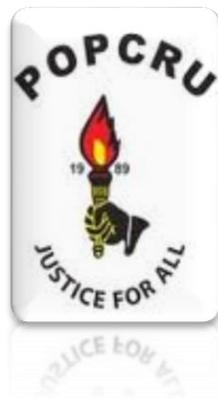


# Opening Address To The Popcru National Executive Committee

12 OCTOBER 2013

**POPCRU HOUSE – AUCKLAND PARK**

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Chairperson...

National Office Bearers...

Esteemed members of the POPCRU NEC including our staff....

Greetings to you all this morning. This ordinary sitting of the National Executive Committee is a great platform which gives us an opportunity to assess our current state and also make decisions on important aspects on the work we do for our members. In the words of the late renowned Indian Civil Rights leader Mahatma Gandhi, I quote “the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others,” unquote. Many of us sitting here, were brought to this point in our lives by those who had the faith and outmost confidence in our ability to lead. Our members bring us to forums such as these with sheer self-assurance that we, and we alone will look after their benefits.

Comrade Chairperson, we are to apply the same attitude as we prepare for the upcoming National Elections. A time during which we shall speak, read and breathe only the name of the African National Congress. After casting his first vote in April 1994, former President Nelson Mandela told the nation that their message is that the basic needs of the masses of the

people must be addressed: the creation of jobs, of houses, the introduction of electricity, building of schools and hospitals, providing free, compulsory education, running water and paved roads. These were our priorities then and remain so now. The ANC led administration remains the only government in the world which has built over one million free houses for its under-privileged citizens. As we begin campaigning, these are some of the facts that we must remind our constituencies of. We are however yet to arrive at our Canaan with more work still to be done before we can become the country of milk and honey we all aspire for.

Our recent crime statistics are an indication that we should continue to encourage our members to keep their eyes on the ball. The general decrease of the statistics offers little comfort especially because high priority crimes such as murder and attempted murder have increased. I want to reiterate our stance that there is absolutely nothing under the sun that is more important than human life. We have expressed as such to the SAPS so that they invest more resources in the kind of policing that would see lives being saved. There were however some successes which include the decreases in business robberies, ATM bombings and bank robberies. We are confident that our members in the South African Police Service will take to heart the statistics which have been shared with the nation as we all work towards making this country safer to live in.

Comrades; at COSATU, we are still stuck in an unprecedented period where there seem to be endless attacks aimed at permanently dividing

the federation. I am certain you are all aware that letters have been brought to the CEC seeking an early congress which would hold new elections. There is also the suspension or attempt to of COSATU's 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy President, Zingiswa Losi from the National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA). We are concerned about the manner in which matters are progressing comrades, because an attempt to oust Comrade Losi equals an attempt to destabilise the current COSATU which took a firm decision to suspend the Secretary General. POPCRU will continue to stand only for that which is righteous and noble. We will not fear or be shaken by elements which seek to reduce our COSATU to a one man show.

We also note the federations' position about the Supreme Court's dismissal of OUTA's bid to stop the implementation of the e-tolls. According to COSATU, this should make no difference to the federation's anti e-tolls campaign. We however comrades believe that as law abiding South Africans, after trying all that is within our power to win this battle, it is now time to give in and follow the law. If that means buying the e-tags, let it be so, it is after-all our government that is calling for this.

Something else that we do support though is the building of a strengthened and financially independent Communist Party. I am aware of the fact that we have filled out those forms as resolved by the past NEC and pledged our financial support to the SACP. Comrades, we must always remember that change begins with us. If we want to see a strong

SACP that we can pride ourselves with, then we have to invest in it as such. I am also informed that comrades learnt a lot from the teachings shared by our party leaders at the Political School. And that is what we expect always.

Moving on to our sectors comrades;

There is a worrying communiqué that is making rounds amongst our members employed under the Public Service Act in the SAPS, promising them salary upgrades and backpack before the end of this month. The very same letter claims that the National Commissioner has acquired 2.6 billion rands from the Treasury. We have clarified this issue to members but it has caused a lot of damage already and it is upon us to work hard in our respective corners to make sure that this is clarified. Our communication with the National Commissioner has been promising and we truly hope we will have good news for our members soon enough. Our members are impatient and frustrated, they are looking to us with eager eyes and we have to deliver to them as we promised during the successful march on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

While still on the South African Police Service, we had an opportunity just the other day to respond to their annual report in parliament. We were able to table to the Portfolio Committee our concern that members in the service were adversely affected by the non-compliance and non-implementation of policies and collective agreements. The case of the

Public Service Act appointees was highlighted as the classic case in question. We raised several issues which we hope will be taken into consideration as we managed to register our dissatisfaction that year after year we go and address parliament but we see very little action as a result.

In the Department of Correctional Services, we are very happy with the end result of the fracas experiences at the Mangaung Private Prison which the department managed to claim back from the unscrupulous G4S. Ahead of the stabbings and other attacks on our members including the hostage situation, we had been calling for the contract between the department and G4S to be terminated. It is rather unfortunate that it took so much time and so many attacks on our members and serious injuries for the department to listen to us. Our aim is to ensure that the same is done at the Private Prison in Limpopo as we have always been against the privatisation of our prisons.

Our state controlled facilities are also not without fault. Capacity continues to pose a great challenge within institutions, with vacant positions not filled for years. Of course this speaks directly to the kind of service our members offer and the kind of rehabilitation received by inmates. These are not new challenges comrade chairperson, but we must never forget the monsters we are at odds with in order to emerge victorious. A lot of work with relation to the Ministerial Task Team has recently halted; we

hope this will change as there are still many outstanding burning issues in need of resolving.

Comrades, finally an agreement at the Road Traffic Management Cooperation has been reached, paving the way for a better relationship with the organisation. We should also keep a close eye on the organization to ensure that the rights of our members there are protected. The institution has just come out of a stormy season and should indeed be treated as such. The agreement will also work in our favour as we continue campaigning for a nationalised traffic service.

Comrades, lets engage, debate and find resolutions to issues at hand for the benefit of the 150 000 men and women who put their absolute faith in us.

I declare this NEC open. Amandla!