



# COSATU Weekly

The weekly newsletter for COSATU Affiliates and Regions

30/03 - 06/04/2001

## DENOSA joins COSATU

The largest nursing organisation in the country, the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA), has taken a historic decision to join COSATU at its recent congress held last week in Pretoria. The 200 delegates at the congress voted in favour of the move.

The congress was held between under theme: "Nursing facing challenges. Development and HIV/Aids."

COSATU campaigns secretary, Meedisi Nontsene, said the union's affiliation is a step forward in the consolidation of public sector unions within the federation. "This also consolidates white collar workers within the federation and further demystifies the long held reactionary notion that COSATU only represents workers in the lower ranks," said Nontsene.

South African Football Players Organisation (SAFPU) and Performing Arts Workers Equity (PAWE) joined the federation last year. DENOSA's affiliation is set to boost the federation's membership from its present of 1.8 million.

### Free to all COSATU Members

Weekly news is a summary of statements made by COSATU and its affiliates and stories in the press of special interest to workers. It supplements the Daily Labour News and Daily News Briefs which are sent out by e-mail. By sending out COSATU Weekly by fax as well, we hope to reach a wider audience. Please write to us with your stories and comments. Fax: (011) 339 - 7788, write to COSATU at P.O Box 1019, Johannesburg 2000 or e-mail moloto@cosatu.org.za

## COSATU supports campaign against child labour

**O**n 30 March the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) launched an international campaign against child labour.

The campaign is set to pressure governments and employers worldwide into taking stronger steps to eradicate child labour practices or face international criticism.

"It will involve all levels of the trade union movement and friendly non-governmental organisations," the ICFTU said in its statement.

The ICFTU campaign will mobilise actions on all trade unions to pressure governments to enforce laws on educa-

tion and to ratify and fully apply International Labour Organisation Convention on the minimum age to work and on the worst forms of child labour. These unions will be required to report on their full respect.

ICFTU general secretary Bill Jordan said: "Despite numerous promises by governments and multinationals to stop child labour, to this day 250 million children are working, 125 million of them have never seen inside of a classroom, and while at work a frightening number of working children are affected by numerous hazards. The situation must be brought to a halt."

## SAFPU condemns soccer racism by Cape Town council

The South African Football Players Union (SAFPU), the COSATU affiliate, recently condemned "with strongest terms the manner in which soccer, in particular, is being treated by the Cape Town Unicity Council."

The football organisation, which represents more than 450 professional players, was responding after reports about the council's rules that require application for permission from soccer teams, including the national soccer

team, before matches can be played.

SAFPU called for the amendment of the rules as "matter of urgency." "We view this as blatant racism that does not have a room in our newly found democracy" said SAFPU.

The union further pledged to mobilise all soccer loving people in the Western Cape for the mass action that will ensure that soccer is accorded the same status as other sports.

### PAWE holds Annual General Meeting.

Performing Arts Workers Equity (PAWE) will tomorrow hold its 12th Annual General Meeting in Johannesburg, Braamfontein. Among issues to be discussed at the meeting are

- ◆ Trade union building,
- ◆ Relationship between union and collective society
- ◆ International co-operation and run away production
- ◆ Role of theatre in SA, and
- ◆ Role of PAWE within COSATU and the Alliance.

COSATU first deputy president, Joe Nkosi, is among the speakers at the meeting.

## **COSATU condemns racist murder in the North.**

COSATU has condemned the brutal murder of the Northern Province boy whose body was found by police in the crocodile infested Arabie Dam this week.

The federation said it regard the murder as an illustration of blatant racism in the country. "We are calling for stiffer sentences to be imposed on all those who will be found guilty by the court of law. Their sentences should serve as a deterrent to all and demonstrate that racism is a crime and human beings must be given the

respect and humanity they deserve," said COSATU.

It further commended the members of the South African Police Service for their tireless efforts in ensuring they find the body of the victim, Tshepo Matloha.

Five Noordelikes rugby players have been arrested in connection with the murder and will soon appear in court.

The federation passed its sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

## **COSATU welcomes the opportunity to contribute in the bill**

COSATU has recently welcomed the Department of Agriculture's invitation to comment on its Draft Cooperatives Bill. The federation said the co-operative sector has a vital role to play in the country's economy.

"Co-operatives allow the poor and working people to participate in the mainstream economy as owners, rather than as non-owners.

However, success of the co-operative sector will, to a large extend, depend on the way government makes the necessary institutional interventions and provides resources towards its vibrant operation," said the federation.

It said that South Africa has a rich and diverse history of co-operatives, including a large, relatively informal sector of stokvels, burial societies and other forms of community savings organisations.

It further emphasized that, although they may not consciously define themselves as cooperatives, such experiences of organic co-operatives activity

can form the basis for a strong and vibrant co-operative movement in South Africa.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) has also welcomed the invitation for its submission to the Minerals Development Bill. In a statement released this week, NUM said the mining industry has a bad history regarding living and working conditions and labour practices in general. It said that its vision for a mining industry in a democratic South Africa is one that is:

- ◆ a safe humane industry that takes care of its people,
- ◆ where the benefits are shared by all,
- ◆ taking care of the environment, and
- ◆ having measures for downscaling.

The union further said the bill should provide for a more and direct role for the state within the mining industry, as opposed to one where the state is mere administrator.

"We want the Bill to promote, more actively,

## **Numsa National Bargaining Conference**

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (NUMSA) will hold a National Bargaining Conference at the Kopanong Protea Hotel in Benoni on Monday next week at 9H30.

The purpose of this conference is to develop a collective bargaining strate-

gy of the year 2001 round of wage negotiations and working conditions. Speakers at the conference will be Trade and Industry minister, Mr. Alec Erwin and COSATU general secretary Mr. Zwelinzima Vavi.

## **Wage Negotiations end in Deadlock!**

By Anna Weekes  
SAMWU media officer

The second round of wage talks for over 230 000 municipal workers ended in deadlock after Samwu spent two days trying unsuccessfully to twist Salga's arm to move off their offer of 3% across the board.

Despite our best efforts Salga clung intransigently to their offer. Their argument was that they did not want to increase wages of the lower income workers because this placed a heavy burden on the finances of municipalities.

They also argued that the wage gap (the difference between the highest paid worker and the lowest paid worker) was the lowest of all sectors and should not be reduced any further.

"Samwu pointed out to Salga that a 3% increase on the minimum wage of R1600-00 was equal to R48-00. This were peanuts and we could not even think about considering their offer. Inflation was 7.7%," said Collective Bargaining Officer Dale Forbes.

This meant that wages had to increase by 7.7% for a worker to afford the same goods as last year. If we had to accept Salga's offer, workers would be poorer than they were last year while we are trying to address the poverty that workers experience! The negotiators made two movements to show Salga that we were serious about trying to find a settlement. We first reduced our demand to R425-00 or 13%, whichever is the greater with a minimum of R2025-00.

When this did not cause a movement from Salga's side we decided to make a further movement of R375-00 or 12%, whichever is the greater with a minimum of R2000-00. Salga still did not make any movement of their offer. "The negotiating team felt that Salga was not serious about negotiations. We declared a dispute with the idea that this will cause Salga to focus seriously on trying to find a settlement," said Forbes.

The dispute will go to mediation on 11/12 April 2001 in Durban. Samwu's Central Executive Committee (CEC) will be meeting on 2 to 4 April 2001 to consider how to approach this deadlock.