

## **Resolutions Adopted at The SAMWU 2<sup>nd</sup> National Congress Held in November 1989**

### **1. The second congress was about: Implementing the constitution and organising the structures.**

#### **This congress noting.**

- a) That the resolution of the First Congress “Establishment of Union Structures” was intended for the formative stage of SAMWU arising from the merger process.
- b) That the time for interim arrangements arising out of merger is past except where there are Unions who have agreed to merge with SAMWU subsequently to its formation
- c) That only properly constituted structures should from now on exercise full rights in terms of the Constitution.
- d) That SAMWU has failed to date to fully implement the structures of the Union at Regional level as demarcated by the NEC, and also at National level.
- e) That compliance with the Constitution by all structures will be a matter requiring on-going assessment by the NEC and/or General Council and that they will retain the power to make such assessment and to require where there is not compliance.
- f) That organizing projects will continue to exist and develop and that guidelines for procedures and development of their interim’s structures will still be required.

#### **Therefore resolves:**

- a) That SUMWU must ensure that Regions are established in Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Transvaal by no later than 1 June 1990.
- b) That nor more than two further NEC based on interim arrangements be held. That thereafter all NEC’s must be in accordance with the Constitution.
- c) That, only municipalities with basic recognition in the form of stop-order facilities will in future be regarded as eligible to be a formal part of any structure. Provided also that there has been compliance with the terms of the Constitution regarding the election of Shop Stewards.
- d) That any independent Union seeking merger with SAMWU must take steps to merge its structures with Regional Structures of SAMWU. Provided that participatory observer status in the NEC shall be allowed directly to the NEC for no more than three NEC’S in order to attain the objective.
- e) That an ORGANISING PROJECT shall only exist where such project has been approved by Regional Structures in consultation with the NEC in terms of the policy of targeting. That such project shall be geared to reflecting the structures of the Union as

closely as possible. They may participate in an area, branch or regional structure on an interim basis without the right to vote or to have Shop Stewards elected to Office-Bearer status within such Structure.

## **2. Organising Principles**

**This congress is recognizing:**

- a) That we here gathered today represents a very small minority of municipal workers.
- b) That it is our objective to unite all municipal workers in South Africa.
- c) That the process of organizing the unity of workers is a process of opposing the many divisions imposed by the bosses.
- d) That we must continually assess the boss's power and that of their sweetheart Unions.
- e) That we are committed to uniting municipal workers irrespective of race, sex, creed or present economic status.
- f) Those walls are built brick by brick.

Therefore **resolves.**

- a) That our Union shall use the broad strategy of recruitment from below and opposition to all divisive institutions.
- b) That our Union shall be flexible in its strategic application of the tactics of "boycott" and "take over" of such institutions.
- c) That we must organize to educate membership, consolidate existing structures and to advance to a strong and powerful National Union.
- d) Establishing structures within such establishments and ensuring a stable unity of workers, thus advancing to strengthening the National Union.

## **3. Membership Subscription**

This congress is **noting**

- a) Those problems have and may be experienced in the implementation of the percentage based subscription of 5% of the member's wage.
- b) That with new recruitment it is difficult to explain a percentage subscription to members and it is advantageous to recruit on the basis of a fixed amount or amounts.

- c) That the principles of each paying according to their ability to assist the Union's struggle to achieve its objectives of all workers having a living wage is the correct principle on which to base subscriptions.
- d) That percentage based subscriptions are adjusted automatically with wage increases and therefore ensure that the Union's finances will be adjusted to counter inflation where the Union fights and achieves wage increases.
- e) Those hand-collected subscriptions bring in minimal income and cannot be relied on for our self-sufficiency.

Therefore **resolves.**

- a) To reaffirm the percentage based principle for subscriptions and that the Union strive for its fullest implementation.
- b) That in recruiting at new Local Authorities the minimum wages shall indicate the minimum subscription on which are to be informed that subscriptions will be implemented as per the following scale:

WAGE PER MONTH		SUBSCRIPTION BELOW
BELOW	R 500, 00	R2, 00
ABOVE	R 500, 00	R3, 00
ABOVE	R 800, 00	R4, 00
ABOVE	R1 000, 00	R5, 00
ABOVE	R1 200, 00	R6, 00
ABOVE	R1 400, 00	R7, 00
ABOVE	R1 600, 00	R8, 00
ABOVE	R 1 800, 00	R9, 00
ABOVE	R2 000, 00	R10, 00

- c) Subscriptions in a new Local Authority may be implemented on an across-the-board basis on the prescribed minimum rate which relates to the minimum wage for the first year of stop-orders provided that as soon as possible percentage based subscriptions are introduced.
- d) That where practical problems arise in implementation of percentage subscriptions because the Local Authority does not have the mechanism for implementation. Or where its implementation may undermine unity and be against the Union's interests in

the short term. In such circumstances the scale above may be introduced progressively in relation to groups of workers above or below the listed levels. Provided that organizers and Shop Stewards shall continue to campaign for full percentage implementation.

- e) That the NEC is instructed to take decisive steps to campaign for full implementation of subscriptions on a basis in line with the above by no later than 1 May 1989.
- f) That there shall be no hand collected subscriptions.

#### **4. Membership Application.**

##### **Noting**

- a) That the prospective Unions all have different systems for membership application which need to be standardized so as to avoid confusion.
- b) Section 2.2 of the Constitution sets out the basis for future members to apply to join the national Union.

##### **Believes**

- a) The smooth transfers of members of prospective merging Unions of the National Union, regulating admission of future members to the national Union and a centralized administration of membership records are important for national organization and unity.

##### **Resolves**

- a) That all paid-up members of prospective merging Unions as approved by the NEC shall be deemed to be the members of the National Union subject to the inclusions of additional members employed at municipalities where stop-order payments are received by the National Union.
- b) That all future members of the National Union shall apply for membership on the existing National union application form and stop-order authorization forms according to Section 2.2.1 of the Constitution.
- c) To facilitate the process of recognition of the National Union by employees of members, all structures within the Union shall ensure that:
- d) The rights duties contained in all recognition agreement presently in force between future members of the National Union and the employers concerned are transferred to the National Union and that copies of such agreements be sent to the Head Office.

Where any such agreement is presently being negotiated by the members of any of the prospective unions such an agreement shall be amended to reflect the name of the National Union;

Where such negotiations have not yet commenced such members shall sign the National Union's stop-order authorization forms in respect of the deductions of Union subscriptions and the NEC through the Head Office shall assist and monitor the progress of such members towards recognition of the National Union.

## **5. Establishments of National Departments**

This congress **noting**:

- a) That SAMWU has experienced tremendous membership growth since its launch
- b) That a very large section of the municipal sector is still unorganized
- c) That no national Departments have been established.

**Noting** that.

- a) That the NEC has approved a funding proposal for the establishment of national Education and Media Departments.
- b) That are present the Head Office is heavily burdened in meeting the needs of the organization.
- c) That are present the financial position of the Union does not allow for the establishment of National Departments.

**Believing**

- a) That how the Union develops with growth is a vital importance.

**Therefore resolves**

- a) That the NEC actively works towards the establishment of the following National Departments:
  - ✓ Education
  - ✓ Media
  - ✓ Administration
  - ✓ Organizing
  - ✓ Legal and
  - ✓ Collective Bargaining

- That the NEC be authorized to take steps necessary to ensure the establishment and subsequent running of such National Departments.

## **6. Women Structures**

This congress **noting**

- a) That women are the most oppressed section of the working class.

Further **noting**

- a) That COSATU and certain affiliates have established formal women's structures

### **Believing**

- a) That the emancipation of women from all forms of oppression is a major component of our struggle.

Therefore **resolves**

- a) That the NEC should determine the number and location of women members in SAMWU
- b) That where it is possible steps should be taken to establish formal structures for women
- b) That the struggle of women should be highlighted and advanced through SAMWU's formal education programme
- c) That immediate step should be taken to revive Fedsaw.
- d) Those steps are taken implementing resolutions taken by COSATU Congress.

### **7. Code of Political Conduct**

This congress is **noting**

- a) That political discipline is of vital importance for the qualitative development of SAMWU
- b) That such political discipline is also indispensable for the maintenance and extension of democratic principles and practices in all structures of SAMWU.

### **Believing**

- a) That the members and officials of SAMWU can only play their rightful role in the struggle for a democratic South Africa society if they themselves adhere to the principles of democratic political conduct while engaged in the activities of the union and the broader community.

Therefore **resolves.**

- a) That as a matter of urgency, the NEC formulates a Code of Political and Democratic Conduct.
- b) That such a Code of Political and Democratic Conduct be implemented and become binding on all SAMWU members, official and structures by not later than 1 July 1990.

### **8. Regularising of shop steward elections**

This congress **noting.**

- a) That the Shop Steward structures are the basic unit of all of our higher structures and leadership.
- b) That there is a tendency for Shop Stewards elections to often be overlooked by Unions.

- c) That Shop Steward elections require careful monitoring and considerable effort in being properly conducted in terms of the Construction
- d) The annual cycle of activities makes it particularly difficult to ensure elections in the mid-year period of wage negotiation.
- e) That for proper elections to be conducted media is needed to back up the democratic process and emphasize the importance of Shop Steward Elections.

Therefore **resolves**

- a) That the NEC should co-ordinate the process of elections in the Union on a general election basis so that elections are entrenched as an important campaign issue in the Union.
- b) That such elections should be conducted in the early part of any year- in the first quarter and all Shop Stewards should be up for elections.
- c) That to begin the process of regularization there should be a general election in the first quarter of 1990 where regular S/S elections have been held.

### **9. The Labour Relations Act**

This congress **noting.**

- a) That despite widespread opposition the boss's continue to utilize those clauses in the LRA which are offensive to workers
- b) That the states security forces have violently intervened in breaking up peaceful protest against this anti-worker law
- c) That workers, as demonstrated at the 2nd workers summit, are steadfast in their resolution to
- d) develop their own LRA

Further **noting**

- a) That certain sectors are excluded from the provisions of the LRA.
- b) That municipal workers are denied the right to strike.

**Believing**

- a) That negotiations with the bosses may not bear fruitful results
- b) That it is only through a well-co-ordinated and sustained programme of action that this Act will be crushed.

**Believing further**

- a) That the Anti-Labour Relations Act Campaign is the most important campaign of the organized workers at the point and should be spearheaded by organized workers supported by the broader working class and its allies.

Therefore **resolves**

- a) To continue mobilizing members around the Anti LRA Campaign
- b) To actively work at ensuring that Regional and national Co-ordinating Communities are functioning effectively
- c) That the fight will only end once this Act has been replaced by a law determined by workers and which address the needs of all workers.

### **10. Living Wage Campaign.**

This congress **noting.**

- a) The ever worsening economic conditions in the country
- b) The poverty wages paid to municipal workers throughout the country
- c) The lack of decent housing, long working hours and the absence of proper social security benefits.

Further **noting.**

- d) That the COSATU living Wage Campaign has not been effectively co-ordinated as a national campaign by affiliates of the Federation

**Believing**

- a) That the Living Wage Campaign must be re-built as an important component of the broader laboratory struggle.

Therefore **resolves**

- b) That the Union through discussions and mandate works towards determining national minimum wage rates for all municipal workers
- c) That a SAMWU National Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinating Committee be established for this purpose.
- d) That the union actively participates in rebuilding the Living wage Campaign as a COSATU national campaign

### **11. Privatisation**

This congress **noting**

- a) That the state is involved in a concerted drive to privatize certain services and property previously controlled by the public sector
- b) That private enterprise is profit motivated
- c) That capitalism has discovered another avenue for continuing its exploitative drive for profits
- d) That privatization entrenches the control of the means of production in the hands of a minority



Further **noting**.

- a) The stand taken by our comrades in Namibia against privatization.

**Believing**

- a) That it is responsibility of the state to provide all basic essential services
- b) That the quality of services currently provided by public sector workers will deteriorate as a result of privatization.
- c) That these services like health care, education, transport etc, will no longer be affordable to large sections of the oppressed and exploited masses.
- d) That privatization will cause untold suffering to workers employed in the public sector and the community at large

Therefore **resolves**

- a) That COSATU and the entire democratic movement should initiate an Anti-Privatization campaign calling on people to unite, to resist and fight against privatization.
- b) That such a campaign should be spearheaded by the Public Sector Unions inside and outside COSATU

## **12. Health and Safety.**

- a) With concern and anger the number of deaths, occupational illnesses and injuries which occur as a result of poor health and safety standards
- b) That this is a direct result of the bosses drive to increase productively, reduce staffing levels and make profits at the expense of workers.

**Noting further**

- a) That workers in the municipal sector are exposed to many conditions which seriously affect their health and safety

**Believing.**

- a) That all workers have the right to proper health and safety conditions in their workplaces
- b) That privatization and de-regulation will further increase health and safety hazards

Therefore **resolves.**

- a) That a national campaign be built to highlight non-existent and deteriorating health and safety standards, involving all progressive unions.
- b) That the issue of health and safety should be fully debated through the structures of the SAMWU part of the educational programme.

## **12. Developing our Political Policy**

**Noting:**

- a) That since its launch, SAMWU has failed to debate and arrive at a comprehensive political position in relation to the broader mass democratic movement.
- b) That individual members and groups have differing political views and background within the broader liberation movement.
- c) That the working class is determined in its efforts to build its organizations to fight for a South Africa free from capitalist exploitation and the achievement of a democratic socialist society; and
- d) That shop floor struggles cannot be divorced from the mass based struggles for liberation.

**Believing**

- a) That the freedom Charter has played a crucial role in mobilizing mass organization and reflects the minimum demands of the working class in our country;
- b) That the central areas of debate within COSATU at this stage centre on the ANC's constitutional guidelines and negotiated political settlement; and

the pace of developments require on-going, open and democratic debate if we are to contribute positively to the working class struggle for liberation.

**Therefore resolves**

- a) That as a matter of urgency, the NE implementation a programme of debate on the Freedom Charter, Constitutional Guidelines and the question of Political Settlement throughout our structures;
- b) That such debate must be implemented in an open and democratic way to ensure that all of the views of our members are knowledge and considered.
- c) That we must support national campaigns by the broad Mass Democratic Movement;
- d) That a further Special National Congress be called by no later than 30 November 1990 to consolidate and further develop the coherence of our political policy.

**13. Climate for negotiations****Noting**

- a) That the organization championing the cause of the oppressed and exploited masses of our land was by the fascist regime of South Africa.

**Believing**

- a) That it is essential, before any negotiations can take place that the necessary climate is created.
- b) That the apartheid proclaimed demand and create this climate.

**Resolves**

- a) To support the conditions laid down by the ANC and for the regime to create a climate for genuine negotiations as outlined in the minimum preconditions hereunder:
  - ✓ Release all political prisoners and detainees unconditionally and refrain from imposing restrictions on them.
  - ✓ Lifting bans and restrictions on all organizations and persons
  - ✓ Remove all troops from the townships
  - ✓ End the State of Emergency and repeal all discriminatory laws, including the Internal Security Act which has been designed to circumscribe political activity.
  - ✓ Cease all political trails and political executions.
  - ✓ Return all political exiles unconditionally.
  - ✓ Allow equal access to all forms of media.

**14. Building Mass Based Organisations**

This congress **noting**

- a) The vicious repression on the part of the state and the bosses in their attempt to crush the organizations of the working class.
- b) That the Trade Union Movement and community organizations have been weakened as a result of this onslaught.
- c) That SAMWU members, through the services they provide, occupy a central and highly visible position in the community.
- d) That issues like privatization and evictions directly affect SAMWU affect SAMWU members and the community at large.

Noting **further**

- a) That despite the effects of the state of emergency and other restrictive legislation, the working class is steadfast in its march to liberation as seen in the Anti-LRS and Defiance Campaigns.

**Believing**

- a) That with mass action should go the process of building and strengthening our organizations.
- b) That the organized workers have a duty to build strong working class organization within the broad democratic movement.

**Therefore resolves**

- a) That SAMWU strongly reaffirms the independence and decision making structures of COSATU and our belief in the leading role of the working class in our struggle for a South African free of exploitation and oppression.
- b) That SAMWU should actively participate in building COSATU structures at a Local, regional and national level.
- c) That SAMWU members should continue to actively rebuild the mass based organizations in all sectors of the community viz. civic, youth, student, women etc.
- d) That SAMWU should, through the building and strengthening of COSATU, play an active role in building disciplined alliance with other mass democratic structures.

### **15. Discussion and Implementation of COSATU resolutions**

This congress **noting**

- a) The urgent need to build and strengthen the structure of COSATU in the face of vicious attacks by the state and the bosses.
- b) The need for affective, national co-ordination of all campaigns initiated by COSATU.
- c) That affiliates are not always serious in implementing the resolutions of COSATU.

Further **noting**

- a) That the absence of the National Education Unit hampers SAMWU in effectively advancing the growth of COSATU on a structured basis.

**Believing that:**

- a) That a strong COSATU is dependent on the role played by its affiliates.
- c) That obstacles to SAMWU's full participation in building COSATU should be identified and overcome.

Therefore **resolves**

- a) That all structures of SAMWU workshop the resolutions adopted at the 3rd COSATU National Congress and ensure that members participate actively in the local and regional structures of COSATU on the implementation of these resolutions.
- b) That the NEC monitors the participating of SAMWU structures in the local and regional structures of COSATU.

### **16. Forced Removal**

**Noting**

- a) The continued forced removals of our people from places to places of the racist apartheid regimes choice.
- b) That the present apartheid regime sees the forced removal as an alternative means to its failure to provide the pole with shelter.

- c) The use of repressive legislation and the Local Authorities law enforcement to beat the resistance by eradicating their shelters.

### **Believing**

- a) That we are all fully aware of the shortage of houses and racist regime is failing to provide shelter for our people.

### **Therefore Resolves**

- a) To fully support the anti-forced removal campaigns as a relevant Union to the situation to stop.
- b) Establish agreements with Local Authorities to interfere in negotiations together with civic organizations on the anti-forced removals.

### **17. International Policy**

This congress **noting** that:

- a) The International trade unions movement remains split by division that derives from the situation of the “COLD WAR.”
- b) There have been signs recently that these cold divisions are starting to ease but that a lot more remains to be done to promote a single, unified trade union movement internationally.
- c) Many international trade union bodies re still engaged in activities which have the effect of dividing the trade union movement in South Africa. Such divisive activities are often the result of funding.
- d) Many international trade union bodies are attempting to promote small splinter unions. Others re attempting to promote our trade unions as a “third force” alternative to the ANC and SACTU

Therefore **resolves**

- a) The international activities of SAMWU and its members must have concrete policies to guide our international work.
- b) Effective international solidarity is in the interests of the working class and the trade union movement.
- c) The nature of our struggle requires the broadest possible range of ideological positions.
- d) Our international work should be aimed at winning support not only for our trade union activities but also support for the broader anti-apartheid movements nationally and internationally which is fighting for a united, non-racial democratic South Africa.
- e) Whilst our links with the union movement of Western Europe and Western Europe and North America are developing well, we still have relatively weak links with unions in the socialist bloc, in countries involved in anti-imperialist struggles and particularly with unions in the frontline states.

- f) We should not allow our international activities to be used by outside forces to create divisions between ourselves and the broader liberation movement, in particular SACTU and the ANC.
- g) SAMWU should attempt strengthen its links with OATUU and Trade Union Internationals (TUIS).

### **18. Regional Services Council**

This congress **noting**

- a) That Regional Services Councils form part of the state's racist and anti-democratic form of government.
- b) That RSC's are an extension of the tri-cameral system of "general affairs" and "own affairs"
- c) That the RSC system further incorporates dummy structures like management committees and community councils.
- d) That SAMWU member are working at these racist structures.

**Noting**

- a) That the majority of the exploited and oppressed have shown their total rejection to all forms of racist government.

**Believing**

- a) That the building of progressive civic structures is an important part of our struggle.
- b) Those SAMWU members, due to their location, have to play a pivotal role in this struggle.

**Therefore resolves.**

- a) That this congress re-affirms its rejection of the RSC system as part of the broader state plan to divide the working class on racial grounds.
- b) That SAMWU will continue to fight for a democratic form of central and local government which will provide for the needs of all.
- c) That as part of the fight, SAMWU will play an active role in building the civic structures which will form the basis of a democratic form of local government.

### **19. Namibia Workers**

This congress **noting**

- a) The NUNW has been the backbone of the internal organization of the Namibian workers in the past years.

- b) The NUNM has played a crucial role in building a mass worker support for SWAPO in the elections and in giving voice to the needs of the Namibian workers in an independent NAMIBIA.
- c) COSATU, at its 2nd National Congress and the last National Congress, supported NUNM and its affiliates to gain full recognition in the factories, shops, mines etc, where they are organized, and encouraged all of its affiliates to build concrete links and offer concrete support to affiliates of NUNM in each sector.
- d) Namibian workers are fighting the problem of stopping privatization (selling off) of all the public assets. The public sector workers in South Africa are also faced with the same problem of privatization.
- e) The Namibian Public Sector Union is, among the other sectors, organizing in the Municipal Sector.

### **Believing**

- a) The demand of the Namibian Public Sector workers is similar to the demands of our campaigns.
- b) The Public Sector employers we are fighting are often the same.
- c) The needs we are fighting for are one.

### **Therefore resolves**

- a) To build, through direct workers to worker contact, concrete links between the Namibian Public Workers Union.
- b) To support all forms of material support and resources to consolidate NUNW and its affiliates.

### **20. Public Sector.**

#### **This congress noting**

- a) That workers employed in the Public Sector are amongst the most exploited
- b) That labour legislation does not extend to all sections of the Public Sector

#### **Further noting**

- a) That the state is involved in a concerted effort to privatize many services currently being performed by public sector workers.

### **Believing**

- a) That at this point in our development it is impossible to include all public sector workers in one union.
- b) That it is necessary to forge strong links with other progressive Public Sector unions in order that issues of common interest can be addressed, whilst at the same time respecting the independence of each union.

Therefore **resolves**

- a) That the NEC formulates a clear programme of action aimed at forging links, with all progressive unions in the Public Sector on a structured and disciplined basis.

