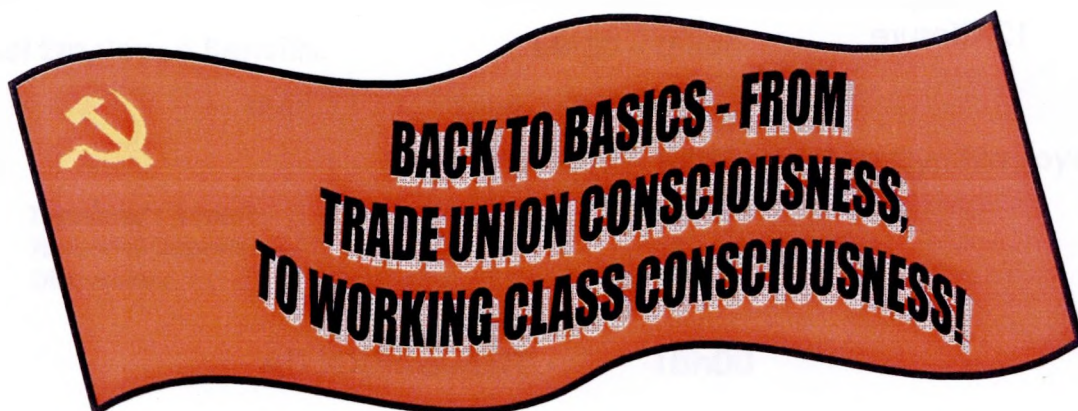

SHOPRITE CHECKERS NATIONAL SHOPSTEWARDS SUMMIT

HELD ON 11 TO 13 OCTOBER 2007 AT THE BIRCHWOOD HOTEL

- Notice & Agenda
- Programme
- Chairperson's Address



**The Agenda For The Shoprite Checkers National Summit Held On The 11 -
13 October 2007 At Birchwood Hotel & Conference Centre In Boksburg**

1. Opening
2. Credentials
 - 2.1. Present
 - 2.2. Apologies
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Introduction of Guests
5. Chairperson's Address
6. Keynote Address – SACCAWU NOBs
7. Address by UNI Representative
8. Presentation
 - 8.1. Old Mutual Group Schemes
 - 8.2. Ingwe Medical Aid
 - 8.3. Old Mutual Employee Benefit
9. Reports
 - 9.1. Financial Report
 - 9.2. Financial Statement
 - 9.3. Secretariat Report
 - 9.4. Bargaining Conference Report
 - 9.5. Gender Report
 - 9.6. Regional Report
 - 9.7. Coordinator's Report
 - 9.8. SPL
10. Commissions, Reports and Wayforward
11. Adoption of the National Summit Resolutions
12. Closure

DAY 2: 12 / 10 / 2007

Secretariat Report 09h00 – 11h00 Cde Solomon Ratsiane

TEA: 11h00-11h15

Regional Reports 11h15 – 12h30

Regions

Coordinator's Report: 12h30 – 12h50

Cde Khulekani Ngubane

Outline & Logistics of Commissions: 12h50 – 13h00

Cde Mike Tau

LUNCH: 13h00-14h00

Commission work 14h00-18h00

ADJOURNMENT - 18h00

DAY 3: 13 / 10 / 2007

Commission [continuation] 09h00 – 10h00

Commission Report and Plenary: 10h00 – 12h00

Resolutions and adoption: 12h00 – 13h00

LUNCH: 13h00-14h00

Resolutions [continuation]: 14h00 – 15h00

Assessment & Next Summit: 15h00 – 15h45

Cde Phineas Mokati

Closing Remarks by the Chairperson: 15h45 – 16h00

Cde Mike Tau

CLOSURE - 16h00



Programme for the Shoprite National Shopstewards Summit
held on the 11th to the 13th of October 2007
at the Birchwood Conference Centre



10/10/2007

:

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

DAY 1: 11 / 10 / 2007

ITEM	TIME	BY WHO?
Opening:	11h30 – 12h00	
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika		
Welcome & Introduction of Guests		Cde Cynthia Joyce
Presentation and Adoption of Credentials		Cde Solomon Ratsiane
Adoption of Agenda		Cde Phineas Mokati
Chairperson's address:	12h00 – 12h20	Cde Mike Tau
Keynote Address:	12h20 – 12h45	Cde Bones Skulu
Address by UNI:	12h45 – 13h00	Cde Isaac Liyungu
LUNCH:	13h00-14h00	
Presentations by Service Providers:		
Old Mutual Group Schemes:	14h00 – 14h15	
Ingwe Medical Aid:	14h15 – 14h30	
Old Mutual Employee Benefits:	14h30 – 15h00	
TEA:	15h00-15h15	
Finances:	15h15 – 18h00	Cde Cynthia Joyce
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treasurer's Report• Financial Reports• Discussions		

ADJOURNMENT - 18h00



Programme for the Shoprite National Shopstewards Summit
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**THE CHAIRPERSONS ADDRESS
TO THE SHOPRITE CHECKERS NATIONAL SHOPSTEWARDS' SUMMIT
HELD ON THE 11TH TO 13TH OCTOBER 2007 AT THE BIRCHWOOD CONFERENCE CENTRE**

Comrades National Office Bearers of SACCAWU, other leadership of the Union at various level, the Wits Regional leadership of SACCAWU, the Shoprite Checkers NSSC NOBs, Officials, esteemed guests and delegates to this Summit, a substructure to the NSSC, I bring you warm and revolutionary greetings on behalf of the Shoprite Checkers NOBs and the entire NSSC and the entire SACCAWU membership.

We are indeed honoured that you have all, particularly the SACCAWU NOBs, Officials and Guests, went to great length and sacrifices to ensure that you form part of this historic Summit. It is historic in that it is the only meeting of national competence convened in the year the NSSC turns twenty. Lest we forget, the Shoprite Council was launched in 1987, and has over the years relaunched to match the developments that were taking place within the company as it was growing its brands. Without your presence, we have no doubt that our debates would be poorer, leading to decisions that might in the long run prove inappropriate. You are once more welcome and assured that you are free to participate in the deliberations over the next few days.

The Council have seen various onslaughts through the years and survived the iron-fisted resolve of the brutal apartheid regime and the capitalist system in its changing forms. It is the experiences of the time that has moulded numerous Shopstewards to an extent of understanding the necessity of participating within the Union and Federation structures. It is no coincidence that today, this Council has many of its Shopstewards in the CEC of the Union. It is of course worthless to have numbers in such structures if we do not play a positive and constructive role in shaping the direction of the Union. We can only do so if we are really grounded on the traditions of the mass democratic movement and the national democratic revolution.

The Summit is convened after various components of the Alliance convened their own important gatherings. The deliberations in all such gatherings clearly points to the fact that our revolution is threatened by new tendencies ranging from internal squabbles and political intolerance of each other's views. The fact that our ANC is now a contested terrain should not surprise us as this was to be expected once we took over political power. What is surprising though is the apparent manipulation of some of our comrades by some forces intent on discrediting the Movement and the Alliance. Such state of affairs place a

challenge to the working class, particularly organized labour to fight in defense of the revolution.

The Summit also takes place just after the SACCAWU Bargaining Conference , which will be covered further in this address.

Our members expect nothing less than progressive decisions from this meeting, aimed at ensuring that we wage relentless struggles to improve their conditions of work and life in general. We therefore have the responsibility to take forward the legacy of our forebearers and ensure that we exert pressure on capital until we attain our strategic objective. We should at the back of our minds always be guided by direct interaction with members through general meetings and other forms of engagement wherein a strong basis for mandate taking and formulation is founded.

No leader worth his/her wits could claim leadership unless it is leadership premised on mandating and being sympathetic and understanding to views of members. Over and above this, it is important to have first hand experience and understanding of the shopfloor experiences of members in order to advance their interests appropriately. First in the list of the negatives that we must rid ourselves of is the division and discrimination of and against each other on the basis of the type of contract of employment as designed by the employer. We seem to have been trapped in the tags manufactured and perfected by the employer so much so that we see them as being something of a "holy cow".

Collective Bargaining

The major reason workers associate with a Union is primarily to improve their wages and conditions of employment. This can only be achieved through collective bargaining, provided the Union has a number of members that makes the employer take the Union seriously.

We have seen over the years the company becoming more and more unreasonable and discriminating workers insofar as it relates to the redistribution of the wealth created by workers. This unreasonableness resulted in workers resolving to take the company head on hence the strike in 2006. The strike, though demonstrating the power of unity, also send signals of what can become of a weakened and divided workforce, particularly during industrial action.

The NNT often found itself removing eyes from the ball and focusing on peripheral issues and egos instead of the issues that brought them together in the first place. This tendency often leads to the Team differing on fundamental principle, instead of differing on strategy, to an extent of questioning each other's credentials and *bona fides*. Squabbling, irritation, ganging up, gossiping,

Bargaining Conference

The Bargaining Conference convened by SACCAWU in July emerged with some progressive decisions aimed at sharpening our collective bargaining machinery whilst laying the foundation for the development of programmatic implementation plans.

It was convened under the theme of having to go: "Back to Basics – From Trade Union Consciousness to Working Class Consciousness" and this theme could never have been more relevant and appropriate. It deliberated on various aspects of Organising, Campaigns and Collective Bargaining, which are in fact the core of our responsibilities as Shopstewards, of course guided by the wisdom of our officials and leadership of the Union.

The Aims and Objectives of the Conference observed that: " ... the first decade of the transition has disproportionately benefited the rich. The rate of unemployment and underemployment is still extremely high whilst almost half of the population lives in abject poverty where some have to sleep without food when the Freedom Charter promised that food shall be plentiful and no one will go hungry.

... Directors and Chief Executive Officers have received millions in their annual remuneration packages, ordinary workers - who are the profit-generating machinery in all Companies - still face the harsh realities of casualisation, outsourcing and starvation wages. Profits have been rising whilst the living conditions of ordinary workers have, at best, remained the same and have at worst declined

... sectors in which we organise are vulnerable and fragmented, with no national bargaining councils in all major sectors. ... Whilst minimum wages that are set by such Sectoral Determinations do not constitute a living wage, let alone the fact that they do not even match the minimum living level, most employers try all sorts of tricks to circumvent such minimum wages and minimum conditions. Unorganised workers are worse off in that they can not use their collective power to ensure compliance with Sectoral Determinations and other labour laws."

The Conference also paid particular attention to and came out with decisions on:

- (a) Bargaining Strategy and benchmarking principle,
- (b) Campaigns and Recruitment,
- (c) Sectoral Determinations, Employment Equity and Skills Development,
- (d) Employee Share Ownership Schemes, Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment and Private Equity,

- (e) The State of our Organising, Campaigns and Collective Bargaining Unit,
- (f) Strike Organisation and the Strike Fund Strategic Relevance.

Some delegates to this Summit participated in the Conference and it is our responsibility to assist and guide this Summit towards the formulation of a realistic and practical programme of implementation. No magic wand can bring the decisions to life unless we raised our hands readily available to work on implementation.

The Struggle against casualisation

This Summit must lay a foundation for the NSSC to finalise a strategic approach towards fighting casualisation.

But first, let us pause and ponder what casualisation and what its consequences are to workers and their gains.

The Impact of Casualisation on Wages

Every working person relies and depends entirely on their wages to fulfill their different financial obligations and commitments both within their families and beyond. The value of the time put into the work is therefore of absolute importance since this is the determinant factor on how much wage is paid to a worker. Of course, the employer determines the man hours needed in a shift and then allocates the appropriate human resources. The payment of workers is budgeted for on the basis of what is forecasted as total turnover, from which all sorts of other operational expenses as well as dividends to shareholders will be deducted before committing an amount of wages. In order to ensure that the total wage bill is as little as possible, employers resort to casualisation since is actually some form of cheap and less qualitative work.

How cheap is casualisation?

In 2005, an entry minimum for a fulltime Clerk/Controller in Shoprite was R12.50 an hour. Over and above this, Shoprite contributed 6.5% thereof on behalf of the employee to Provident Fund. Shoprite also provided uniform plus uniform laundry allowance. Apart from this there are other wage related burdens like tax, UIF and Workmans' Compensation paid by Shoprite to relevant authority for each employee. Fulltime workers also have staff discount. A part time Clerk/Controller in the same Shoprite earns an entry minimum of R11.11 an hour and the employer does not contribute to Provident Fund and other benefits are not applicable to non-fulltime workers [where they are applicable they are suppressed to the bare minimums]. The wage related burdens will also be very little for Shoprite, resulting in the savings being rerouted to profits.

setting members against other Team members and other negative traits all became the order of the day. We need to ensure that the Team shapes up and live up to the responsibilities placed upon it by the thousands of members within Shoprite Checkers. Members are not interested on who knows what better than whom or such things but only interested in an outcome that would talk to their aspirations and improve their conditions. No egoistic rhetoric and irrational squabbling can deliver such interests.

At least some sanity prevailed albeit at a very delicate level whereupon any little thing could trigger the tendency once more. After various interventions by the SACCAWU NOBs the situation seems to have improve and we have to work harder to ensure that we sustain this relative stability for the sake of members. The benefit of having a stable, focused and united Team can not be quantified and will go a long way in the pursuance of workers' mandates.

We must revisit the standing principle of ensuring that all comrades who participate in the negotiations are accordingly mandated by the constituencies. We have seen how in some instances comrades seem to thumb suck mandate instead of ensuring that members are taken on board in decision making. Some comrades on the other hand seem to be acting as couriers as they do not guide members during the mandating process, leading to mandates that are difficult, if not impossible to achieve, yet such comrades do not work on mobilizing members behind such mandates. It is such instances that normally frustrate an effective collective bargaining based on demands that would easily win public sympathy.

We have also seen a tendency where comrades have become sensitive to constructive criticism and this has limited our ability to learn through sharing experiences and networking.

The recent meeting between the SACCAWU NOBs, Shoprite Checkers NOBs and NNT attended to some of the thorny issues in the form of:

- The 2006 strike aftermath,
- The Relationship between the Union and the Company,
- Processes towards a Global Framework Agreement,
- North West Vaal issues relating to the Company Council Levy.

Some key decision arrived by the above meeting are:

- (a) Issues that had been raised in the December meeting with the Company should be re-visited in a follow-up meeting with management,

- (b) A further consultation meeting with Brett Purdon should be arranged where the Southdale agreement will be discussed,
- (c) Regions that had not submitted details of victimisation of shopstewards and members were urged to do so,
- (d) Comrades Khulekani and Mike Tau were mandated to consolidate existing information on instances of police brutality.

Lastly, whilst we encourage comrades to develop a healthy working relationship with management, we believe that this should not result in compromising the cause. Such relationship should be based on mutual respect as well as the appreciation of class interest. We do not for a minute suggest that there will never be conflict as conflict is inherent in any relationship, particularly within the industrial relations framework and it is the management of such conflict that define the types of relationships.

We can not pretend that management were a bunch of Angels during the strike and the General Secretary in his address to the SACCAWU Pick 'n Pay NNSC 20th Anniversary commented that: *"Many management foot soldiers or Store Managers viewed recognition of worker leaders and their being accorded facilities with contempt, as some form of capitulation and/or selling-out of what others were indoctrinated to believe, some of whom might still believe in and behave, as a "Superior Race". As a result every step of the way they would deviate deliberately from what would be rules of the industrial/labour relations game, with some openly collaborating with the State Apparatus"*

Such comment holds true for the state of affairs during our own strike! The fact that we have lost some of our key comrades within the Team, like Cdes Thoko Mchunu, Robert Ndaba and Suzette Fortuin just after the strike is testimony that the company is on a warpath. We have seen how the company, after the strike, behaved like a spoilt little brat who will throw things around in destruction because they could not get what they want, no matter how unreasonable their wish could have been. It is precisely for the above that we should intensify our struggles in this company, failing which we will be sitting ducks for super-exploitation informed by the greed of the employer to maximize profits.

Moving on to the strategic necessity to follow the growth pattern of the company across the Continent, we are blessed to have in our midst comrades from various countries. We must ensure that we seize the moment and consolidate attempts to establish an alliance to ensure that we are able to confront the company through a united front. The harsh realities confronting our comrades in other parts of Africa dictate that we do so. We are confident that this Summit will rise to the challenge.

Then, instead of employing a fulltime Clerk/Controller, with a guaranteed entry minimum of R2 442 per month, Shoprite employs about 4 non-fulltime workers and schedule them on *ad hoc* basis, with maximum 24 hours per week, with no guaranteed wage.

The result of casualisation

Instead of paying a guaranteed wage of R2 442 to a fulltime cashier monthly, Shoprite pays 4 non-fulltime workers a maximum combined wage of R1 066.56 per week or R4 266.24 per month. Although Shoprite claims to be creating employment, in actual fact, no real quality jobs are created. What happens in these circumstances is the replacement of one fulltime job with 4 non-fulltime and less qualitative jobs!

Casualisation divides workers on the basis of tags attached to their type of employment. Over time there is a visible line of divide between fulltime workers and non-fulltime workers and this affects their collective bargaining strength. In some instances, the dress code/uniform is not the same, underlining the intra-class divide.

What should we do?

Workers must see themselves as a class, despite what the employer does to differentiate between them. In this context, they will advance the same class struggle without entrenching the division, which eventually erode their collective strength. Vibrant trade unionism becomes an absolute necessity in order for the impact of intervention to directly improve the wages of all workers as well as fight casualisation.

Amandla