



COSATU 8th Central Committee

DECLARATION

15-18 September 2025

I. Introduction

We, the delegates to the 8th Central Committee of COSATU, representing over 1.5 million members from across different sectors of the economy, represented by 342 delegates, gathered in Benoni in the City of Ekurhuleni on the 15th – 18th September 2025.

The Central Committee (CC) was joined by our alliance partners, the SACP and its league, the ANC and its leagues, SANCO, and other MDM components, as well as our international guests from across our continent and the world.

The Central Committee, as per the provisions of the federation's constitution, is convened to adopt general and specific policy measures which serve as the aims and objects of the federation and to assist in reviewing and implementing existing resolutions and draft resolutions on urgent measures.

The Central Committee held under the theme, “**Build working class unity for economic liberation towards socialism,**” is the Mid-term Conference of COSATU, which receives reports, do a thorough assessment, and develops a clear wayforward to advance the strategic and programmatic tasks of the working-class.

Accordingly, the CC received comprehensive reports covering the 4 core areas of COSATU work: **political, economic, organisational, and international sections.** These reports accounted for the work done by the federation in implementing

the last National Congress resolutions to accelerate the organisational renewal of COSATU and heighten the momentum towards the unity and militancy of COSATU in advancing the demands and aspirations of workers.

The Central Committee welcomed the Secretariat report as an account of the work undertaken by the federation and its core thrust, affirming the centrality of COSATU in advancing workers' rights, decent work, gender equality, workplace transformation and equity, job creation, land and agrarian reform for inclusive growth and class solidarity in pursuit of real gains and victories for workers.

In that context, the CC deepened its analysis of the prevailing global geopolitical balance of power, the realignment of forces, and the deepening crisis of capitalism and its implications for the working class, resulting in the high costs of living, deepening inequalities, unemployment, and poverty.

The CC made special emphasis on the importance of sharpening our strategic and tactical clarity on the global, continental, and domestic configuration of forces to advance workers' interests in all sites of power; the workplace, community, the state, the economy, ideological, and international spheres of influence.

The CC also received messages of support from working class and fraternal allies from different parts of the world. To that extent, the CC firmly expressed unwavering internationalist solidarity salutations to all workers and oppressed people involved in struggles in different parts of the world.



The CC took a deliberate focus on the state of our region, Southern Africa, and the conditions facing our region and the people in particular.

The CC paid special tribute to the fighting people of Palestine, particularly Gaza, and the resistance by the liberation forces and the people as a whole against a genocidal state committing crimes against humanity daily. It went on to pledge solidarity with the workers and people of the DRC, Sudan, and called for peace, democracy, industrialisation, and inclusive development for all

The 40th anniversary of COSATU – a proud legacy of militant working class struggles and revolutionary trade unionism!

This year, 2025, marks the 40th anniversary of COSATU. COSATU was born on the 1st December 1985 in Durban (now eThekweni City) at the height of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The birth of COSATU marked a turning point in the struggle against apartheid and resulted and proclaimed the final blow to the horrendous system of apartheid.

The CC recalls with pride the extraordinary sacrifices of workers in the struggles that defeated apartheid and shall be holding a series of events to celebrate and honour these heroes and heroines of our people, the working class.

The major celebration shall be hosted in **DOBSONVILLE STADIUM, SOWETO**, on the **6th December 2025**, itself a revolutionary heritage and fierce theatre of working class and youth struggles.

COSATU celebrates this watershed moment at a time when major and significant events that define our liberation history and key milestones of our struggle, including.

- a) **The 70th anniversary of our predecessor, SACTU**, which we jointly hosted with the Veterans of SACTU at Rivonia Liliesleaf farm in March this year.
- b) **The 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter**, which emerged to become the blueprint of our liberation struggle and inspiration for all the years

of exile, banning, and apartheid persecution.

- c) **The 70th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**, the historic movement that united the 3 Continents: Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Tri-Continental Conference) held in Bandung against colonialism and resulted in the global coordination of solidarity that led to the final defeat of colonialism and apartheid on our own continent
- d) We acknowledge the **Centenary of Frantz Fanon**, the great revolutionary thinker and African intellectual, for the remarkable contribution made to our struggle as a people and continent.

2. Political Section

The 8th Central Committee received a Secretariat Report that provided a comprehensive analysis of the federation's historical mission, its ideological foundation, and a concrete analysis of the current political conjuncture.

The report went further to illustrate the global situation and its interconnectedness with our domestic situation. Towards this end, it identified key defining trends that summarise the prevailing global balance of power, which are;

- a) The heightened wars of imperialism for the conquest of ever new territories, lands, mineral resources, and the further subjugation of the developing world.
- b) The entrenchment of the global division of labour in which Africa and major parts of the global south remain mere providers of raw material and the imperialist/developed world producers of finished goods or valued added products.
- c) The unprecedented ecological crises with the destruction of the environment by capitalism.



- d) The heightening of the global energy crises, which are about the consolidation of ownership, control, and use of global energy to meet the needs of the most industrially developed countries, in the main.

The report emphasised COSATU's role in advancing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) as a route to socialism. It highlighted the interconnectedness of global and domestic balance of forces and struggles, underscoring the importance of working-class unity in achieving working-class victories, specifically in the areas of political and socio-economic transformation. It reflected on the federation's historical contributions to the liberation struggle, its alignment with the SACP as the vanguard party of the working class, and the ANC as the national liberation movement, speaking to our commitment to build a socialist future.

The report made an assessment of the unfolding contradictions in the South African struggle in the post-apartheid era, characterised by the regression of the NDR, resulting from a protracted neoliberal austerity trajectory. The post-apartheid capitalist agenda and its crisis have resulted in high levels of unemployment, growing inequality, and a crisis of social reproduction affecting working-class communities, especially women, youths, and children.

Resulting from this, the electoral platform has lost traction with growing sections of working-class households. For instance, the 2024 general elections witnessed the worst form of such a dissonance by our people at the electoral platform, with 60% of South Africans of voting age not casting their vote, resulting in only 40% of voter turnout. Out of these, the Alliance electoral ticket through the ANC only secured 40,18% of the vote, failing for the first time to attain an electoral majority.

The Alliance characterised the outcomes of these elections as a strategic setback for the NDR. But what became the most unfortunate part was that the ANC still went on to form the GNU with forces of monopoly capital, which both COSATU and the SACP characterise as 'a regression in the NDR'.

The Central Committee reaffirms COSATU's position on the historical mission and political programme of the Alliance, which, from the 6th National Congress resolutions, the federation was clear in calling for the reconfiguration of the Alliance. Towards that end, COSATU reaffirms the centrality of the common alliance programme, the Reconfiguration of the alliance, which is our most immediate task, and we will remain actively seized with its implementation.

The CC endorsed this analysis of the South African context, reaffirming our theorising of the NDR as a strategic programme of our struggle, endorsing the SACP as the vanguard of the working class, and affirming the immediate task to jointly build a socialist programme, entailing political/ideological education, building the left popular front and building a powerful socialist movement of workers and the poor.

The CC deliberated on the three main themes from the 14th National Congress political resolutions, namely; the State of the National Democratic Revolution and Socialism, Political Work, and Immediate Tasks in defence of the National Democratic Revolution.

The CC reaffirmed the clarity of the federation on our characterisation of the South African struggle - the NDR as a direct route to socialism, noting its regression, resulting from a protracted neoliberal austerity, and the shift in the ANC in the context of the GNU. It also affirmed the challenge of working-class representation in the current context, and the task of building working-class hegemony both within organised labour and working-class communities.

To that end, the CC resolved that;

- 2.1 On the state of the NDR and socialism, the 8th CC resolved that since the NDR is regressing, given the convergence of neoliberalism in the formation of the government of national unity, the Federation should contest the NDR in class terms.
- 2.2. The federation shall strengthen political and ideological training within the working class, as the main and leading motive force of the revolution.



- 2.3. The federation shall establish popular programs and activities at the point of production and workplaces, including extending Socialist Forums to deepen class consciousness. It also resolved to strengthen COSATU's role as the most organised contingent of the working class, to ensure its independence while building a strong alliance and the entire Mass Democratic Movement.

On Political Work, the CC resolved that;

- 2.4. Political and ideological education should go beyond leadership to the rank and file, particularly workers on the shopfloor, and be extended to the broader masses in general.
- 2.5. It also resolved that post the 8th CC, there should be an urgent bilateral meeting between the ANC and COSATU where the federation will register its position against austerity measures, deindustrialization, and the neoliberal agenda, and deliberately mobilise society against the neoliberal policies.
- 2.6. It shall convene an inclusive National Left/ Socialist Axis Summit to deal with modalities, inclusive of timeframes and proper coordination thereof. (Reaffirmation, as it is a long-standing resolution). It also resolved that the next CEC should develop a programme to embark on a deeper consultative process, to discuss the 15th SACP National Congress Resolution.
- 2.7. The federation shall develop a deliberate programme to align itself with organisations that are opposed to the neo-liberal outlook.
- 2.8. The federation shall prioritize political education by convening regular political schools, workshops, and forums to empower workers ideologically and politically, and to develop and implement a minimum political program aligned with the objectives of the NDR and socialism as a guide to COSATU's political work.
- 2.9. It shall contest imperialist and capitalist dominance in political spaces with ideological clarity and class consciousness, ensuring

that COSATU's political work is guided by the interests of the working-class, balancing opportunities and risks while advancing the socialist program.

- 2.10. It also resolved that the class should contest elections with ideological clarity, ensuring working-class representation and alignment with the broader goals of the NDR, reaffirming COSATU's commitment to building worker unity, strengthening the socialist axis, and reconfiguration of the alliance (COSATU, SACP, ANC, and SANCO) as part of advancing the NDR.
- 2.11. Lastly, on the immediate tasks in defence of the NDR, the 8th CC resolved that the CEC immediately following the 8th CC should develop a framework that guides the completion of the consultation process by affiliates in preparation for the 15th National Congress. There should be urgent engagement with the SACP and the ANC, and these engagement processes will facilitate a discussion towards a decision at the 15th National Congress.
- 2.12. It also resolved that COSATU and the SACP, upon completion of the internal consultations by affiliates, should have continuous engagements on the modalities regarding the contestation of elections.
- 2.13. The 8th CC made further resolutions on strengthening unity and engagement, on mobilising the working class, on building solidarity, and on advancing socialist programmes to address challenges and limitations in executing COSATU resolutions on the NDR and the immediate political tasks.

3. Organisational Section

COSATU Organisational work is based on the clear provisions of the Medium-Term Vision (MTV), which calls for a thorough-going Organisational Renewal of COSATU and its engines. To this



end, the 8th CC took forward the clear tasks to advance those perspectives more concretely in a programmatic way.

Therefore, the 8th CC resolved on the following.

3.1. An integrated approach to Organisation Building, Organising Workers, Collective Bargaining and Campaigns

The 8th CC recognised that Organising, Campaigns, and Collective Bargaining are closely connected. Organising brings workers together, builds unity, and builds the power to bargain. Bargaining shows the value of organising, and bargaining victories can be used to recruit workers. Together, they make unions strong.

3.2. Strengthening COSATU engines

The 8th CC reaffirmed the need for strong organisational engines to drive programmes of the Federation and to ensure that the CEC commissions are well resourced with dedicated administrative and technical capacity. Building COSATU engines also requires building of provinces and locals.

3.3. Unity of Workers

The 8th CC highlighted the need to prioritise the implementation of its long-standing policy of a single Federation in South Africa and its past resolutions on unifying workers and the trade union movement.

The 8th CC emphasised the urgency of a united workers' movement now more than ever in the light of the challenges facing the labour movement, which have intensified in recent years. COSATU is to initiate a practical programme towards building a single union federation in South Africa. Part of the discussions must include the unity of all federations.

3.4. A Campaigning Federation

The 8th CC emphasised the need to strengthen and intensify its priority campaigns while building an overarching campaign on the demand for "A

Living Wage," which should emphasise that the national minimum wage is only a minimum, and that a living wage must be augmented by the demand for a social wage.

The Federation must link the Living Wage Campaign to an intensified campaign against austerity, highlighting the cost-of-living crisis, transport, electricity, water, food, and other basic needs. This campaign shall culminate in the **National Day of Action** against job losses and austerity measures.

The 8th CC reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for universal healthcare and resolved to work with unions and progressive formations to defend and advance the campaign for the National Health Insurance.

COSATU has launched provincial Occupational Health and Safety committees. The 8th CC resolved to build these committees and to campaign for safe and healthy workplaces, including a focus on gender-based violence and ensuring safety for workers at work, while commuting, and in public spaces. Furthermore, we resolved to conduct workplace inspections to ensure OHS compliance and decent work. The federation and its affiliates should increase membership growth and density.

3.5. Recognising Private Sector Challenges and Strengthening Affiliates

There is a need to recognise the unique challenges facing private sector unions in both organising and bargaining. This Federation of Elijah Barayi was built to defend the most vulnerable and exploited workers. The strength of the Federation depends on a strong base in the private sector, where workers face the harshest conditions and the most aggressive exploitation by the capitalist class.

The 8th CC emphasised the need for solidarity between public and private sector affiliates.

3.6. Collective Bargaining

The 8th CC noted that the state has reneged on public sector bargaining agreements, and the



continued attempts by private sector employers to replicate the tendency of undermining and avoiding collective bargaining.

We have resolved to intensify efforts to ensure compliance with the national minimum wage, labour laws and to advance collective bargaining in the LRA to ensure that employers cannot dishonour collective bargaining agreements under any circumstances or for whatever excuse in order to do away with the current system of voluntary collective bargaining. We resolved to challenge the informalisation of formal employment and to organise young and unorganised workers in vulnerable employment, including call centre and platform workers.

The 8th CC noted that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology are being implemented in workplaces without transparency and consultations with workers. The Federation calls for trade union oversight and bargaining on the use of AI and workers' data in workplaces, while also advocating for job security, reskilling, and upskilling programmes.

The 8th CC resolved to call for PIC (Public Investment Corporation) investment in infrastructure development and other initiatives that benefit workers directly.

3.7. Worker Education and Shop Steward Training

The Federation and its Affiliates must prioritise worker education. Shop steward training and induction programmes are essential to building a strong workplace organisation. Capacitated shop stewards provide leadership in bargaining and building a collective organisation.

4. The Socio-economic Section

4.1. COSATU is about defending and advancing

the real gains of workers.

The core thrust of our programme is in advancing the real gains of workers and improving their conditions of work, life, and self-development. This is why our programme below reflects our practical commitment to changing the lives of workers for better incomes, health and safety, access to quality healthcare and education, defence of workers' rights, and the democratic institutions of collective bargaining and social justice.

COSATU continues to champion the struggle against the apartheid wage gaps in class, racial, and gender terms. This is why our defence of employment equity is about advancing transformation, inclusivity, decent work, gender and youth participation, and ending the racial and gender stratification of the apartheid labour market. Our rallying cry for equal pay for work of equal value is the cornerstone of our struggle to break the back of persisting inequalities and advance economic justice.

COSATU regards the urgency of building a strong and progressive working-class movement in the whole Southern African region as key to advancing decent work and improving the quality of life of workers broadly. The struggle to ensure proper bargaining institutions at the SADC regional level is key to avoiding capital playing workers against each other in the race to the bottom.

4.2. The global threat to workers' rights is real – Tariffs, unilateralism and protectionism undermine our jobs, growth and solidarity

The 8th CC of COSATU takes place in a context of heightening imperialist aggression launched by the far right, neo-conservative, and racist global movement, led by the Trump administration. The 8th CC was emphatic in its observation that the Trump administration is using the instruments of economic warfare, such as trade tariffs, destroying the post-Second World War international trade and financial architecture, in its imperialist, technological



rivalry with China, the European Union, Japan, and the rest of the world.

The 8th CC further observed that the Trump 2.0 administration is a threat to global trade multilateralism, a rules-based international world order. It is undemocratic and a global right-wing response to the emerging multipolarity. It risks plunging the global economy into a global economic crisis.

The South African economy was already experiencing premature deindustrialization, loss of productive capacity, and high levels of unemployment at 42.9 percent. The Trump trade war, in the form of the unilateral imposition of 30 percent tariffs on South African goods, will further exacerbate this situation. Many strategic sectors in our economy, such as auto and components, Agriculture, Textile, clothing, and footwear, or leather products, are facing massive job losses and company closures because of Trump trade war against our economy and against many others.

Even before Trump, the South African economy has been struggling already punctuated by job losses in most dynamic sectors such as foundries, smelters, steel aluminium sector, this has been as a result of premature trade liberalization, rising energy crises and global overproduction and problems in our logistical systems which are as a result of neoliberal economic and social policies that successive ANC-led governments have continued to implement.

Reaffirm the Congress position on SOEs regarding Eskom stability and the impact it has on energy crises.

The CC reaffirms the implementation of the 2022 Collective Bargaining outcomes as an immediate task in the period.

The turn to green protectionism in the North under the guise of protecting the environment, in the form of the EU unilaterally imposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and other green protectionist measures, risks undermining

fair trade, multilateralism and may lead to the collapse of the global trading system. COSATU supports the South African government's dispute against these unilateral trade measures.

COSATU notes that the Government and the Reserve Bank are lowering the inflation target to 3 percent. This is done against the background of a stagnant economy, deindustrialisation, and significant threats from an unfavourable global trade environment.

Such a target will further throttle the economy and exacerbate the current jobs crisis.

Therefore, COSATU rejects this new target and calls on the Government to subject monetary policy and the Reserve Bank's mandate closer to the goals of job creation, industrialisation, and economic development.

4.3. The Central Committee called on the democratic state to do everything possible to defend South Africa's sovereignty, defend multilateralism, and the emerging multipolarity.

The 8th CC calls on the South African government to challenge the unilateral imposition of tariffs by Trump and green protectionism measures by EU in correct multilateral trade institutions such as WTO and use the WTO dispute mechanism to isolate these unilateral unfair trade measures, diversify our export destinations, and revive and boost domestic economy, increase intra-trade with Africa and guard against dumping and advancing the Africa Continental Free Trade Area through promoting developmental regionalism.

The 8th CC also calls for a stakeholder engagement to advance our industrialisation policy and decent work.

The 8th CC noted the poor performance of the South African economy. the 8th CC was of the view that this vindicated COSATU's position that the continued adherence to a neoliberal, austerity, and conservative macroeconomic policy framework has undermined structural



transformation and is responsible for premature deindustrialization, job losses, and deepening social inequality. It has also been a wedge driver between the ANC and its core constituencies, the poor and the working-class, which led to the ANC-led alliance suffering electoral losses.

The 8th CC took note of the fact that South Africa is one of the most unequal societies globally, with significant disparities in income, access to opportunities, and social services, largely rooted in the legacy of apartheid.

This also confirms our analysis that the ANC macro-economic policy has nothing to do with the immediate needs of the working class and the poor; the ANC macro-economic policy is aligned and is influenced by capital and is identical with the ideology and the policy of the party of monopoly capital, the Democratic Alliance, which has since developed into the so called 'GNU'.

The 8th CC noted the excessive increases in energy prices and their impact on the incomes of workers, and their impact on the competitiveness of our manufacturing sector. It further noted the challenges facing our manufacturing sector, collapsing social and economic infrastructure, and called on the democratic state to do massive public investment in climate resilient social and economic infrastructure, and break with austerity. The 8th CC noted the work the Federation is doing in green industrialization, new sectors such as critical minerals for beneficiation, green hydrogen and electric vehicles, and on the financing of green just transition. The 8th CC calls for the policy unit of the federation to deepen this work further.

COSATU calls on the government to speedily implement the National Health Insurance and a comprehensive social security system, which must include the Universal Basic Income Grant. We call on our affiliates to develop joint campaigns with the SACP, to mobilize the working class and the poor communities, for service delivery. The 8th CC also reflected on the challenges that are confronting our manufacturing trade union and called on the leadership of the federation to

develop a comprehensive programme to revive our unions.

4.4 The 8th Central Committee Tasks of COSATU – Building a Popular front of forces against the high costs of living, unemployment, and inequalities!

The 8th Central Committee prioritised intensifying efforts and fast-tracking implementation of the following existing COSATU resolutions:

4.4.1 On the Popular Front - build a front or umbrella of fronts that unite people, including on education, on health, and on the cost of living. Strengthening the unity of affiliates is an important precondition. A Left Summit needs to be convened to build unity among left forces and develop practical socio-economic campaigns.

4.4.2 On the State's role - ensure the repositioning of the budget to recapitalize the state and prioritize investments in essential services for working-class communities and fill critical vacancies. Campaign against austerity measures and neo-liberal attempts to weaken the state's role in the economy and reaffirm the commitment to defending the public ownership of SOEs as a critical pillar of the economy.

4.4.3 On the NHI - call on the Government, especially the Presidency, to defend the NHI in court challenges and to work with the Government.

To continue to campaign actively for the full implementation of the NHI and initiate a mass popular education campaign.

4.4.4 On education - to call for opportunities to be created for young workers, including through internships and investing in their skilling and upskilling to equip them in this era of AI and the 4th Industrial Revolution. Related to this, drive a national 4IR and AI response strategy to protect vulnerable workers and advocate for collective agreements to secure at-risk jobs and invest in new job-rich economic sectors.



4.4.5 **On climate change** - energy supply and the Just Transition, advocate for a Just Transition strategy that prioritizes job protection, worker skilling, re-skilling, and upskilling, especially in factories, and that does not abandon at-risk workers, value chains, and communities, especially in the mining sector. Push for a moratorium on closing power stations until research is done on guiding extensions of power station lifespans and support measures are put in place to protect sectors and jobs.

4.4.6 **On land reform** - campaign in defence of the Expropriation Act and advocate for the release of land for reform and redistribution to unlock economic opportunities and to integrate the land question into the broader campaigns of the popular front. The Federation supports the call by our working-class ally, the SACP, in their campaign aimed to unlock the slow pace of the resolution of the Land Question, of which the Party is campaigning for the holding of a referendum at the earliest possible moment on the Land Question. The successful placement on the agenda of the referendum would allow the vast masses of the South African people to express their wishes regarding the unresolved Land Question".

This would also give the working-class axis prospects for mobilisation with vast sections of working-class communities towards a working-class political programme, starting with this campaign on the land question.

4.4.7 **On retirement funds** - The 8th CC recommit to convening the **Retirement Funds Conference** as an urgent priority. The 8th CC further calls for engagement with Treasury and Parliament on the next phase of the Two-Pot Pension Reforms, including reducing the tax burden, which was undermining the original objectives of the two-pot system, reviewing the system, and training union members on it.

4.4.8 **On retrenchments** - review the Business Rescue legislation to ensure workers benefit

more, and any business rescue is limited in time, with the Business Rescue practitioners more accountable. Campaign for stronger retrenchment payment provisions, such as the proposed increase to two weeks' salary, campaign to expose employers hiring undocumented workers for positions that could be filled by South Africans and align various legislations to strengthen our ability to fight retrenchments.

4.4.9 **On inequality** - ensure the Government implements the new Companies Amendment Act, which requires salary disparities between CEOs and workers to be published, as per the agreement made in NEDLAC and fight for greater compliance and enforcement of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and close loopholes bosses are taking to avoid paying the NMW.

4.4.10 **On revitalising industrial sectors** - support initiatives to rebuild industrial sectors to create sustainable economic growth and decent permanent jobs, advance worker participation in industrial policy and sector strategies, such as the Masterplans, advocate for the development of a bold new industrial strategy and convene an industrial policy summit that will cascade to workers on the ground and engage the Government to stem job losses and factory closures.

4.4.11 **On the employment of young workers** - review internships and campaign for the permanent insourcing of interns and other outsourced workers, and advocate for fair treatment and proper career development opportunities with full employment and decent work for young workers.

4.4.12 **On comprehensive social security** - intensify our campaign for the UBIG and our work with other progressive formations.

4.4.13 **On child labour** - to campaign for the government to increase support to children to stay in school and put in place specific measures to support the girl child and child-headed households.



4.4.14 **On corruption** - intensify efforts to combat corruption in both the public and private sectors.

4.4.15 **On workers on boards** - the Secretariat to coordinate union representatives on boards to strengthen mandating, reporting back, and accountability.

4.4.16 On Immigration and Labour Migration Policies –

- a) Noting that our laws are clear on the importance of compliance and governance of immigration controls in the country.
- b) Further noting that labour laws govern labour migration and legality in the country.

The 8th CC resolved that:

- a) To work with the Department of Labour, Home Affairs, and law enforcement agencies to ensure compliance by all employers.
- b) To fight against employers using illegal migrants as cheap labour and to avoid compliance.
- c) To ensure employers don't use enforcement gaps to divide workers and avoid employing locals.
- d) Ensure that South Africans are given priority status in employment.
- e) To initiate a campaign against human trafficking, with particular focus on women and children as the worst victims.
- f) To fight against crime and international syndicates by affirming the tight national security of our state and the people.
- g) To call on SADC to ensure all states work to create jobs and ensure workers' rights and democracy throughout the region, to regulate the movement of people in

accordance with the law.

The 8th Central Committee further adopted **two urgent resolutions** which direct the federation to;

- a) **On trade and jobs** - defend existing trade relations as a way to preserve jobs, call on the Government to diversify our trade but not enter into trade agreements which could result in lost jobs and de-industrialisation, call for an appropriate, worker-friendly response to the trade shocks and campaign for a return to a rules-based trading system that prioritises developmental issues and is worker-focused.
- b) **On combating Gender Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH)** - mobilize campaigns to raise awareness and dialogue about GBVH, and to organise a summit to bring men together in a **Bua-Monna Summit** to discuss and address issues contributing to GBVH.

5. International Section

The 8th CC reaffirmed the assessment of the international balance of power as articulated by the report and summarised into notable and key trends, which are the important background and analysis of the current geopolitical and economic situation and the crisis facing the working class.

Given the prevailing international balance of forces, the global trade union movement is facing major challenges, and the following are the notable trends in the current period;

- 5.1. Heightened fragmentation of the trade union movement, resulting from the neo-liberal restructuring of the global economy. This is evident in the way casualisation, outsourcing, labour broking, stratification, as well as market globalisation in general, are deepening the



fragmentation of workers and the trade union movement in particular

- 5.2. Intensified pauperisation of the working class as a whole, resulting from increased inequalities, poverty, and hunger as capitalist greed consolidates itself on a global scale.
- 5.3. Signs of increasing levels of working-class consciousness following a period of sustained degeneration of ideological depth in the trade union movement globally. This resulted in the weakening culture of solidarity, self-organisation of the class, and militancy in the recent past period. It affected and weakened strategic alliances and support systems amongst the forces of the working class, particularly socialist and communist parties in many countries of the global south. However, recent events reflect a new re-awakening and revived impetus against austerity, fascism, corporate exploitation, unemployment, and poverty. These are the results of the institutionalised and structural crises of the capitalist system in general
- 5.4. The need for a strong, effective, and highly organised African trade union movement is our core priority on the continent. The state of SATUCC, ITUC Africa OATUU always concerns us very much. This explains our consistent and robust discussions about what should be done to build a strong, effective, and impactful continental trade union movement to fight for change and improve the conditions of workers on the continent. Towards this end, we commit to revitalise the Africa Quadrilateral Forum, comprised of COSATU (SA), TUC (Ghana), NLC (Nigeria), and COTU (Kenya), and its extended alliance partners; Algeria, Senegal, and Tunisia. In the Southern Africa region, we need to identify the core strategic partners for better coordinated cooperation.

5.5 On COSATU's unwavering commitment to anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism, and affirming the centrality of our democratic sovereignty

Therefore, resolve that:

- a) COSATU shall intensify an active international solidarity campaign that brings together all progressive forces to act together in defence of South Africa's democratic right to sovereign development, free from imperialist bullying and threats.
- b) COSATU shall liaise closely with the progressive global movement and its components, particularly the international trade union movement, communist and working-class parties, social movements and NGOs, liberation movements, youth and women's organizations.

5.6 On building a united, organized, and fighting international trade union movement

Therefore resolve.

- a) To use COSATU's global affiliations, influences, and strategic alliances to build a coordinated progressive bloc of unions towards a global front of "like-minded" social forces
- b) To fully participate and organise further events marking the 80th anniversary of the WFTU as a critical moment that propelled working class struggles on a global level, including concrete solidarity with our own struggles against apartheid colonialism,
- c) To revive active international social movement unionism along the lines of the Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights (SIGTUR), which was focused on global southern perspectives and workers' struggles
- d) To support COSATU affiliates in their respective international sectoral affiliations and improve coordination for maximum impact. In this instance, COSATU affiliates hold significant positions in the international trade union movement that wield huge global influence

The CC calls for a more robust and concerted efforts to revive contacts and joint campaigns with



the workers and unions of the DRC, Sudan towards a progressive international solidarity movement To work with the unions of the DRC, Sudan and continentally towards exposing the role of imperialism in the wars of looting of the minerals and in defence of the people against violence, atrocities, abuse and systemic underdevelopment.

To further work with our sister unions towards the mobilisation of the people of the DRC and the rest of the continent against militia serving as fronts of the inhumane multinational companies, mainly from the UK, France, the US, and Belgium.

5.7 On Concrete International Solidarity Work and Campaigns – Solidarity in action

Therefore, resolve that;

- a) **On Swaziland** - The federation shall undertake a CEC-led international exchange visit to Swaziland, to do an assessment of the prevailing situation and interact with the working class and broader progressive forces to reaffirm and pledge solidarity with the working people of Swaziland in April 2026. The exchange visit shall be the basis for the development of a concrete international solidarity programme of COSATU with the workers and people of Swaziland.

Further, the Central Committee expresses unwavering solidarity to the March organised by PUDEMO and (Swaziland Youth Congress) SWAYOCO External region against the dumping of dangerous criminals by the US, in secret deals with King Mswati and his government. This puts the security of the whole region, including South Africa, at serious risk and should be vehemently opposed.

- b) **On Palestine** – The CC endorsed two concrete action plans.
 - The energy embargo and call for active engagement with our unions in the energy sector on the non-handling of coal campaign to Israel within a specified time duration.
 - The Special resolution on Gaza and ending

the genocide - to intensify the global call for an end to genocide and cleansing of Palestinians by the Israeli settler apartheid regime. To find practical ways for the federation and its affiliates to support the people of Palestine.

- c) **On Western Sahara** – to organise an international protest at the US and Morocco embassies in February 2026
- d) **On Cuba and Venezuela** - to declare an International Day of Solidarity with countries victimised by unjustified blockades and sanctions by imperialism, particularly Cuba and Venezuela, in the context of our international solidarity work with progressive forces in Latin America, particularly. The US aggression against Cuba and Venezuela illustrates the threat facing humanity, which is imperialist aggression.
- e) **COSATU and affiliates international work** - the federation shall coordinate a national affiliates meeting on campaigns targeting mainly Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal embassies for solidarity protests.

5.8 On Global mega blocs and the urgency of Africa's industrialization and development

The 8th CC resolved.

- a) To actively coordinate with the international and national trade unions involved in the key global mega economic blocs, particularly BRICS, the ACFTA, the AU, EU-Africa, US–Africa Trade bloc (AGOA), MERCUSOR, ALBA, ASEAN, and other strategic blocs of relevance to advancing workers, trade, and industrial development, jobs, and skills.
- b) To strengthen COSATU participation in advancing working class perspectives in the key global mega blocs that have strategic significance and importance to the people and workers of South Africa



and our continent, Africa.

- c) To develop a tracking mechanism to ensure workers' issues are consistently well articulated, defended, and the broader thrust of progressive economic and labour policies is the cornerstone of the emerging global and economic architecture.

5.9 Developing the capacity of COSATU to advance internationalism and training cadres specializing in international relations

The 8th CC resolved that;

- a) Priority should be given to training COSATU and affiliates' shopsteward on international relations, the global political economy, and geopolitical trends, as well as skills necessary for IR Practitioners of COSATU
- b) To use the COSATU International Practitioners Resource Book, the International Shopstewards Handbook, and the International Policy of COSATU as base resources and reference materials in the training.
- c) To support the International Relations Committee (IRC) of the federation as a driving engine of our international programme and the Provincial International Committees and Twinning programmes as support infrastructure to support involvement of Provinces, and for coordination purposes.

6. Conclusion

The COSATU 8th Central Committee reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the principles of the NDR as the only route to socialism, recognising the centrality of the working class in the struggle against capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination. The 8th CC underscore the urgent need to confront the deepening crises of capitalism, including

unemployment, inequality, ecological destruction, and the commodification of labour. It calls for the reconfiguration of the Alliance and the building of a united socialist movement to advance the National Democratic Revolution as a direct path to socialism.

The CC emphasizes the importance of sharpening class consciousness, intensifying political education, and mobilizing workers to contest neoliberal austerity and imperialist aggression. In the spirit of working-class internationalism, COSATU commits to strengthening solidarity with oppressed peoples globally, reaffirming the historic call: **"Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains"**. as the rallying cry for collective resistance against the forces of exploitation and oppression.

The declaration concludes with a resolute call to action, urging workers to organize and build unity across workplaces, communities, and international borders. It recognizes that the fragmentation of the working class under neoliberalism is a deliberate strategy of capital to weaken collective power and thus calls for the revitalization of trade union militancy and the forging of alliances with progressive forces worldwide.

COSATU pledges to intensify its campaigns for decent work, universal healthcare, social security, and the defense of public ownership, while contesting imperialist dominance in global trade and economic systems. The 8th CC envisions a future where the working class leads the struggle for socialism, dismantling the structures of exploitation and building a society rooted in equality, justice, and solidarity. **"Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains!"** It remains not just a slogan, but a revolutionary imperative to transform the world.

Aluta continua!

