



POLITICAL OVERVIEW TO THE 2ND NATIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE OF POPCRU 24 JULY 2014 ST GEORGES HOTEL, IRENE

Comrade Chairperson,
Members of the National Executive Committee, Officials and
Leaders of the Progressive Affiliates within COSATU and the entire mass
democratic movement,
Policy Conference Delegates
Comrades & Compatriots
Ladies and gentlemen...

Let me take this ample occasion to welcome you to POPCRU's second National Policy Conference. The conference affords us an opportunity to appraise progress made in relation to the implementation adopted policies by the 7th National Congress in 2011, make necessary reviews on the current policies whilst closing the policy gaps where they exist. The implementation our policies takes us a step further towards POPCRU's twenty fifth Anniversary celebration later this year. The twenty-fifth anniversary must find us in a state where we truly live the narrative of our organisation produced by the 7th National Congress.

We stated in that conference that over the past twenty five years of POPCRU's existence, the organisation evolved into a well-capacitated progressive force, a glue that held its entire membership together. POPCRU is a gigantic organisation today and this is not said as a result of lack for better words but because we have come a long way from where we started. POPCRU has grown from having one to two staff members to the large union you see today employing over 70 staff members, thus contributing to job creation in the country.

We have grown from a period of oppression that incapacitated our organisation from growing. Today we are a beacon of hope to our broad membership and to many people. Comrade Chairperson, as I said earlier we are gathered here to dissect and assess the policies which govern the organisation. Policy is a compilation of a set of rules and guidelines which dictate the manner in which

we work, conduct ourselves and make use of available resources in our control which are meant to make it easier to service the men and women who have put their trust in POPCRU. This is the principle which we have entrenched within ourselves as an organisation. Without these set of rules we would have been working aimlessly, without any direction and I am quite certain that we would not have attained our organisational status we find ourselves today.

It is the responsibility of everyone in this room today to ensure that the next coming days are fully exploited as we take a critical look at what was concluded when a gathering similar to the one of today sat down and drafted these policies. Our foundation was based on an ideology that was derived from the wish to have a representative body within the criminal justice cluster which was centred on liberation, fairness and dignity. The latter was for both the public which we were employed to serve and for us in doing away with the barbaric nature of the apartheid regime towards us. It is along the same breath that we wish to be continuously transformative in our approach to all issues including those which relate largely to the conditions which we create for our workers. This also extends to the measures which we have put in place to ensure the smooth running of operations as we serve our members effectively.

Comrade Chairperson, this gathering is indicative of our ethos as an organisation. We appreciate order and subscribe to norms and standards which dictate professionalism and efficiency. The leadership extends appreciation to the team which dedicated it's time to the development of the discussion document which was discussed at the PEC level throughout the length and breadth of the country.

I am grateful this was the case because it has given all provinces an opportunity to interact with real policy making processes, understanding that their role and contribution are quite critical. The matters under review in our current policy document have been at the centre of debates which also involved our staff members and the leadership. We welcome all the inputs and proposals which will form acute engagements during this conference in the interest of a united and progressive POPCRU. We pride ourselves as a labour movement because of our principle of internal democracy and in-house

assignment. There is no better opportunity than what the time we are presented with to fully introspect.

Our path is already pre-determined by the objectives which we seek to see realised. Our aim to consolidate working class power within the criminal justice will be dictated to by some of the policy positions which will emerge from this august conference. We are going to tackle almost all policies including the one that regulate and standardise issues relating to the performance, remuneration, training and development of our staff members. Yes, we are a disciplined and orderly organisation which amasses great influence and power in the sectors we organise in.

This success was achieved by the leaders of yester-year and today alongside the staff which has come through POPCRU corridors through the years. So I singled out the human resources policy because it speaks directly to how we will be addressing issues affecting our employees so that they can contribute to the organisation, nothing but the best skills and expertise.

Let me touch on the developments within the federation. We have a duty to rebuild the federation and the coming CEC sittings should cement and strengthen its values, character and organisational discipline of the federation. This call is made against the background of the evaluation we made in previous NEC sittings on the state of the federation, and an analysis of the key challenges that it is facing. Key to the challenges relates to the ideological direction the federation should take and it remains our strongly considered view that the federation is and must remain part of the Tripartite Alliance. The Alliance remains the only proficient vehicle to convey the fundamental transformation in South Africa. The prominence of this determination was based on the fact that the Alliance is centred around the National Democratic Revolution [NDR]. And that is the ideological posture and the direction we want the federation to continue pursuing, not a workerist kind of direction the critics are currently engaged in.

We always abide by the federation's internal discipline as we did up to thus far with the resolution that called for ceasefire as directed by the normal CEC in

May 2014. We are however, sadly disturbed by deliberately contravene the said noble resolution. POPCRU is not, has never been and will never be a faction. I stood at this very venue during our Central Executive Committee last year and declared that the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union will continue to support COSATU and its unity and we continue to do so. In the process, the federation has to cleanse itself of those who are hamstrung to destroy it from within.

We join the multitudes throughout the world to condemn and demonstrate our opposition to the Israeli's vicious attacks against the Palestinians in Gaza and the other regions of the illegally occupied state. The regime in Tel Aviv serves as an outpost to imperialist domination of the Middle East and therefore has not suffered any sanctions or diplomatic reprisals from the governments in Europe and North America. Inside the U.S., corporate media reporting serves as a rationale for the continuing White House and Congressional funding of the occupation of Palestine and the forced removal and persecution of its people.

The international community cannot remain to be voiceless. As the situation worsens, the United Nation Secretary General is issuing spineless statements calling for restraint from both sides at the height of evidence clearly showing Israel's disproportionate use of crude force. Palestine has no serious army, no air force and no serious weapons of war like Israel does. Rockets that land on the Israeli territory cannot be associated to the heavy war technology that Israel deploys with impunity on residential areas that have become legitimate military targets in the eyes of the Israeli military authorities.

In the same breadth, we condemn the Ukrainian government which is using force against pro-Russian civilians with the encouragement and direct support of the notorious United States and the European Union. The United State and the West are trying to use Ukraine not as a uniting point on the European territory, but as a watershed between East and West. This is typical of the imperialist agenda which should be fought from all fronts.

Just as in Iraq, just as in Afghanistan, just as in Libya, the liars and their lies spreading to justify what the policies of America and the West have already

been developed to do to Assad and Syria. They want to tip the balance by using the very same weapons they say Assad is using. They inspire others to use it to justify pulling Obama and America into war.

They think that they would do this to Syria and Russia would be quite? Russia has already warned that if America does this, there would be catastrophic results if they bomb Syria. But they are blinded, they think America is more powerful than it is. So if Obama allows these liars, deceivers and war mongers who lied to get America into war in Iraq, to him again to get involved in Syria as they are doing, when is going to explode beyond anything we can imagine.

With this in our minds, we have social responsibility and revolutionary obligation in contributing to the reconstruction of Africa to be politically progressive, socially empowered and economically self-sufficient. We have to stop to be dependent to foreign economies to develop our continent. The American and Western economies have sucked the blood and continue to suck the blood of the poor and the weak of this earth, particularly sucking mineral resources from the African continent. They are worried about the united Africa because they benefit from the civil and tribal wars going on in the African continent which are covertly caused by them.

Comrade Chairperson, there are many issues to deliberate upon and as we do so, I wish you all the best and hope that we will meet the mandate handed to us by our members. I declare this policy conference officially open.

Amandla!