are on the defined contribution (DC) schemes whose benefits fluctuate on the basis of investment earnings.

On the other hand, a defined benefit pension plan assures a specified pension payment, lump-sum or combination thereof on retirement that is predetermined by a formula based on the employee's earnings history, tenure of service and age.

National Labour Symposium on the future of work, stakeholders find common ground



ZCTU President Peter Mutasa addressing the symposium



Part of the local and international delegates to the symposium

By Staff Reporter

The recently held national labour symposium on the future of work that was a brainchild of the ZCTU to bring together all labour stakeholders to discuss and find solutions to problems

affecting workers and citizens has been highlighted by the call for unity of purpose among stakeholders.

Held under the theme 'The Future of Work - Towards a resilient social contract' the symposium closed ranks among labour unions, ZCTU

and the Zimbabwe Federations of Trade Unions (ZFTU) with growing calls for unity among stakeholders as a pre requisite for the success in securing a better future of work for the next generation of workers.

ZCTU President Peter Mutasa, in his opening remarks

implored on the importance of class unity as trade unions brace themselves for the future of work. He said the future work was an unavoidable revolution whose predecessors left profound impacts on the world of work creating a big capital gap between the rich and the poor which needs to be closed through close cooperation.

ZFTU Secretary General Kennias Shamhuyarira said it was important to focus on the current situation affecting Zimbabwe before looking into the future. He said workers were facing several challenges threatening their livelihoods that require urgent attention.

"We need to encourage thoughtful and responsible leadership. It must be put to government that it needs to start to seriously fund industry and retooling efforts to jumpstart productivity," he said.

Speaking at the symposium, ILO Harare Country office director, Ms Hopolang Phororo said the future of work presents serious challenges of capital inequalities whereby the rich will become richer and the poor will still lag behind since the internet of all things will highly benefit the business.

"It is important that we collectively reflect on how the fourth industrial revolution can be an opportunity to catch up on the world of work. If we do not we risk being left behind, the world around is moving at a rapid speed and we risk being the loser in the common global market therefore. To trade union leaders present every voice of the millions of hard working Zimbabweans will play a role in building the future of work that Zimbabweans want. As the world of work changes so the need for workers' organisations to adapt and remain fit for purpose today and for the future.

She said there was need to prioritise social dialogue and the spirit of tripartism.

Workers in Zimbabwe today face many challenges but they are not insurmountable, social dialogue is the key," she said.

The Regional desk officer for Africa, ILO, Dr Mohammed Mwamadzingo presented on the ILO centenary declaration 2019, themed Advancing Social Justice, Promoting decent work: and the role of trade unions.

In his exhibition he outlined, the impact of the 4th industrial revolution driven by cultural changes,

demographic change, globalisation, climate change, digitalisation, automation, artificial intelligence, robotics etc.

He said the 4th industrial revolution is breaking barriers and boundaries and the innovation pace will result in 81 percent of jobs under threat in 20 years. He further mentioned that, there were certain mitigatory strategies needed in preparing institutions for the future.

Mwamadzingo said flexibility had a huge impact on workers and workplaces making it difficult for trade unions to organise.

"Implications for the worker, flexi-work destroys the workplace and it would be difficult to organising workers, uncertainty on income and inequality in distribution of incomes with only a few beneficiaries would be rife. Trade unions will have to find ways to fit in the environment of the future working places, the trade union will also need to develop new forms of collective bargaining so as to strengthen its capability in the future.

It will have to redefine the employer, redefining organising and would also need to broaden mandates to include those which are beyond the workplace to managing disparities for human needs.

Job cuts looming as companies volumes decline

BY ALOIS VINGA

WORKERS across the country's economic sectors are likely to lose jobs in the coming year owing to a critical decline of sales volumes currently being reported by Zimbabwe Stock Exchange listed companies.

Various financial reports on the first half of 2019 reveal that consumer purchasing power has declined at the back of a weakening Zimbabwe dollar being used for salary payments at a time when prices of goods and services are indexed against the US\$ parallel exchange rates.

Presenting the financial performance for the first half of

2019, Dairibord Holdings said price adjustments made were below the depreciation in exchange rates.

The company said the environment is envisaged to remain fragile and uncertain making it difficult for businesses to implement their growth plans as the supply of electricity, water and foreign currency is expected to remain constrained.

"Under such circumstances, the company will focus on the survival and hold strategy. Given the aforesaid challenges in the operating environment, sales volumes for the second half are expected to be lower than what was achieved in the first half of the year," said the company in a statement.

National Foods Limited group chief executive, Michael Lashbrook said his company suffered a huge decline when compared to yesteryear.

"Volumes were very subdued, closing 36 percent below the same period last year as sustained inflation further restrained consumer spending power, impacting volumes across all categories. Flour volumes were most heavily impacted, closing 50 percent below last year, on the back of intermittent supply and increased cost of wheat," he said.

Lashbrook said volume performance in the remaining categories was largely reflective of consumers down-trading in favor of

more affordable commodities, with groceries mainly rice and salt closing 47 percent down.

He added, "Snacks and treats were 37 percent down and stock feeds 25 percent down. The Maize category was the least impacted, with volumes for the quarter closing 5 percent below the prior period, as subsidies on raw maize assisted with maize meal affordability, driving consumption."

Market watchers believe that if trend insists, companies will be left with no choice except to cut down on jobs and maintaining a sizeable workforce which is in tandem with cash flows.

The situation has been the same for beverages manufacturer, Delta

Corporation Limited which recorded a 48 % lager beer volume decline in the first half of 2019 owing to the erosion of disposable incomes.

Chamber of Mines report released early this month established that key minerals are expected to record declines in output growth.

"Mineral output prospects survey findings show that key minerals are expected to record declines for selected key minerals ranging as follows: gold between -5% to -35%; platinum 0% to -7%; diamond -30% to -40%; chrome -10% to -20%; nickel -2% to -10% and coal -10% to -40%," said the document.

CHILD LABOUR

**\$1 a week:
the bitter poverty of child
sugarcane workers in Zimbabwe**

THE GUARDIAN

Children as young as seven are doing hazardous work for meagre sums on sugar plantations

The blistering sun beats mercilessly on the Mukwasine sugar plantations near Chiredzi, in south-east Zimbabwe. It is Sunday morning and the soothing sound of hymns reverberate from a nearby church.

For most of the children living near the estate, it is time for Sunday school and listening to Bible stories.

But for Tapiwa Mumverenge*, nine, it is another day of toil. In tattered clothes and worn-out plastic shoes, Tapiwa emerges from lofty stacks of sugarcane. Despite his age, he has worked for the past six months at the plantation.

He was just seven when he first had to find work, after both his parents died in 2017. Now Tapiwa works to feed himself and his elderly grandmother.

Drenched in sweat, he furiously swings his makeshift blade, hacking at sugarcane plants twice his height.

"I've never been to school. This is all I do," he tells the Guardian in a shy voice. "I am helping my grandmother. If I don't do it, we will die of hunger. My grandmother does not want me to go hungry, so she encourages me to work. It is tough, I get sick sometimes."

Tapiwa is joined in this "maricho" (menial work) by his grandmother. They both earn \$2 (£1.5) every fortnight.

This goes towards buying food and soap. "I would want to go to school one day so that I [can] buy my grandmother what she wants," Tapiwa says.

This is life for the poorest young boys at the plantations. Mukwasine farmers have been criticised for underpaying labourers who constitute a critical part of the sugarcane industry in Zimbabwe. In cane cutting season, local farmers want cheap, casual labour.

Across the field, a group of children take turns to hold a fishing net in a pond, hoping to catch kapenta fish for dinner. They have all worked on the sugarcane farms.

During school holidays the young labourers work in the cane fields for a meagre \$10 per month.

"If I need schools fees, I have to go for maricho," says one. "Our parents cannot afford books and other things we need for school so we have to work hard."

The monthly wage for cane workers is \$180, according to the Progressive Agriculture and Allied Industries Workers' Union of Zimbabwe.

Children of Tapiwa's age work without protective clothing in the plantations, infamous for diseases and dangerous snakes.

Last year, a young girl, a pupil at Hippo Valley High School, was burnt to death in a fire in a sugarcane field in Chiredzi.

Moses Sihlangu*, 14, says he

has since quit his farm job after working for a year without pay.

Sihlangu, who now works as a herd boy, told the Guardian that his employer had denied him his wages. "I had to leave because I was working for nothing. He promised to pay but never did. Children are being used here and it's not fair. Kids my age are being ill treated in these plantations because of desperation."

Mukwasine, a sugar plantation largely made up of farmers who resettled under late president Robert Mugabe's 2000 land reform programme, has seen the practice of child labour grow in recent years.

According to a US Department of Labor report published in September 2018, children in Zimbabwe engage in the what they define as the "worst forms" of child labour, including mining and agriculture.

The report notes that the deterioration of Zimbabwe's economy has contributed to an increase in child labour. Lack of access to basic education may also increase the risk.

The lucrative sugar business has been rattled by an upsurge in cases, with the government threatening to begin an investigation.

"We are worried. The ministry is concerned with such a development because we are signatories on the conventions on the rights of the child. We also have a programme which we are running to end child labour. We will do as a matter of urgency an investigation into the case to ensure the protection of these children," labour and social welfare minister Sekai Nzenza told the Guardian.

Zimbabwe Sugarcane Farmers Development Association chairman Edmore Veterai says his association prohibited farmers from hiring children.

"We hear this now and again. We always say people should give us evidence. People who come ... for work always come with their children, which does not relate to the farmer."

"It is strictly prohibited to use children under the age of 18 because our sugar will be called 'blood sugar'. Since we sell our sugar around the world, it will not look good on us," Veterai says.

In May Zimbabwe ratified the protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, demonstrating its commitment to combating forced labour in all its forms.

An estimated 168 million children engage in some form of work globally, with 98 million in agriculture and 12 million in manufacturing and industry.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of child labourers in the world – 59 million children between the ages of five and 17 – with the International Labour Organisation estimating that more than one in five children in Africa are employed against their will in exploitative or hazardous work, such as at quarries, farms or mines.

*Names have been changed to protect the identity of the children.

ZCTU MOVES TO CRAFT DISABILITY POLICY



The ZCTU is working towards formulating a disability policy. The process has seen the ZCTU conducting a consultative workshop which was attended by workers with disabilities. The workshop was the first to have material in brail in response to the needs of visually impaired workers.

Organising precarious workers in Africa

Worker organisations in Africa are beginning to cross the divide between the formal and informal economy.

The labour market is a key institution for shaping the distribution of resources in an economy. This is true for two reasons. First, wages are an important source of income for most individuals. Second, the wage relationship is a key site of contestation over the resources that are produced.

However, in Africa the industrial working class is very much a minority of wage earners. Instead, what you have are quite flexible classes of labour. What I mean by this is that while people still need to sell their labour power – either directly on a wage labour market or indirectly through some form of product market – categories like 'worker', 'peasant', 'employed' and 'self-employed' are fluid.

This presents a unique challenge for organising labour in Africa, however groups of precarious workers, NGOs and some trade unions are trying. I would like to present three case studies to illustrate this development. First, labour broker workers at Heineken's brewery in South Africa illustrate how organising in the formal sector takes place while "working under conditions of informality". Second, Tanzania's dala dala workers – informal minibuss drivers and their assistants – demonstrate workers' efforts to challenge informalisation in the public transport sector. And third, informal tailors in Nigeria give us a good look at how formal and informal workers can come together under a single textile workers' union. I conclude by emphasising the hybrid nature of the forms of organisation that are forming on the periphery of the labour movement in Africa.

Organising through the realisation of common interests

The Heineken plant in South Africa does not directly employ everyone who works there. Only the highly skilled workers engaged in the brewing process are directly employed. Everyone else comes from employment agencies. These companies compete for contracts with Heineken by lowering wages and increasing workloads.

Workers are divided and put in competition with each other, making collective action difficult. The trigger that led the outsourced workers to unite behind a common demand was, according to the researcher Thomas Englert, amendment 198 of the South African Labour Relations Act. This makes agency workers employees of the client after three months of work. For the first time outsourced workers had the possibility of direct employment with Heineken, a prospect which raised their expectations and led them to pursue their common interests.

The precarious workers at the Heineken plant were already members of the traditional Food and Allied Workers Union, but this did little besides collect subscription fees and intervene in some individual cases. The union also kept the permanent and precarious workers separate, refusing to let them organise common meetings. The workers finally found a way forward when they met with staff from the Casual Workers Advice Office, a South African NGO, who helped them to mobilise through the newly amended Labour Relations Act. This helped the workers to unify around the demand for permanence rather than competing against each other. They formed a workplace forum based on free membership and transparent decisions taken in open assemblies. With the help of the advice office, the workers deployed a mix of strategies that included using the law, limited strike action, and a media campaign to pressure the employer to change.

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the privatisation of the public transport system fragmented existing work into an intricate system of small owners, drivers, and conductors. Those that have assigned buses have more or less steady employment, while the others take what work they can find. Considered as self-employed workers, the drivers, conductors, and their assistants must pay the bus owners daily rent and then share whatever little is left. This

system leads to a market structure of thousands of atomised work units waging intense competition under self-exploitative practices. They speed to get more runs into a day and overcrowd the buses in order to meet quotas and compete for clients.

To overcome these divisions the workers formed an association and paid a formal visit to the established transport union, the Communication and Transport Workers Union of Tanzania (COTWUT). This meeting, according to Matteo Rizzo's book on the subject, triggered a process where these two distinct institutions went about "building a shared notion of the exploitation faced by Dar es Salaam's transport workers and a strategy to address it". The strategy was three-fold: first, they shared in detail their working reality; second, COTWUT contributed funds for organising; and third, they employed transport workers themselves to promote the association at a street level.

It was only after they established the link with COTWUT that they managed to formalise their association and extend their scope, building a campaign for employment rights (contracts). They made use of the union's political connections as well as the occasional threat to paralyse the city in order to put pressure on local governments and, by extension, on the bus owners. As their campaign grew, they engaged with a range of relevant national government departments – to stop the state from criminalising their efforts – and forged alliances with likeminded groups.

The National Union of Textile, Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria lost 40,000 members between 2000 and 2016 in the face of massive retrenchment in the textile industry, as a result of intensified international competition. To re-fill its ranks the union began to recruit traditional self-employed tailors on the basis of certain common interests – the need for cheap electricity and water, and regulation of foreign

Right to collective bargaining

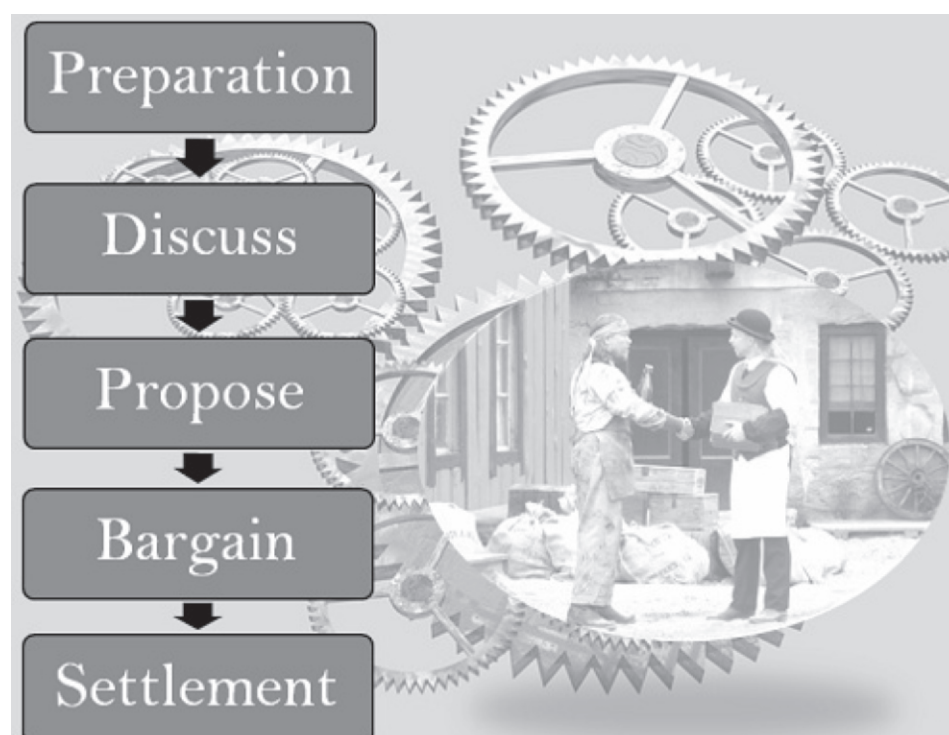
This article will look at what collective bargaining is and the legal implications of its registration mainly in the context of Zimbabwean law. The article will specifically look at collective bargaining agreements negotiated by workers committees as well as one negotiated at industrial level. The right to collective bargaining will also be looked at in the context of international law.

The right to collective bargaining is now a constitutionally enshrined. Section 65(5)(a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that except for members of the security services, every employee, employer, trade union, and employer's organization has the right to engage in collective bargaining. This is in line with other jurisdictions such as South Africa which provides for the right to collective bargaining in section 23 of its Constitution.

The Labour Act [Chapter 28:01] defines a collective bargaining agreement as an agreement negotiated in accordance with the Act which regulates the terms and conditions of employment of employees. The Collective Bargaining Convention, 1951 (C 154) regards collective bargaining as extending to all negotiations which take place between an employer, a group of employees or one or more employers' organisations on the one hand and one or more workers' organisations on the other determining working conditions and terms of employment and or regulating relations between employers and workers and or regulating relations between employers or their organisations and a workers' organization.

A workers committee has a right at law to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement at the workplace. Section 24 (1)(b) of the Labour Act provides that a workers committee shall be entitled to negotiate with the employer concerned a collective bargaining agreement relating to the terms and conditions of employment of the employees concerned. In order to ensure that a worker committee is not a willing appendage of the employer, the Labour Act provides that its composition and procedure has to be determined by the employees and that its members must be members of a trade union where the trade union represents not less than fifty percent of the employees.

A collective bargaining agreement negotiated by the workers committee does not immediately become binding upon its agreement. Section 25 of the Labour Act provides that every collective bargaining agreement which has been negotiated by a workers committee shall be referred by the workers committee to the employees and the trade union concerned, and, if approved by the trade union and by more than fifty per centum of the employees, shall become binding on the employer and the employees concerned. The need for approval by the employees and the trade union is due to the fact that the workers committee is a representative of the employees who must ratify its decisions.



The question which then arises is what happens where there is a conflict between a collective bargaining agreement negotiated by the employees and the one negotiated by the appropriate trade union. The proviso to section 25 provides the solution. It states that where there is any conflict between the terms and conditions of any such collective bargaining agreement and collective bargaining agreement negotiated by an appropriate trade union, the latter shall prevail unless the terms and conditions of the former collective bargaining agreement are more favourable to the employees concerned, in which case such last-mentioned terms and conditions shall prevail.

A trade union and an employer organization also have the right to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. The scope of such a collective bargaining agreement is provided in section 74 of the Labour Act. It provides;

'(2) Subject to this Act and the competence and authority of the parties, trade unions and employers or employers organizations may negotiate collective bargaining agreements as to any conditions of employment which are of mutual interest to the parties thereto.

(3) Without derogation from the generality of subsection (2), a collective bargaining agreement may make provision for—

(a) rates of remuneration and minimum wages for different grades and types of occupations;

(b) benefits for employees;

(c) deductions which an employer may make from employees' wages, including

deductions for membership fees and union dues, and deductions which an employer may be required or

permitted by law or by order of any competent court to make;

(d) methods of calculating, or factors for adjusting rates of pay, and the dates, times and modes of payment;

(e) all issues pertaining to overtime, piece-work, periods of vacation and vacation pay and

constraints thereon;

(f) the demarcation of the appropriate categories and classes of employment and their respective functions;

(g) the conditions of

employment for apprentices;

(h) the number of hours of work and the times of work with respect to all or some of the

employees;

(i) the requirements of occupational safety;

(j) the maintenance of, and access by the parties to, records of employment and pay;

(k) procedures for dealing with disputes within an undertaking or industry;

(l) housing and transport facilities or in their absence, an allowance for the same;

(m) measures to combat workplace violence and handling its aftermath.

(n) the following measures to foster the viability of undertakings and high levels of employment, where applicable, namely measures—

(i) to promote high levels of productivity; and

(ii) to promote economic competitiveness; and

(iii) to promote economic and environmental sustainability; and

(iv) to mitigate the cost of living.'

There are a number of fundamental obligations during collective bargaining agreement. One such obligation is to negotiate in good faith as well as duty of full disclosure where financial incapacity is alleged. Some of the duties can be found in the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) as well as C.87. Zimbabwe ratified C.87 on the 9th of April 2003 and C.98 had been ratified on the 27th of August 1998.

The fact that the trade union and an employer organization have reached an agreement does not prevent the negotiation of a collective bargaining at workplace level by a workers committee. In this regard, the Labour Act provides that the existence of a collective bargaining agreement shall not preclude an employer and his employees from agreeing to the introduction of higher rates of pay or other more favourable conditions of employment before the expiry of such collective bargaining agreement, so however that the rights and interests of the employees are not thereby diminished or adversely affected.

The collective bargaining agreement negotiated by the trade union and the employer organization must be published in the gazette in order for it to be binding. This can be noted from section 80 of the Labour Act which provides that;

"(2) The terms and conditions of a registered collective bargaining agreement shall become effective and binding—

(a) from the date of publication of the agreement in terms of subsection (1); or

(b) from such other date as may be specified in the agreement."

Prior to its publication in the gazette, the agreement must be submitted to the Registrar and the Minister may direct the Registrar not to register any provision of the agreement which is inconsistent with the Labour Act, contrary to public interest or unreasonable. Registration will only be done once the provisions have been suitably amended.

No party other than the workers committee, trade union or employer organization may negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. This can be noted from the fact that courts have consistently set aside arbitral awards which purported to set minimum wages in instances where it was the sole duty of the parties to agree on the minimum wage for their industry.

It can be noted from the above that the right to collective bargaining is an essential labour right. Almost all rights of employees can be advocated for and secured by means of collective bargaining. Employees must utilize the right to collective bargaining in order to defend their rights and interests at the workplace so as to match the power of capital.



ATDU Network promoting stronger unions and better development policies in Africa

From Page 4

development framework which requires trillions of dollars to successfully finance its implementation and yet countries only have billions. In the context of this narrative, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) committed nations to use public investment instruments and vehicles to leverage the unprecedented levels of private finance required to fund this agenda.

The UN strongly backs and promotes this approach, but for trade unions, the strong push to increase the involvement of the private sector in the development arena and to promote blended finance and its associated PPPs raises the question on how the motives of business (profit) can be reconciled with the desired development outcomes as stipulated in the Agenda 2030.

It is clear that unfettered business interests would

jeopardise the spirit and outcomes envisaged in the development goals. The network has done a lot of work on these streams to enable trade unions in Africa to critique the current development financing architecture and how it has a huge potential to roll back the gains realised for African workers.

One of the most important platforms for advocacy on SDGs in Africa is the Africa Regional

Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). This forum, which is jointly convened by the Africa Union and United Nations Commission for Africa (UNECA), offers stakeholders an opportunity to take stock of where the continent is in terms of implementing the SDGs. In all its engagements the ATUDN has promulgated key trade union messages on the pillars of decent work, just transition, labour rights and gender equality.

In the past four years, the network members have also represented the African Trade Unions at the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. At the HLPF, unions have used shadow SDGs country reports to bring to bear the trade unions position on the status of SDGs implementation in Africa. These shadow reports have proven to be powerful tools in holding

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From Nicholas Goche to Sekai Nzenza

.....NSSA's history of looting

As we went to the Press, ZCTU leaders Peter Mutasa and Japhet Moyo walked free after the State withdrew treason charges against them. The ZCTU leadership was arrested for calling for a stayaway in January 2019 against the increase in the price of fuel which triggered massive price increases of almost all commodities, making life virtually impossible to live.

After spending days in police cells and appearing at the Magistrates Court for dozen times in the past 11 months, the state suddenly withdraws the charges.

The ZCTU leaders at some point were reporting twice a week at a police station. What it meant was that they could not move around or travel. Some missed funerals of their beloved and even some crucial meetings. Chigumura believes the arrests had nothing to do with trying to overthrow the government but purely harassment of trade unions.

Three of the most fundamental rights human kind are supposed to enjoy are the right to freedom of speech, association and assembly. Any country that does not guarantee these rights is designated as undemocratic. When some people cry for sanctions to be removed, those who imposed them look at such issues.

Zimbabwe, under the President Emmerson Mnangagwa has shown serious deficits in as far as respecting human and trade union rights. They should not cry foul if sanctions are maintained!

Chigumura is watching with interest what is going on at NSSA. For years the ZCTU has been complaining that NSSA had become a cash cow for politicians particularly those from the Ministry of Labour. From the Times of Nicholas Goche, Petronella Kangonye, Prisca Mupfumira all these Ministers dipped their figures into the coffers of NSSA in one way or

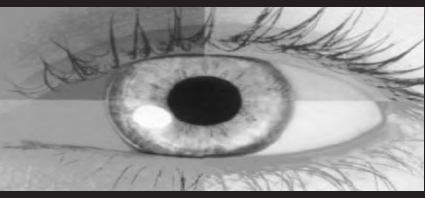


Prisca Mupfumira under investigation for misusing over US\$90 million NSSA funds

another.

NSSA has a consistent history of doling out money to Ministers. Who would ever thought even the recent Labour Minister Sekai Nzenza, with a damning forensic audit in her hands, would also found her name on the list of 'borrowers' from NSSA.

CHIGUMURA



Of course all these Ministers were very clever, they would use "cabinet authority" to take what did not belong to them from NSSA with promises to pay back. It is our fervent hope that the new labour Minister Paul Mavima is not already looking at areas where he can get 'cabinet approval' to get his fingers into NSSA!

It must also be remembered that NSSA also gave money to closed banks that was never paid back. It would invest in dubious companies and banks at the behest of Ministers (of course they would

all be paid kickbacks).

It even built hotels that are not being used as campaign gimmicks by Zanu PF. At one time, NSSA could not locate land it bought in Chegutu! For Christ sake, this is workers' money. Pensioners are getting less than ZWL100 per month while NSSA plays around with their money. It is time we all demand accountability at NSSA. Perhaps the best way out is to make the institution independent. The Ministry of Labour has failed workers.

President Emmerson "scarfmore" Mnangagwa is doing everything in the book to emulate his predecessor Robert Mugabe particularly when it comes to travel. Maybe he wants to beat Mugabe's record. He has never missed an opportunity of travelling whenever an offer arrives.

What is worse, he is hiring a private plane for that matter, chewing thousands, if not millions of dollars. We are not sure what he brings back from those travels. Mnangagwa must remember that this country is in a crisis and he must save every cent that is available.

Amidst all the gloom and doom, Zimbabweans remain a



Robin Vela former NSSA board chairperson



Nicholas Goche

hopeful lot. This is so because there are things that you cannot rationally explain.

Most Zimbabweans earn less than ZWL1000. The Food basket is over ZWL4500. Transport costs alone would chew over ZWL200. With ZWL 100, you can only buy two items in shops. Bread is at ZWL15 and a family will need

two loafs per day. Come to think of it, how do Zimbabweans survive? In fact why do they go to work? Why are they subsidizing employers? These are million dollar questions. I do not want to believe that Zimbabweans are surviving through pilfering!

I am out of here!

ATDU Network promoting stronger unions and better development policies in Africa

From Page 12

governments accountable and have also facilitated the opening of doors for national union centres from Ghana to the Democratic Republic of Congo to Chad and Zimbabwe to be consulted by their governments on the implementation of the SDGs.

Looking ahead

It is evident that a lot of work has been done and good progress has been registered in the past four years but moving forward, the ATUDN has its work cut out. From now on, the network ought to focus its energies at national level where the real work on

making the SDGs a reality lies. A recent report from UNECA and the SDG Center for Africa consistently flagged up the continued lack of clarity on accountability and enforcement mechanisms for SDGs at national level. Additionally, it has been intimated that only 40 per cent of the indicators in the global SDG data framework are accompanied by data in Africa. All these challenges are compounded, the report further argues, by the huge SDG financing gap for Africa which is estimated at between US\$500 billion and US\$1.2 trillion annually.

Thus, the strengthening of national affiliates to champion the decent work agenda in the

context of social dialogue will go a long way to ensure that trade unions have a say on SDGs implementation at a national level. Since all African governments have committed to meeting these goals, unions have an excellent opportunity to demand accountability on their progress. To that effect, unions ought to intensify their efforts to create awareness and mobilise their members on the SDGs, while utilising the tripartite social dialogue mechanism to advance the cause of the working class.

Practical interventions like advocating for policy coherence at a national level, lobbying for the integration of the SDGs into the national plans and budget

tracking to ensure that spending is in tandem with the goals, would go a long way towards meeting the SDGs targets.

Lastly, the African labour movement ought to rally behind the Time for 8 campaign, which highlights the centrality of Goal 8 in achieving the SDGs and advocates that no one is left behind as the world transitions to more sustainable ways of living and working.

As the ITUC general secretary Sharan Burrow pontificates: "The key to making sure that decent work becomes the rule and that millions of working families escape poverty and exploitation lies in giving working people the power to influence the decisions

that shape their lives".

It is true that the SDGs framework does not question the neoliberal development orthodoxy and therefore falls short of being a transformative agenda for the Africa labour movement. Nevertheless, the SDGs still offer the African labour movement a golden opportunity to meaningfully engage governments and development cooperation partners on trade union priorities such as decent work, social protection, labour rights, gender equality and the overarching struggle towards reducing inequalities and poverty in all its manifestations.

Time to rethink fiscal austerity

It is necessary and desirable to rethink the current macroeconomic thrust 'austerity for prosperity'. The current economic downturn has created an opportunity for change, which we must not miss. Importantly, in the words of Professor Deepak Nayyar, 'it is essential to return a developmental approach to macroeconomic policies that is based on an integration of short-term counter-cyclical fiscal and monetary policies with long term development objectives.' There is a need to redefine macroeconomic objectives so that there is equal focus and prioritisation of both economic growth and employment creation. For instance, the fiscal policy must contain clear economic growth and employment creation targets. We must be able to know how many jobs will be created by the projected economic growth. Macroeconomic policies must contain policy tools and strategies for employment creation in labour-intensive sectors.

The fiscal policy must also not just be reduced merely to a means of eliminating fiscal deficits. According to conventional macroeconomic thinking upon which austerity is anchored and premised, the elimination of fiscal deficits is both necessary and sufficient for the adjustment and transformation. However, according to many scholars, this is a myth.

The quantum of the deficit or the level of public indebtedness in most cases is a symptom of a structural malady in the economy and not the actual malady itself. The most important issue to address is the allocation and ultimate of public expenditure in relation to the cost of borrowing.

Public borrowing is always sustainable if it is used to finance social expenditures and capital investments and if the rate of return on such investments is greater than the interest payable. There is no macroeconomic dictum that stipulates an optimum level to which the fiscal deficit must be reduced as a proportion of GDP.

For example, it is possible that a budget deficit at 7% of GDP is sustainable in one situation while a fiscal deficit at 5% of GDP may not

sustainable under different circumstances.

The social costs of austerity policies have been found to be very high. In downturns, cuts in public expenditure squeeze investment in infrastructure and reduce allocations for social sectors, which can only dampen growth in the long-term. In the case of Zimbabwe, public social spending remains very small accounting for only 4% of total fiscal spending during the first quarter of the year.

The majority of the citizens don't have access to social safety nets necessary to mitigate the adverse effects of the austerity. Austerity inordinately focuses on the attainment of macroeconomic stability as an end in itself at the expense of employment creation and poverty reduction.

It has been observed in many countries that, obsession with eliminating fiscal and current account deficits, if achieved through cutbacks in public expenditure, especially on development and social services, can retard the process of growth and result in an increase in poverty.

It is vital to adopt a human rights approach to macroeconomics and development that prioritises people and their basic needs (such as food security, healthcare, education, housing, transport, access to public utilities, decent jobs and rural infrastructure) as well as ring-fencing expenditures thereto.

In particular, investments in health, education and infrastructure have a positive effect on the accumulation of human and physical capital as well as total factor productivity. Such an approach must promote employment intensive growth. This is because decent employment is a key nexus between growth and development.

It must boost public spending on health, education, agriculture and infrastructure without undermining fiscal sustainability. Such a framework must also be strongly aligned with constitutional imperatives such that the bulk of resources are dedicated towards the realization of constitutionally mandated people's rights.



GODFATHER OF AUSTERITY - Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube

Others have argued that the government does not have many degrees of fiscal freedom. However, nothing could be further from the truth. For instance, there many opportunities to cut back on non-



productive recurrent expenditures. Two good examples are the role of medical tourism and military spending in crowding out resources.

There is an African idiom that if a man does not eat at home, he may untry to reduce its military spending

never give his wife enough money to cook a good meal. This applies to politicians seeking medical help anywhere but home (medical tourism by political elites at the expense of the tax payer). The cost of medical tourism could build 25 district hospitals. There is also scope for the country to reduce its military spending and deploy those saved resources to social expenditures and capital investments.

Huge military expenditures that are largely recurrent in most African countries including in Zimbabwe are behind the slow pace of development. Ultimately, our greatest challenge is not lack of resources but rather poor stewardship and deployment of the resources we have and wrong priorities.

In conclusion, government macroeconomic and development policies must be based on a holistic Government policies must be the result of a process that involves the

approach to sustainable development that integrates economic, social and environmental imperatives and considerations. Macroeconomic policies for development require partnership and coordination. Government policies must be the result of a process that involves the much-needed broad-based participation of all key stakeholders, including the working class and civil society; not just the private sector.

The global consensus is that broad-based stakeholder participation in policy development is critical as it engenders national ownership, accountability and transparency. In fact, the major reason for policy stillbirth and failure in many countries including in Zimbabwe is the lack of effective participation by the citizens and key stakeholders.

ZCTU preliminary commentary to the 2020 national budget

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) notes with disappointment the uninspiring National Budget Statement by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Professor Mthuli Ncube presented to Parliament on November 14, 2019 under the theme 'Gearing for Higher Productivity, Growth and Job Creation'.

It is disrespectful for the Minister to begin the Budget Statement by glorifying the suffering ordinary Zimbabweans have endured in 2019. He quotes a statement attributed to Orson Whitney, a religious leader that says, "No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted ...; it ministers to our education and development...". It is insensitive that you inflict pain on your people and find a way to justify it, especially for the working people of Zimbabwe who are generally incapacitated under the current austerity measures.

As has become the norm, the

Minister paints a positive picture around his "Austerity for Prosperity" mantra, insisting that the implementation of fiscal consolidation reforms resulted in "...consistent monthly budget surpluses or savings reaching ZWL\$1.4 billion between January and August 2019." Similarly, he mentions that the current account delivered a positive balance of US\$116.4 million in the first half of 2019, "...which all pointed to positive signs for restoring the much needed macro-fiscal stability, and elimination of the 'twin deficit'." The Budget Statement is up-beat about the fiscal consolidation and restoration of 'tight monetary policy' following the reintroduction of the Zimbabwe Dollar.

We wonder how a Government worth its salt can talk about budget surpluses in a country failing to provide basics like water and sanitation, proper health services, with slave wages, painful electricity outages of up to 18 hours a day, failing to pay its debts, create jobs and provide meaningful social protection cover? We ask which country the Honourable Minister is

coming from or is talking about? If anything, the reality on the ground is different as the economy is in a tailspin with chronic high inflation and unprecedented erosion of incomes and prejudice of pensioners that is akin to the period of hyperinflation in 2007-2008. The re-introduction of the local currency against a context of a highly unstable economy and shortage of foreign currency reserves has spelt doom and gloom for ordinary folk. Even Government itself had indicated it would not re-introduce a local currency until the macroeconomic fundamentals were in place, but Nicodemously went against its own better judgement.

With the economy projected to decline by 6.5%, and recover by 3% in 2020 (which in itself is a mirage), there is no immediate respite for ordinary Zimbabweans, especially as the economy is clearly off the rails with chronic high inflation. The projected improved growth in 2020 is premised on a favourable rainfall season, improved macroeconomic stability through continued austerity; improved

electricity supply through imports and other alternative sources of power; supportive tax and non-tax incentives; continued ease of doing business reforms and investment. We see these as medium to longer-term factors that may not immediately deliver better prospects in 2020.

We therefore wonder how the 2020 National Budget would mark the exit "...from austerity to growth stimulation and employment generation era through promotion of production oriented investment and productivity, without losing focus on fiscal responsibility" when the macroeconomic situation is characterized by chronic high inflation, continued shortages of foreign currency, and an emaciated populace. We may ask whether it is prudent to burn down the whole house in order to frighten the mouse away. It is therefore difficult to see how an economy in crisis can produce productivity and growth; jobs creation; competitiveness; a more sustainable and inclusive development and export diversification and import substitution all in 2020. Arguing

that this growth and productivity thrust, supported by the reengagement process with the International Community "...will enable us to meet our Budget objectives," is disingenuous.

While any tax relief measures are most welcome, we do observe that they cannot provide relief for incapacitated workers earning so little. Can the authorities not see that average minimum wages of ZWL600 are just enough for workers to have bread on their table, let alone other cost of living aspects such as food, transport, accommodation, education, health and social protection. It remains an indictment of this piecemeal approach in a chronically high inflation environment where prices are rated against the exchange rate, while wages are decoupled from it. This is the very reason workers are fighting for the rating of their wages against the exchange rate in order to achieve an equilibrium between prices and incomes.

Unless Minister Ncube climbs down from his ivory tower, there is no respite for Zimbabweans.

An Amplats mine in Zimbabwe will pioneer 'Responsible Mining' audit



Africa Young Workers

Young workers from IndustriALL Global Union affiliates from across the Sub Saharan Africa region met for the first time in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on 7 October. They created a structure and elected office bearers.

The 44 delegates from 11 countries were joined by guests from a number of organizations, including the ILO, BWI, UNI Global Union, SASK and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, which sponsored the event.

The delegates displayed spirit and enthusiasm, frequently breaking into call and response chants celebrating union power, and songs to create a sense of unity and movement. They sang songs from the trade union struggle, including Asinamali ("We don't have any money"), Asifuni Agenda yama Capitalist ("We don't want the capitalist agenda") and My Mother was a Kitchen Girl.

A panel discussion was held with participants exploring different aspects of youth organizing in their countries.

"Youth are marginalized. People put us down, not by the power of their arguments, but with the weight of their years," said Tafadzwa Eustace Chidhindi of Zimbabwe.

Tolulope Fagbamigbe of Nigeria

pointed out that young women workers are doubly oppressed by ageism and patriarchy. When there is an invitation to a youth meeting, men old enough to be their fathers are first in line to attend.

After a presentation on the ILO Centenary Declaration by Mban Kabu of ILO ACTRAV, participants discussed how the future of work was likely to play out in the African context and developed proposals for young workers marginalized by a growing informal sector.

They felt that their familiarity with new technology meant that they could benefit from new forms of work. Sweshta Soomungull of Mauritius asked: "Since when have unions been afraid of challenges?"

There were debates about the suitability of union structures for organizing young workers. Iris Nothofer of the FES Trade Union Competence Centre Sub-Saharan Africa raised a provocative question: is there a conflict between union democracy and efficiency?

"Democratic structures and procedures are necessary but not sufficient. We need vibrant rank and file networks," she concluded.

IndustriALL youth coordinator Sarah Flores spoke about the importance of youth developing autonomous structures and their own way of working. The participants divided into three

groups to develop their policy and the structure.

They identified the following priorities:

Formulate a regional structure

Develop youth leadership

Develop a union education programme for youth

Formalize alliances with civil society

Including youth in collective bargaining

Integrate youth into industrial policy

Rose Omamo, general secretary of AUKM in Kenya, led the election process.

The vote was as follows:

Chair: Emmanuel Adjei-Danso of Ghana

Vice chair: Christian Rutendo Ranji of Zimbabwe

Secretary: Victor Notaye Ngwane of South Africa

Committee:

Sweshta Soomungull of Mauritius, Tolulope Fagbamigbe of Nigeria, Prisca Miharilala of Madagascar and Maria John Bange of Tanzania,

IndustriALL regional secretary Paule Ndessomin said: "I am impressed by the passion and commitment we saw here today. The future looks bright! Now that a structure has been created, young unionists can work together effectively."

Convention No 1

A landmark for Workers' Rights

100 years ago the first International Labour Conference adopted the first International Labour Standard – on working time. As the ILO celebrates this landmark moment, ILO Working Time specialist, Jon Messenger, looks back at the history of the Convention and its impact.

No matter where we work and what we do, "working time" is an issue that affects us all. Yet few people realize that the fact that we have limits on the hours we work traces its roots to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) first International Labour Standard – the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No.1).

Prior to the outbreak of war in 1914 limits on working time – most prominently the eight hour working day – had been one of the principal demands of the international trade union movement.

Once the war was over, and with the creation of the ILO as part of the Treaty of Versailles, the issue resurfaced, as large-scale labour unrest threatened to spread in several countries.

The ILO Constitution, contained in Article 427 of the Treaty, included the declaration that "the adoption of an 8-hours day or a 48-hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained" was of "special and urgent importance". Only a few months later the subject was put on the agenda of the First Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC), which met in Washington in October-November 1919. By the end of the conference the principle of the eight hour working day had been embodied in the first Convention adopted, the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919.

Considering that the eight hour working day had been dismissed five years earlier as impracticable and unachievable due to international competition, the adoption of Convention No.1 was a remarkable achievement – the trade union movement had succeeded in getting international recognition of its foremost goal.

However, ratification of Convention No.1 by ILO member States was not as widespread as the first ILO Director, Albert Thomas, had hoped. The Great Depression brought with it a reluctance by employers to face higher labour costs. Moreover, some member States and even some in the labour movement, especially in Germany and the United Kingdom, considered that hours of work could best be reduced through trade union action and collective bargaining rather than by legislation. Even today, only 46 out of the 187 member States of the ILO have ratified this convention.

Nonetheless, in spite of the low number of ratifications, Convention No. 1 has had a considerable impact in expanding use of the eight hour working day.

Only four countries had passed eight hour laws before 1919: Cuba in 1909, Panama in 1914, Uruguay in 1915 and Ecuador in 1916. Between the Armistice of November 1918 and the drafting of the preparatory report for the Washington ILC, eight hour day laws of varying scope had been enacted by Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland.

The eight hour workday also became more widespread in the UK and the United States; more than four million of the 12 million members of the British workforce had their working day reduced to eight hours. In the USA, the number of workers covered by an eight hour day agreement rose from 172,000 in 1915 to 1.14 million in 1918.

Albert Thomas reported that, "during the years 1918-19 the eight hour day has, either by collective agreements or by law, become a reality in the majority of industrial countries".

By 1922, the 48-hour week was the general practice, especially in industry, throughout Europe and in Australia, New Zealand and many countries in Latin America. There had even been significant reductions in working hours in Japan and India.

As we look back to these early years, it is clear that the ILO and its Convention No. 1 have been key drivers of the eight hour working day. They standardized and promoted this labour policy, leading to its widespread implementation and today the eight hour working day is the norm in countries all over the world.

www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/

Commonwealth leaders urged to pass laws protecting workers from slavery

World leaders should take aim at modern slavery in corporate supply chains at a global summit next year, labour rights activists said on Wednesday, calling for laws to compel companies to tackle worker exploitation in their operations.

Speaking at the Thomson Reuters Foundation's annual Trust Conference, experts urged heads of the 53-country Commonwealth – mostly ex-British colonies home to 2.4 billion people – to focus on the issue at the biennial event to be held in Rwanda in 2020.

"If the Commonwealth took the lead (on due diligence laws) ... it would have an enormous rippling affect around the world," Phil Bloomer, head of London-based pressure group The Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, told a panel.

The European Union is often seen as setting the minimum regulatory standards for businesses on human rights, according to Bloomer, who said the Commonwealth should take the lead.

"The Commonwealth could act ... as the beacon and litmus test ... but also a multiplier effect on due diligence laws."

He described Britain's world-first 2015 Modern Slavery Act – which requires large businesses to publicly outline their anti-slavery efforts – as important but "toothless", and urged major nations and the EU to hold firms to account on labour abuses.

Sharan Burrow speaks at Trust Conference, an annual conference hosted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation on Nov 13, 2019, London, Britain. Thomson Reuters Foundation/Daniel Leal-Olivas

About 25 million people are

estimated to be victims of forced labour, and companies are facing rising consumer pressure to clean up their supply chains with the issue in the spotlight since the United Nations set a target of ending slavery by 2030.

Yet the world's economic model has "broken down" as the practices of large corporations and digital platforms put a rising number of workers at risk of slavery, said Sharan Burrow, head of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

About two billion people – more than 60% of the world's workforce – are in informal work, leaving them vulnerable to being underpaid, overworked and treated like slaves, she said.

And the rise of digital platforms from food to taxi apps where workers lack proper contracts and social protections means that key rights

such as a living wage, trade unionisation and fair working conditions are under growing threat, Burrow added.

"The world's employment framework has broken down ... we need a new social contract to clean up forced labour," she said.

"THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES"

Burrow called upon businesses to do more to identify the risk of exploitation and slavery in their operations and provide workers with avenues to report abuse without fear of reprisals, and urged governments to ensure labour rights are respected.

She pointed to Qatar – which relies on about 2 million migrant workers for the bulk of its workforce – as a positive example of how pressure from labour rights groups over what they described as modern slavery could

lead to broad labour reforms.

Doha last month announced a new minimum wage law and steps to end the "kafala" sponsorship system, which binds workers to one employer and has been criticised as abusive.

The global outlook for workers' rights is concerning, Burrow said, citing recent ITUC research that showed workers had no or restricted access to justice in 72% of countries and found a spike in the number of nations blocking trade unionisation.

"For workers, the struggle continues for fundamental rights, a minimum living wage, the right to bargain collectively, and the guarantee of a safe workplace," she said.

"Every business ... and government must be held to account."

(Kieran Guilbert | KieranG77 | Thomson Reuters Foundation)

Masakadza accepts Zim director of cricket role

Hamilton Masakadza has been appointed as Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC)'s director of cricket, a newly created role designed to transform the game both on and off the field.

The 36-year-old former Zimbabwe captain, who retired from the international game only last month, will be responsible for defining policy, strategy and programmes of "best practice" throughout all aspects of the ZC cricket pathway.

He will be accountable for the recruitment, management and interaction of senior cricket technical staff within the cricket affairs department.

The director of cricket will also ensure that coaches and captains are providing effective leadership to the national teams.

Masakadza, who represented his country in 38 Tests, 209 ODIs and 66 T20Is, will officially begin his new role on November 1.

The decision to appoint a director of cricket was made by the ZC board, which at its last meeting in August passed a resolution to restructure the organisation's management.

ZC chairperson Tavengwa Mukhlani was pleased that Masakadza had accepted the offer to take up the position.

"This is a key appointment that clearly indicates our desire to strengthen our cricket across all levels while also improving the game administratively," said



Hamilton Masakadza

Mukhlani.

"We are therefore excited about Hamilton taking up the role, which will see him bringing a fresh perspective to the administration of cricket and helping us to shape the future of our game.

"I have no doubt that his

incredible passion for Zimbabwe cricket, massive knowledge of our game and the wealth of experience that he gained from playing at the highest level will help transform ZC and see him becoming a respected leader in the sport."

Joseph Parker taunts Chisora

Joseph Parker says a final decision on the Derek Chisora fight will be made and wants to "smash" the Brit's lingering hopes of a world-title shot.

Former world heavyweight boxing champion Joseph Parker was ruled out of his fight with Zimbabwe-born Dereck Chisora because of illness.

The New Zealander has called for a rescheduled heavyweight boxing clash with Zimbabwe-born Chisora after a suspected spider bite forced him to withdraw from last month's O2 showdown and Parker will hold talks with promoter Eddie Hearn to confirm his next heavyweight fight.

Chisora instead stopped David Price inside four

rounds and manager David Haye has turned his attention to an alternative fight with Oleksandr Usyk, the WBO mandatory challenger, but Parker raised doubts about whether this is a likely route to a world title for the Londoner. Parker, who is ranked No 4 by the WBO, told Sky Sports:

"He hasn't won a world title, Chisora, so I think they are trying to look for the fastest and the best way of getting there, and they think Usyk is the best way of getting to a world title.

"But firstly it doesn't make sense, because he's not ranked and there's a lot of guys ranked before him. I'm not sure why they want that fight? Obviously the fight was locked in for us both and I couldn't control what

happened with the illness, but I want to reschedule the fight. I'm healthy, I'm fit, I'm ready to go. I know I can smash him, I know I can beat him. He's going to bring a lot of pressure, but I know I've got better boxing skill and better movement than the other guys he's faced.

"I told him before that I will retire him and I'll be his last fight. Lock in the fight, I'll put in a great show. He will get his money that he wants, but I will put him into retirement. He's had a good career."

The Kiwi's manager David Higgins has suggested that Haye is looking for a final payday for Chisora against Usyk, but remains hopeful that Hearn will instead secure the fight with Parker. — Sky Sports.

Antipas 6-out ...steps down as Warriors coach



Joey Antipas

The Warriors coach reportedly leaves after just six games in charge of the national team on interim basis.

Zimbabwe caretaker coach Joey Antipas has reportedly resigned less than 24 hours after guiding the Warriors to a 2-1 away victory over Zambia in a 2021 Africa Cup of Nations Group H qualifier.

Antipas, who was also doubling up as coach of Zimbabwean Premier Soccer League side Chicken Inn, departs after just three months in charge of the national team.

His schedule saw him in charge of Zimbabwe's match against Botswana last Friday in Harare, and he led Chicken in a league match the following day in Bulawayo, before travelling back to the capital city to prepare for the Zambia trip.

How the world is stealing Zim's finest rugby players

While there was much hype about the South African Springboks ambushing and totally humiliating the England Rugby team at the World Cup Final in Japan, Zimbabweans from around the world have their own 'bone to chew'. It would appear like Zimbabwe has become an exporter of note when it comes to fine rugby players.

A total of 9 top Zimbabwean players appeared for 7 different countries with Tendai "Beast" Mtawarira being on everyone's lips. The Beast plays his trade in South Africa.

Tendai (34) was born in Zimbabwe and attended Churchill and Peterhouse Boys High School. He was snatched by South Africa before legally acquiring citizenship.



Below is a list of Zimbabwean Rugby players who have been snatched by other countries...

- 1)Tendai-Beast Mtawarira-The prop, was snatched by South Africa and later given citizenship.
 - 2)Takudzwa Ngwenya – The winger now plays for the United States Rugby Team
 - 3)David Denton and Thomas Evans – Both players snatched by Scotland.
 - 4)Brian Mujati – Like The Beast, Brian was also snatched by South Africa.
 - 5)Kotaro Munyaradzi – Kotaro plays for Japan and has a Zimbabwean father and Japanese mother.
 - 6)David Pocock – David was born in Gweru, Zimbabwe and later moved to Australia as a teenager.
 - 7)Don Armand-the 31 year old plays as a flanker for Exeter Chiefs in the English Premiership.
- Heartbreaking as it maybe, this is how Zimbabwe has continued to shape rugby around the world. Even when the Sabres haven't featured at the World Cup since 1991.