



REVIEWED STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

**STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF NEHAWU
NOVEMBER 2021**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ANC	African National Congress
CEC	Central Executive Committee
CET	Community Education and Training
CHWs	Community Health Workers
COSATU	Congress of South Africa Trades Union
CST	Colonialism of a Special Type
DA	Democratic Alliance
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority
ICTUF	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NEC	National Executive Committee
NEHAWU	National Education, Health & Allied Workers Union
NOBs	National Office Bearers
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
PSCBC	Public Sector Collective Bargaining Chamber
PSET	Post Schooling Education and Training
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SACP	South African Communist Party
SANCO	South African National Civics Organisation
SPF	Strategic Policy Framework
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is the SPF?

This Strategic Policy Framework (SPF) of NEHAWU (National Education, Health & Allied Workers Union) is our Medium-Term Programme as a union. It embodies the broad transformation-centred vision of the organisation on the one hand, and on the other, the immediate to the long term wide-ranging transformational goals that are built on the solid foundation of the organisational vision. To the extent that NEHAWU espouses a revolutionary vision and a transformational mission as the fundamental basis of its very founding as trade union; its SPF as a living document represents and articulates the organisational vision and mission while it also serves as an instrument of organising and practical agenda.

As a dynamic and a living document, the SPF's development overtime is characterised by members' constant collective effort to shape and reshape the immediate, midterm and long-term objectives of the union - precisely for the purposes of our internal organisational development and for the wider strategic objectives as they relate to the public sector transformation in general and workplace transformation in particular. Notably, the SPF development process began in 1997 and was subsequently adopted in 1998 as our ten year programme. It has since been renewed in subsequent NEHAWU congresses precisely for its singular and consistently principled goal: to preserve an appropriately adjusted strategy that is inventive and is relevant to challenges of each unique epoch while maintaining consistency with the revolutionary vision of our foundation.

The SPF is also formulated to serve as the primary source of organisational policy direction. Understandably, it must be the basis of organising workers in the public sector and for transforming the state as well as society. Our perspective also views privatised social services such as healthcare, social welfare and education as privatised extensions of the public service that must be brought back into the ambit of the state in the long run. It is within this context that the union's presence in both the private sector and public service should be understood. The SPF thus serves as our collective guide to action;

a comprehensive, strategic, logical policy formulation tool whose content and approach to transformation must help in orientating the whole union towards an all-encompassing, deliberate, systemic and coordinated programme for driving practical change.

In that sense, the SPF is a practical instrument of organising through our medium-term programme while at the same time, serving as a mechanism for ideological orientation and political analysis. Therefore, it remains a reservoir of political knowledge that helps us to achieve our overall strategy.

1.2 Structure of the SPF

In terms of its lay out, the SPF document is organised in such a manner that it encompasses four main sections that also constitutes the pillars of the union's areas of work, namely; (section 2) the current international context, (section 3) current national political context, (section 4) on our socio-economic pillar, and our (section 5) organisational pillar. The purpose of these main sections can be summarised as follows:

Section 2 of the SPF looks at how the current international context and material conditions in South Africa combine to shape the balance of class force in the country and internationally. This section explores the evolution of the class struggle through the various phases of capitalist development from the cold war era to the neoliberal-globalisation period. Given the inherent limits and contradictions of the system of capitalism, capital has had to constantly reinvent capitalism over and over again as it seeks to overcome the recurring boom and bust cycles of the system and attempt to overcome the problem of overconcentration of wealth and the crisis of overproduction. This reality manifest itself in the form of increasing poverty, the widening gap of inequality and the pauperisation of workers and the working class through the destruction of quality jobs. All these global and domestic developments have implications for workers, their trade unions and the working class as whole. Our international perspective also help the union advance trade union internationalism and for it to know its domestic and international class allies and enemies.

Section 3 uses our Marxist-Leninist tools of analysis to look at our current national political context as a country, and how this political context came into being, how it perpetuates itself, and the various competing class elements waging a struggle to either preserve it or negate it. This section also looks at the South African transition since the dawn of our democracy, and evaluates it in relation to the ideals the democratic movement has set for itself as outlined in the formulation of the NDR. We also shine a light on the post 1994 neoliberal detour and all its consequence such as the decimation of industrial, manufacturing and retail workers unions that dominated the pre-1994 trade union landscape, and the rise of public sector union partly through successful struggles of recognition in the 1980s and 1990s, and also partly as a result of the above mentioned neoliberal onslaught which has been most severe on private sector workers and their unions. The process of class formation and class realignment currently underway in South Africa is also closely looked at including the formation of the black middle class that has come to dominate the state apparatus - these developments are unfolding in the face of severe attacks on the working class, and significant erosion of its leadership ranks. All the above are a reflection of the national balance of forces and serve as a barometer for the prospects of socialism under the current conditions dominated by the bourgeoisie neoliberal thought, and has had a visible and qualitative impact on the class alliance of the progressive forces.

Meanwhile, section 4 outlines our socio-economic pillar as a union by identifying the primary areas of focus that our work revolves around. This pillar is derived directly from our scope as a class conscious industrial union organising in the public, private and allied sectors, and our broader ideological orientation. The union's scope and work revolves around health, education, social welfare, public administration in both the private and public sectors Here we look at the policy perspective of the union in as far as it relates to the state in general, the public sector in the wider sense and the public service in particular. Furthermore, it deals with strategic policy positions of the union in so far as the character and nature of the state, the post schooling and higher education landscape,

health care provision, public administration and welfare provision is concerned. While the union also organises in the private sector, it is opposed to the privatisation of the above mentioned public services and advocate for the centrality of the state in their provision. It is argued that it is only in this way that such services can be made accessible to the working class that increasingly finds it difficult to access privatised public services. As a union, we organise in the private sector where such privatised social services have been outsourced to, the long term objective being the reintegration of such services into the state to ensure access to social services for all and job security for all public sector workers. The vision of the union on this matter is underpinned by its principled believe in a single integrated public service, which is also in conformity with COSATU's slogan and vision of "one industry, one union".

Lastly, section 5 of the SPF document clarifies the organisational outlook of the union in terms of its unitary nature, the emphasise it places on unity and cohesion, the building of a seamless union machinery as a strategic approach and the intergration of its operational and constitutional structures to maintain the balance between administrative efficiency and proper political orientation of the union. Here it is emphasised that for the union to function optimally and meet the needs and expectations of members and workers in general, it should have well thought out structures that function and relate seamlessly as a single coherent organism. This section also looks at the organisational priorities of the union, which are aimed at strengthening workplace organisation, rolling out an effective education and training strategy for the union, developing a comprehensive bargaining strategy that responds to both the political aims of the union and the needs of its members, running effective and responsive campaigns that serve as a basis for attracting and recruiting workers into NEHAWU, and setting up an effective case handling and management system in the union. At the centre of the above principles and priorities must be a learning organisation that is able to adapt to the changing nature of work and the challenges that come with that. education as a weapon to advance trade union struggles, use campaigning as an effective tool of organising and recruiting new members; and effectively represent members in the workplace when they need representation. The union is guided by

its organising slogan; “close ranks and defend the base”.

1.3 Evolution of Our Union

NEHAWU evolved into its present form and character from a definite set of international and particular national conditions as represented by the history of the world under colonial and capitalist domination, that exhibits strong racial and patriarchal dimensions in addition to the class contradictions it spawns. The historic formation of progressive trade unions in general, and South African class oriented trade unions is the history of responding to the domination of capitalism and imperialism. The character of our union derives from the role of different generations of class conscious activists and revolutionaries; men and women whose actions and collective conscience, both in the national liberation struggle, the struggle for women emancipation and gender equality, and the struggle against capitalist class exploitation, created the material basis for the form and content of the trade union in the twenty first century. NEHAWU inherited its distinct identity, among different trade unions, from a definite legacy of internationalist working class struggle against capitalist exploitation and revolutionary struggle against colonial rule in South Africa.

Although the capitalist mode of production emerged in Europe in the 1500's, it was only with the historic rise of the industrial revolution in the 1700's that workers as a class emerged. The trade unions in Europe began to form in different expressions of sophistication from lower organizational formation and consciousness to higher forms of organisation and consciousness in line with the historic transformations of industrial and class relations of the time. The first industrial revolution fundamentally changed production techniques, in that manual labour was replaced by machines, giving way in this process to a comprehensively new social order and system of capitalist mass production. This period also saw the beginning of the process of drawing women into the ranks of the proletariat through their recruitment into factories and textile industries.

The process of class formation in society in the early industrial era created conditions for the rise of class organisation of the proletariat

which has historically existed as trade union at first and different class parties later. This process of development of class organisation occurred to bring about a consciousness of the working class as a class in itself with distinct class interests and revolutionary objectives it identified with. In a way, that constituted the transformation of its consciousness from a “class in itself” to a “class for itself”. The process of class formation has also been characterised by the increasing participation of women in the in the labour market; more often than not, women are mostly employed in sectors and roles that corresponds with their reproductive roles in the home. This reality has translated in the predominance of women in certain sectors, and in the unions that organise in those sectors. So, patriarchy is an ever present dimension of the process of class formation and the proletarianisation of women. NEHAWU, by virtue of its scope, is one of those unions with a high number of female members hence the necessity of mainstreaming the gender question in its programs.

At the same time, the historic deepening of capitalist relations of production and maturation of capitalism as an historical epoch and social order presented a critical combination of factors that paved the way for capitalist expansion and capturing of new markets as territories for continued accumulation. Concurrent with the accumulation orientated outlook of the capitalist system there arose, among capitalist countries of the North, a new deliberate initiative to pursue new markets which constituted the material basis for colonization of the African continent and the Global South in general. To this end capitalism found root in the African continent and in South Africa in particular. The industrialization of South Africa was driven by the capitalists’ needs of the colonial mining and manufacturing industries.

Notably, the formation of the class organisation of the proletariat in South Africa took on forms corresponding with the establishment and promotion of economic and political structures of colonialism and production system of capitalism buttressed by the unique features of colonialism. To this end the craft unions that were formed in the mining industry, in the main, and other industries inherited their orientation and inclinations from the orientation of their counterparts in the home country of the colonizer who were

the owners of the mines and other industries later established. The shortage of labour led to the policy of forcing Africans to pay land tax and consequently, forcing male African peasants to become workers while leaving the rural women folk behind to reproduce the workforce for the migrant labour system i.e. forced proletarianisation. It is through the forced proletarianisation, industrial expansion and the concurrent systematic destruction of the African's peasant economy on the countryside that the complete structure of the class formation in the country compliant with themes of modern capitalism began to take shape.

In that way the forced proletarianisation of the African people and the privileged position ceded to the white working class served to crystalize and consolidated the unique social relations of what was later characterised as Colonialism of a Special Type (CST). CST was characterised by the triple interconnected challenges of class, racial and gender oppression that shaped and defined the struggle against it. Thus South African progressive trade unions, and NEHAWU in particular inherit their form and content from these historic structural effects of CST. Similarly, NEHAWU and other progressive trade unions' transformative and revolutionary programme emanates from material need to drive, with and on behalf of the largely disenfranchised working class and African people, a programme to change their working conditions and consciously participate in struggle for political freedom which will encapsulate the gender and race dimensions of our class struggle.

1.4 Our Political and Ideological Orientation

Since NEHAWU's commitments to its members and the working class in general were not changed but reinforced by the gains of the 1994 democratic breakthrough, it continues in the militancy and revolutionary ethos of the Congress Alliance tradition, with Marxism-Leninism as guiding ideological framework. NEHAWU's transformative agenda, especially at this particular conjuncture, in a context of neoliberal hegemony continues to make scientific socialism very relevant as a tool of analysis in navigating the political and economic spheres.

As a part of social consciousness, ideology is determined by the conditions of society's material life and reflects social relations, in a class divided society, like South Africa, ideology assumes a particular class character. A Red trade union requires a non-sectarian ideological perspective to fulfil its mission in a manner consistent to its character, hence Marxist-Leninism is a non-sectarian working-class ideology which suits NEHAWU's medium term and long-term transformation programme. It is through the effective use of the Marxist-Leninist perspective that the union as a class organisation can successfully engage on the on-going socio-economic, political, ideological and cultural struggles as part of advancing workers' interests.

By employing the Marxist-Leninist theoretical framework as an ideological compass and theoretical guide, NEHAWU avails to the workers and the working class a theory that is a weapon with which to advance the revolutionary agenda for social change. This theoretical and ideological orientation derives from current and historical experiences of the working class in both the South African and international contexts and historical conditions that gave prominence to Marxist-Leninism as a revolutionary theory and force for changing the world but most importantly placing the working class as the driving force of that change.

An appropriate grounding of NEHAWU as an organisation in Marxist-Leninism helps not only in the development of our collective appreciation of the historical context that informs the conditions of struggle at a given historic moment, both internationally and locally, but facilitates the sharpening of the organisation's analytical and political perception, organisational acumen and political consciousness necessary to advance our class interests. As Lenin wrote: 'The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true' hence revolutionary trade unions like NEHAWU utilize this science as a guiding tool in conducting trade union work in particular and its conscious participation in class struggle as a constant reality of history. The Marxist-Leninist tools of analysis help the union to properly grasp the class origins of gender, race and other forms of discrimination and oppression, thus allowing for the resolution of all these question through the advancement and victory of the class

struggle.

Marxism-Leninism is a science that came about after years of tenuous theoretical and philosophical work of several generations of revolutionaries in history seeking a theory of revolutionary change. According to Manevich (1985:7) ‘the working people did not arrive straight away at an understanding of the need for a radical transformation of society, but over long centuries of struggle, with the help of advanced revolutionary theory, which, in turn, rests on the achievements of social sciences.’

The classical theory that is Marxist philosophy addresses itself to the two fundamental theories of historical materialism and dialectical materialism as a scientific prism through which the development of society ought to be understood and therefore its concrete representation in the present be interpreted for purposes of the unfolding class struggle pursuant of society characterized by no oppression of man by man. Leninism, on the other hand, derives its foremost utility, as indelible part the revolutionary knowledge system of scientific socialism, in the spheres of the theory of struggle, the theory of proletarian organisation, theory of imperialism and that of the NDR. The theory of the NDR, within the thoroughgoing framework of an international working-class struggle for socialism, is concerned with the resolution of the National Question in those countries where the working class and peoples suffer under the bondage of capitalism as well as that of national domination through colonial oppression of the people as whole.

NEHAWU thus, politically and theoretically speaking and on the basis of the theory of NDR, appreciates the all inclusive relationship between the task of our revolution to resolve the national question as well as the resolution of the class and gender question as interrelated contradictions whose resolution guarantees conditions for transition to a egalitarian society. In the context of the National Democratic Revolution in South Africa the matter of the National Question was consolidated to its highest theoretical exposition by the South African Communist Party in the Black Republic Thesis. The Black Republic thesis outline continues to serve as the main theoretical framework that guides the progressive forces in the South

Africa, and NEHAWU in particular, as it relates to the fundamental conceptualisation of the national and the class question in pursuit of our collective transformative and revolutionary goals.

To the extent that Marxist-Leninism is NEHAWU's theoretical guide and arsenal of tools of analysis it is important for this strategic perspective to state, over and above our commitment to Marxist-Leninist principles, that the union is unequivocally a political and a biased union in favour of the South African revolutionary forces who collectively derive our midterm programme from the National Democratic Revolution. On the basis of this reality as NEHAWU we place great premium on our strategic relationships, we establish through COSATU our federation, with other progressive forces charged with the historic responsibility to fundamentally transform South Africa into a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic and prosperous society as the NDR advocates.

The lived experience of the South African working class is the primary basis of the developed practice of struggle among the working class as well as the deepening of the class struggle in general. The formation and development of the trade union organisations is owed to the material practice of resistance and struggle of workers against class exploitation, discrimination and gender oppression. This practice of struggle achieved its highest development and actualisation through the radicalising, organising and conscientising effect of Marxism-Leninism which is rooted in the perspective of working class internationalism; this combined with the prosecution of the national liberation struggle and the concurrent development of political consciousness that accompanies it.

The ideological and theoretical grounding of our strategic policy framework, therefore, is sourced from the foundation of the Marxist-Leninist principle of working class internationalism as a political outlook and organisational outlook, the materialist conception of history as a philosophical outlook, national democratic revolution as our medium term programme and socialism as our strategic and long-term objective.

1.5 A Red Trade Union

As part of the progressive labour movement, it can be safely argued that NEHAWU is at the forefront of defending workers' rights against exploitation. It is not by coincidence that the union has been at the forefront of struggle against government's neoliberal policies that constitute an onslaught on the working class. As an instrument of working-class struggles, the union also plays an important role as a political school that imbues workers with a revolutionary fighting spirit. The character of NEHAWU is that of a radical and militant trade union that unashamedly fights on the side of workers and all oppressed people in South Africa and the world. This character is a product of the historical and day to day struggles in defense of workers and in pursuit of the national democratic revolution and socialism.

The revolutionary character of NEHAWU stems from its historical role in the struggle against colonialism and imperialism in South Africa. The union, in keeping with the traditions of its predecessors, is guided by the understanding that racial, gender and class oppression in South Africa, was characterized by colonialism of a special type. In South Africa, capitalism (and class exploitation) took on a particular class, racial and patriarchal form that radicalized sections of the working class (that were at the receiving end of apartheid) and its organisations against the whole existing social system.

As a transformative trade union, NEHAWU seeks to maintain a balance between workplace struggles and broader political struggles of the working class in society. The task of the union is to educate workers and raise their consciousness through daily struggles in the workplace, and fight in alliance with other progressive social forces for the creation of a democratic and just non-racial and non-sexist society. As part of its transformative agenda, in the medium term, the union does not only fight for benefits for its members, but it also seeks the transformation of the public service so as to enable the state to pursue the NDR as a direct route to socialism.

NEHAWU moves from the premise that capitalism is founded on and sustained through class exploitation as a basis for wealth accumulation;

facilitated through racial oppression and patriarchy. So, the struggle for better wages and better working conditions can only be resolved through the destruction of capitalism and the creation of a Socialist state that will abolish all class, racial and patriarchal relations. Conscious of the limitations (scope, membership and politics) of trade unions in the struggle for socialism; the union identifies with and recognizes the necessity for a vanguard workers' party that will play a leading role in the struggle for socialism - the union is but one instrument among many at the disposal of the working class in the struggle against capitalism and the bosses.

The increasing impact of international trade and financial regulation coupled with the increasing power of multinational corporations, demand trade union action on a global scale. As a revolutionary union, NEHAWU identifies with the struggles of all oppressed people throughout the world and strive for working class solidarity in the trade union movement, nationally and internationally. Capitalist globalisation and the mobility of capital is characterized by the fourfold crisis of economic crisis, social reproduction crisis, climate change crisis and the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic - these global challenges, including the attacks on the working class and working class organisations, strategies to distance the progressive trade unions from the Party, confronting the labour movement require a collective global response from progressive trade unions, their local federations and international labour organisations they are affiliated to. Such a response will require both bilateral and collective engagements/responses from the trade union movement to the global challenges confronting it.

The imperialist agenda of regime change and plunder impacts most severely on the living standards and condition of the working class of the affected countries. So, the union will continue, in the spirit of internationalism, to pledge solidarity with the working class of all countries struggling under the yoke of imperialism. Currently, workers are divided largely between two major international labour organisations the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). The ideological differences of these two international labour bodies is elaborated later below.

In the South African context, the trade union movement has profound internationalist roots and similarly NEHAWU is itself fundamentally an internationalist. Against the backdrop of the development of South Africa as a colonial economy and an industrial development and class formation that correspond to this fact of history, the trade unions reflect clear features of greater external and international influences that fundamentally informed the structure, perspectives and traditions of organised labour. While there is a particular historical narrative in the development of NEHAWU that is particular to the specific South African reality and its evolution, this narrative is readily couched in a definitive international working class struggle that is internationalising alongside the development of imperialism. Our international struggle seek solidarity with all oppressed groups and people faced with any kind of oppression or exploitation on the face of the earth.

Historically, the Communist internationals; the first, second and third, represent the fundamental international political framework of development in modern history of working class internationalism. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (as pioneers of the Communist International) are the pioneering revolutionaries whose thoroughgoing concept of working class internationalism remains the historical and theoretical basis for the different historic representations in the evolution of the international class oriented trade union movement. Lenin, after Marx and Engels, played a critical role through the revolutionary example of the October Revolution and his far reaching critique of imperialism to bring to the fore the practicality of working class internationalism.

The Great October Socialist Revolution brought radical changes in the international situation and in the balance of forces: it was a brilliant example of inspiration and experience for the working class and the world trade union movement. The workers of the world saw in this revolution how their aspirations could be realised. The creation of a powerful trade union centre in Russia was objectively a major incentive and support for the whole world working class trade union movement. The resolute backing and international solidarity which the proletariat of the whole world, including here in South

Africa, gave to the new Soviet Republic proved that the workers realized the Russian Socialist Revolution was their joint cause.

Before the Russian Revolution the international working class movement was increasingly challenged and contested by spirit of reformism, as well as the manifestations of chauvinistic and nationalistic tendencies a great portion of which was greatly influenced by the social democratic tendency, that argued that class contradictions under capitalism could be overcome through reforms rather than revolution, that found root in Germany. This was the matter that was at the heart of the contradiction that later caused the split in the international trade union organisation and working class parties after the second world war and the reason for the existence of two lines today.

The founding of the Third Communist International (organisation of communist parties and working-class parties) in Moscow in March 1919 exerted direct influence on and gave further impetus to the world working class trade union movement. Thus, in 1920 the First Congress of Revolutionary Trade Unions was held in Moscow, and was attended by delegates from 41 different countries. It was there that the Red International of Labour Unions was founded. It was a predecessor to WFTU which was established in Paris on 3 October 1945. The First World Trade Union Congress (Paris, 3-8 October 1945) which voted to establish the WFTU was attended by delegates representing 67 million workers from 56 national organizations from 55 countries and 20 international organizations.

The formation of International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICTUF) in 1949 (a splinter from WFTU) and later is amalgamation into ITUC in 2006 was the historic split between trade unions that are class oriented and those that are class collaborationist in their perspective of world reality. The split has its roots in the development of trade union perspective in Germany, during WW1, that prioritised the collaboration of the working class and its organisations with their national bourgeois class in the conventional political and ideological lineage of narrow nationalism (class collaborationist) that is noncompliant with the Marxist principle of international working class solidarity and working class internationalism as

a political principle of working class power. To this end the split represented the development of the post-world war international political economy whose consolidation facilitated the maturing of unequal and oppressive power relations between the imperialist north and the South subjugated to the power structure imperialism.

NEHAWU is thus a red union with a decidedly internationalist trade union tradition rooted in working class internationalism and located in anti-imperialist position as our perspective and basis of our international programme. Our strategy therefore must seek to consolidate our revolutionary international perspective and our socialist perspective which seek to abolish all class oppression, racial exclusion and gender oppression. The struggle to consolidate and deepen internationalism is at the same time a struggle for the trade union broadly against reactionary unions and yellow trade unionism.

1.6 The National Democratic Revolution and Socialism

The NDR is the transitional struggle aimed at achieving national liberation in colonised national territories while concurrently and organically creating the totality of political and socio-economic conditions necessary to pursue the objective of building socialism. The National Democratic Revolution at any given time in history is a total representation of the objective balance of class and political forces in all societies in transition that are characterised by political class, racial and gender contestations and relations. The nature and history of the South African national democratic revolution is such that the working class has historically hegemonised its interests and its hegemonic position in the NDR and has overtime radicalised the trajectory of the NDR and consolidated its position as its true motive force. However, this reality increasingly no longer holds true - the NDR seem to have been high jacked by petty bourgeoisie elements.

Although the NDR expresses working class interests in the main, it nevertheless has multi-class content arising from the combined socialist and national liberation tasks from which the peasantry, national petit bourgeois, national bourgeois and other national social strata find expression. In the South African context, where capitalism was characterized by racial domination, and hence,

Colonialism of a Special Type, the struggle for social transformation meant pursuing national democratic goals, a portion of which was attained with the attainment of establishment of a majority government, as a necessary condition for advancing towards socialist transformation. The socialist transition inferred here is subject to the evolving material conditions and objective class balance of power as represented in the whole scheme of hegemonic undercurrents at a given historic moment.

The NDR therefore comprises of both the national liberation tasks as well as the socialist tasks at the same time; the national liberation struggles create conditions for the elevation of the socialist cause and the struggle for socialism has, inevitably, the national question as its integral part. The struggle for socialism is dialectically connected to the struggle for national freedom and, conceptually, the working-class effort to build socialist struggle occurs in tandem with their effort to materially eradicate the economic and social structure of colonial legacy as the content of the national liberation struggle. The totality of the NDR thus views race, class and gender as intertwined dimensions of the capitalist system domestically and globally. Hence the struggle for socialism revolve around the national question and the women/gender question as integral components in the resolution of the class question.

This understanding ‘of the class content of the national struggle and the national content of the class struggle’ was expounded by Joe Slovo in 1985. In pursuit of these tasks the working class is required to constantly build the working class organisation and contest for its dominant position among the social forces that constitute the national struggle while creating hegemony for the socialist struggle. Without this multi-dimensional approach to building the social conditions for socialism through national liberation the working class will be risking the stagnation of the national transformation project and therefore the inevitable moribund state of its condition as it relates to the vision of a socialist transition and future.

Our political respective in our SPF therefore seeks to locate the union as part of the conscious working class forces that embark on deliberate struggle to build and consolidate the working class

struggle and working class power for purposes of advancing the national struggle, which involves the gender question, while concurrently putting up the building blocks for socialism in a continuous routine and fully conscious of the internal and external hegemonic struggles within which they proceeds. It is on the basis of the awareness of the hegemonic struggles that continually occur that the union's strategy and perspective encapsulates both the tactical and strategic relations with likeminded forces. It is this fact that continues to validate the revolutionary alliance that the union, through COSATU, is part of.

The socialist axis of the alliance however, as led by the vanguard party of the working class, has a greater responsibility in the NDR with and on behalf of all components of the working class. The left axis infuses the radicalizing stimulus in the transformation discourse of the revolution while carrying out a categorically anti-capitalist agenda and crystalizing a socialist way forward for the masses; the multiclass liberation movement on the other hand does not specifically accumulate such responsibility owing to its nature and character. The political content of the left axis, its political activity and programme is strategically determined by the political party of the working class, the South African Communist Party, to ensure the sustainability of the socialist project.

1.7 Our Revolutionary Alliance

This Alliance between the ANC as a broad revolutionary movement for all the oppressed, the SACP as a vanguard party of the working class and COSATU as a mass formation of the organised working class, is an organisational expression of the motive forces of our national democratic revolution - the working class, the rural peasantry and the black middle strata. The revolutionary Alliance of the ANC, SACP and COSATU is founded on a generally common and principled understanding of the character and content of our national democratic revolution; our common programme. The working class is the primary motive force of the NDR; this on the basis of its objective status as the ultimate beneficiary class of its gains as well as on the basis of its dependability as the material

driving force of its progress. The immediate and long term interests of the working class as well as its objective position in the socio-economic system accrues to its objective position as the primary motive force of the NDR.

The Communist Party exercises political leadership of the working class as a whole. This places a historic responsibility on the shoulders of the SACP as a vanguard party of the working class, to articulate its political programme, politically organise the working class and its organisations and consistently develop its political capacity for its long-term interests as a class. In particular, the SACP enriches the ideological, theoretical and programmatic depth of progressive trade union movement under the banner COSATU and the working class more broadly. The revolutionary components of workers organised under revolutionary trade unions represent the sections of the working class with the highest revolutionary potential and with the potential for the highest levels of class consciousness.

Unless systematic ideological and political work is carried out through the working class vanguard party among trade unions, workers will remain with only lower levels of trade union consciousness, as opposed to rising to the level of class consciousness. When imbued with class consciousness, organised workers are ideally positioned to ensure that day-to-day trade union struggles ultimately deepen the objectives of the NDR and thereby create conditions that increase the potential for a revolutionary transition to socialism, with the Party as their vanguard. To this end the Communist Party anchors the whole of the working class in consistent and solid collective class action rooted on the objective to deepen rather than resolve the prevailing class contradictions. From this perspective it is in the best interest of all organised workers COSATU members to build the SACP as a strong party of their own as a class.

The ANC is a broad revolutionary movement must place the working class at the centre of its programme for transformation because the ANC leads the NDR, and must mobilise and unite the motive forces to achieve the NDR - and that cannot be achieved without the hegemony of the working class. However, the different and competing long term interests of the different motive forces of the

NDR dictate that at some stage both the nature and composition of this revolutionary alliance will change as other components either rich their objectives before others or divert from the NDR to pursue their narrow interest. This implies a movement in constant flux that can only be kept true to its revolutionary objective through the hegemonic role of the primary motive forces of the NDR. Without the hegemonic ideological and political leadership role of the primary motive forces the ANC and the NDR itself run the risk derailment and betrayal.

The conservative forces have been dominating the global political and economic institutions and have developed sophisticated means of imposing their political and economic agenda on developing societies, left parties and governments. This agenda has a very negative bearing on the primary motive forces of our revolution. Nationally, the ANC has come under tremendous pressure from the elite classes and strata, some of whom are its leaders and former leaders, to deliver faster economic change that favour their interests.

The black petit bourgeoisie and its political section, continues to put the national democratic state under remarkable pressure to pander to its economic interests and thereby sets the whole political framework of the alliance at the service of its narrow interests by negating the interest of the working. For this reason, the working class must take active interest and a centre stage in the building of ANC structures and in deploying its finest and most disciplined and committed cadres into organs of the democratic state to enable the ANC government to deliver and bring about faster and fundamental social transformation. The SACP and COSATU are socialist formations within the Alliance, while the ANC is neither socialist nor capitalist but is rather a progressive liberation movement leading a leftist majoritarian liberation project. The ANC's character as a revolutionary liberation movement is crucial for the revolutionary and socialist cause and thus should not be risked at the altar of short term political expediency.

The Alliance however has faced some strategic predicaments owing to the balance of power unfavourable to the working class movement.

The task of the union, in the medium term, is to determine the appropriate approach to the future of the alliance in light of the present and growing threat against its leftist and revolutionary character as a result of its organisational and therefore strategic contamination by the conservative forces, and corrupt elements masquerading as radical progressives, that have found their way into the constituting organisations of the alliance and the ANC in particular. The thoroughgoing mantra however to resolve this question must be founded on the principle to avert the structural fracturing of the organised popular forces of change and thereby the systematically weakening of the progressive trajectory of our revolution.

The working class as a motive force must consistently work maintain the unity of the progressive forces. The revolutionary trade union in particular bears the responsibility to defend the unity of the organised working class from which the advanced detachment to lead the socialist project will be sourced. However, this unity is constantly being tested and undermined by the lack of ideological coherence among the motive forces stemming from their divergent long term interests. For that reason the unity of the motive forces of the NDR needs to be clarified in terms of its composition, purpose and limits as it does not apply at all times under all circumstances - the material conditions and the unfolding class struggle shapes and determines the formation, deformation or reformation of class alliances.

SECTION 2: THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 On Internationalism

The prevailing international situation is characterised by the dominance of neoliberal-globalisation as a new policy of imperialism pursued by the major imperialist powers in the West. The agenda of neoliberal-globalisation is maintained through constant military threats, and the systematic organisation of the international political and economic system by international institutions that drive the neoliberal capitalist agenda globally.

The union must express its proletariat internationalism on critical international questions through a consistently Marxist-Leninist perspective. It must drive a programme that advances its policy of practical and active international working class solidarity on many problems posed by imperialism to the working class globally. Our international pillar is thus anchored in the common efforts of progressive forces globally, to consolidate and build a counter hegemonic programme opposed to imperialism.

- More than 150 years ago capitalism transitioned into a new stage that Vladimir Lenin in his popular outline, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917) called imperialism or “the monopoly stage of capitalism”. This is the highest stage in capitalism’s development in which banking and industrial capitals increasingly merge into giant multinational monopolies called Monopoly Finance Capital. Socially, this is constituted by the Financial Oligarchy which is contemporarily loosely called the richest 1% and this is the most decisive social force in the current imperialist epoch.
- Capitalist development is characteristically uneven whilst at the same time it continuously deepens interconnections between the advanced and imperialist core countries on the one hand and the underdeveloped and peripheral countries on the other hand. So, imperialism is a particular stage in which capitalism is a global system, which means that what takes place at its advanced pole tends to have a bearing on its underdeveloped pole and vice versa. And there is also a very strong gender demission to this equation in so far as the economic status and condition of women and other marginalised groups is concerned.
- Whilst still retaining the basic capitalist production and social relations as well as the bourgeois political superstructure, this evolutionary development of the capitalist system goes through different phases. These phases are primarily marked by specific combination of changes in production or labour process, the role of state in the economy and the distribution of the national income. For instance, the post-World War II period up to the 1970s is characterised as the Keynesian-Fordist

phase. This was the most prosperous period in the history of capitalism. At the level of social relations, this period saw the emergence of the welfare state providing universal or extended social security coverage, reduced inequalities through strong measures for income redistribution and the provision of social wage to address the basic needs of the working class and other subordinated social strata. This period also saw more women being drawn into the workforce as the demand for labour grew; this development was associated with the growth of the women's movement and victories on the trade union front against discrimination and more protections for workers. At the level of production relations, permanent employment was commonplace, technical and technological change allowed for mass production in large-scale factory plants and the consumption of wage goods on a mass scale by the working class. The social compact between capital, labour and the state became the benchmark in managing the relations of production, typically based on consensus amongst these parties in linking wage increase to productivity increase.

- The emergence of these large-scale factory plants meant that over time there was the over-accumulation of capital generally marked huge investment in machinery leading to overproduction and rising wage rates, which in turn started to reduce the average rate of profits. This eventually pushed the Keynesian-Fordist regime of accumulation into stagnation by the 1960s. Subsequently, after the oil crisis arising from the oil embargo imposed upon the US by OPEC in retaliation for its support to Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israel War, in 1974-1975 a deep economic crisis broke out globally which brought the Keynesian-Fordist phase to an end. This crisis was the first of such a scale since the Great Depression of 1929-1939 in which economic stagnation was uniquely combined with high inflation, hence it was called “stagflation”.
- As imperialist core countries experienced stagnation as a result of the falling rate of profits, from the 1960s many western monopolies started to relocate their labour-intensive manufacturing to East Asia in search for cheap labour to restore

profitability. More often than not these cheap manufacturing jobs were occupied mainly by women thus placing them among the lowest paid and poorest workers. This gradually changed the international division of labour as the formerly colonised countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan began to move up the international hierarchy and gradually becoming industrialised and prosperous. These so-called Asian Tigers were the first group of the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) and they were later called “developmental states” as their growth model and domestic policies were peculiarly developmental rather than merely focused on economic growth. These countries were also of strategic geopolitical interest to imperialism in the context of the Cold War and were never subjected to Neoliberal reforms, until in the aftermath of the Asian crisis in 2001.

- Through international multilateral institutions such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATS), which later became the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the dominant fraction of capitalists in global capitalism, i.e. Monopoly Finance Capital, responded to the crisis of the 1970s by imposing Neoliberal policies within countries and across the world trading system. Thus, countries had to align their trade, currency exchange and domestic economic policies with the WTO agreements and the dictates enforced by the international multilateral institutions such as IMF and WB. This then ushered in a new phase called Neoliberal-globalisation, which marked the further evolution of capitalism in the imperialist stage. This period saw the reversal of workers’ rights through measures such as “labour market deregulation” characterised by poor quality low paying jobs that affected women in particular worse than men as they are predominantly employed in the lowest sectors with the poorest quality jobs.

2.2 Neoliberal-globalisation

- The US sponsored 1973 coup d’état undertaken by Augusto Pinochet that toppled the democratically elected Chilean

government led by a socialist President, Salvador Allende, became the first Neoliberal experiment. Thus, the military junta of Pinochet carried out Neoliberal economic policies such as large scale privatisation of state companies, corporate tax cuts, labour market flexibility, abolishment of subsidies on basic foodstuffs, etc. With the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in 1981 in Britain and USA respectively, the political centre increasingly shifted towards the right in favour of Neoliberalism to the extent that these countries have impact on others. This meant that the balance of class and political forces increasingly favoured the ruling classes led by Monopoly Finance Capital in the advanced imperialist countries. Thatcher and Reagan led the charge in attacking the working class and weakening the trade union movement. This authoritarian feature set up a paradigm of Neoliberal form of governance and politics that became a benchmark to be followed in other countries.

- Highly indebted mainly as a result of the oil embargo crisis of the 1970s, Africa and global-south in general was forced to implement a set of one-size-fits-all domestic Neoliberal measures called the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). The IMF and WB used the terms of lending to foist conditionalities upon these countries, whilst amongst the advanced imperialist core countries Neoliberal reforms were introduced gradually and unevenly. Nonetheless, over the past four decades or so Neoliberal reforms were extended to numerous countries worldwide and it has now reach maturation globally, affecting and shaping even the social and cultural dimensions of society in terms of deepening class and gender inequalities. Neoliberal still persists to date as the regime of accumulation at this stage in the development of imperialism despite the 2007/08 and subsequent capitalist crises.
- However, parallel to the advent of the Neoliberal-globalisation phase were revolutionary advances in countries such as Iran, Grenada and Nicaragua, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe and others. By the time of the breakthroughs in the national liberation struggles of Namibia and South Africa, the global

balance of class and political forces had decisively shifted in favour of imperialist core countries. This was underscored by the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the subsequent collapse of the Warsaw Pact as capitalism was restored in the whole of the formerly socialist Eastern Europe. This then produced the current unipolar world order that is dominated by the US-led imperialism.

- However, the People's Republic of China rapidly emerged in this post-Cold War world order as a global power in its own right. China's economic growth accelerated, especially after it joined the WTO in 2001, and thus becoming the second biggest economy and with powerful arm-forces. This was on the back of the historic Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) held in December 1978. Deng Xiaoping was ascending to become the paramount leader when the Central Committee adopted his inspired "Reform and Opening Up" policy.
- China's accelerated growth was part of a new and second set of NICs such as Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Chile, Mexico, Hungary, Thailand, Turkey and others that also benefited from the continued relocation of labour-intensive manufacturing from the global-north as a result of the crisis of profitability. However, between the 1952 and 1978 the Chinese economy had already been growing rapidly, averaging 6.3%¹, therefore its admission to the WTO only served to accelerate sustained double-digits annual growth rates. The increase in the number of the newly industrialising countries of the global-south made further changes in the international division of labour, whilst the global-north economies gradually shrank their industrial bases. However, the imperialist core countries still benefited from huge profits expatriated by their industrial monopolies from investments in the global-south. In addition, through cheap imports from East Asia, China and other industrialising

1 Even the OECD and World Bank confirmed the authenticity of these calculations, see L. Zhiming & R. Herrera, *The Enigma of China's Growth*, Monthly Review. December, 2018. (New York, N.Y.: 1949).

economies in the global-south the global-north governments were able to suppress the domestic wage levels and this reinforced the weakening of the trade unions and thus further retrenched existing class inequalities and the precarious condition of working class women.

- The emergence of BRICS in 2006 formed by China, Russia, Brazil and India was against the background of the rising economic power of these countries and it held out a potential of becoming a counter-hegemonic block. BRICS was subsequently joined by South Africa in 2010 and since then it has established an alternative development oriented international bank, and amongst others it considered alternative foreign exchange system and a sovereign rating agency.

2.3 The main socioeconomic characteristics under Neoliberal-globalisation

- With the exception of the varying forms of socialist systems in North Korea, China and Cuba, the capitalist mode of production is now virtually universal, meaning it is now worldwide in the current Neoliberal-globalisation phase. This means that scores of humanity live under conditions whereby the material reproduction of society is based on a social labour processes that is controlled by the bourgeoisie, which owns the means of production and extracts surplus-value from labour which owns nothing but its own labouring hands. In turn, the extraction of surplus-value from labour is the basis for economic growth, from which depends the circulation and the distribution of the national income and resources by the state through taxes on incomes, profits and in some cases on wealth. This is the worldwide predominant form in which the society develops, that is based on the ever widening class inequalities and antagonistic social relations.
- In addition to the relocation of labour-intensive capital in search for cheap labour in the global-south, the decline in the average rate of profits in manufacturing also caused a shift in the composition of investments in the economies of the

global-north. The capitalists that have been hoarding massive cash and weary of investing in productive activities shifted their focus on to the speculative-bubbles in stock-markets, finance, insurance, and real estate (also known as FIRE). This then constituted a specific feature defining the Neoliberal-globalisation, namely the phenomenon called financialisation. Financialisation underscores the preeminent influence exerted by Monopoly Finance Capital on the state and the ruling political elites. The state duly obliged and catered to the interests of the Monopoly Finance Capital in cutting corporate taxes, deregulating the finance industry and foreign exchange. In addition, stock markets were allowed to develop other new forms of speculative investments in which the workers' pensions were used to gamble instead of investing it in infrastructure and productive activities.

- The enforcement of trade liberalisation and financial deregulation by the WTO and IMF created relatively frictionless movement of capital and goods across borders on an unprecedented scale. This significantly increased the volume of trade and reinforced the free-market illusion that trade under capitalism is based on the principle of equivalent exchange between goods and money. However, labour remained the only factor of production that is significantly restricted. Restrictions on the mobility of labour reinforces the persisting colonial wage differentials because the international labour-market remained fragmented, characterised by the divergence in the values of labour power between the global-north and global-south countries. This reality refutes the Neoliberal principle of equivalent exchange as these expanding traded goods embody the labour power of the global-south that is under-valued internationally, especially when compared to that in the global-north. For instance, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Chinese and Indian wage rates range from a low of 10% to 25% in the jobs of the same value and quality compared to those in the US and the rest of the developed world, and within each of these countries there is a gender pay gap as well. Hence, in the lack of convergence in the values of labour power as compared to other commodities, the industrial monopolies of

the global-north exercise wage-arbitrage. In other words, they search for highly skilled and cheap labour power for production in the global-south which guarantees huge profit margins from the produced value-added commodities when they are sold in international markets. Thus, the global-north capitalists buy labour power cheap in the global-south and sell its products dear in international markets. In turn, the global-south is exploited through this wage-arbitrage and as such profits are taken out of the economies in which they are generated and repatriated back to the imperialist core countries.

- The Neoliberal-globalisation phase is generating extreme levels of inequalities and everywhere it compounds racial, gender, geographic and ethnic inequalities. According to the ILO, the size of the global labour force is about 3.5 billion, of which 3.3 billion is in insecure jobs and 60% of this labour force is in informal work. Amongst this 3.5 billion global workforce, the ILO estimates that almost a billion are working-poor, earning less than \$2 a day. On the other hand, the World Inequality Report (2018) states that “income inequality has increased in nearly all world regions in recent decades” in which the top 10% income elite takes 37% of all income in Europe, 61% in the “middle-east”, 41% in China, 46% in Russia, 47% in North America and around 55% in Sub-Saharan Africa, Brazil and India.
- The unevenness and intertwined nature of capitalism as a global system is underscored in how its advanced pole is taking advantage of its underdeveloped pole. In the 21st century, amidst the age of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, the advanced electric vehicles, cell-phones and other computerised gadgets are developed from materials such as cobalt, coltan and copper that are mined in the Congo to produce lithium-ion batteries through forms of slavery and child labour.

2.4 The main political tendencies under Neoliberal-globalisation

- The rise of Neoliberalism in the 1970s marked a further radical shift of the political centre to the right across the global-north countries. Neoliberalism became hegemonic and so did the

conservative bourgeois parties such that even the traditional labour and social democratic parties embraced Neoliberalism as they fixated themselves with public opinion polls and electoral contestation for the middle-ground. As the implementation of Neoliberal policies took its toll on the working class, large sections became alienated and disillusioned with the bourgeois democratic system and political parties as such. This alienation and apathy affected the centre-left political parties more so as they increasingly became little more than political representatives of the ruling class.

- In the global-north countries the centre-right parties that traditionally dominated elections increasingly became even more reactionary in terms of their social and international policy outlook. This is linked to their alignment with the rising xenophobia, racism, jingoism, patriarchal sexism and religious conservatism in the general population, especially amongst the white working-class. The white working class historically enjoyed racialised privileges of permanent employment, social security and social wage, but with the advent of Neoliberalism it suddenly found itself extremely vulnerable. Many of such people increasingly gravitated towards neo-fascist movements. Since the 2007/08 crisis, these neo-fascist movements have made some inroads in the formal parliamentary electoral contests, including ascending to political office in countries such as Greece, Italy and some of the former socialist countries in central and Eastern Europe.
- However, sections of the youth; young men and women, and the middle-stratum in the global-north countries increasingly embrace forms of radical politics and show interest in Marxist economics and tend to be actively part of mass protests against the elites. The 1999 Seattle WTO protests, which was followed by other mass protests such as Occupy Wall Street, campaigns around climate change, etc. are amongst the few examples that enjoyed international attention.
- Over the past two decades Latin America blazed the trail for the international working class in concrete struggles for

socioeconomic transformation and it pioneered the politics of socialism in the 21st century. In the overall, there have since been an ebb of the radical wave and some major setbacks suffered by left forces in countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Honduras and Bolivia amidst the rise of the counter-revolutionary forces sponsored by the increasingly aggressive US-led imperialism.

2.5 The trade union movement and working class struggles

- In the overall, the Neoliberal-globalisation phase has taken a toll on the trade union movement. The implementation of Neoliberal measures geared at engineering labour market flexibility, erosion of the welfare state, freezing of pay and benefits and privatisation weakened trade unions considerably as they became bogged down in defensive struggles. In addition, many of the new entrants into the labour market were increasingly employed on casual terms and fixed term contracts and thus they are ununionised, the gender dimension of this is translated into the preponderance of women who find themselves in these kind of employment. Hence, globally trade union densities average less than 30%. In almost all countries of the global-north the trade union densities are higher in the public sector, which mirrors the SA trade union landscape. The G7 countries have the lowest union densities, whilst on the other hand the Nordic countries boast the highest densities - Finland at 69%, Iceland 81%, Sweden 68%, Norway 54% and Denmark 67%.
- Nonetheless, there are recent and growing pockets of militant counter-currents of resistance that have captured international attention, amongst others such the ongoing struggles of the Gilets Jaunes, “maquiladora” workers in Mexico, Jan 2019 largest general strike ever in history in India.
- Progressive and revolutionary politics remains alive amongst sections of the trade union movements of Asia and Latin America. But some sections of the global-south trade union movement continue to be held back by the influence exerted by the labour aristocracy of the global-north through the

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and its General Union Federations (GUFs) and funders, especially in Africa. The initiative of building South-to-South trade union collaboration has largely been unsuccessful as a force geared at impacting on international developments.

- A similar pattern of dependence applies to civil society organisations, more so in Africa, given their */dependence on funders from the countries that were their colonial masters. Such organisation tend to be narrowly focused on human rights, climate change, “social justice” and other such issues. Nonetheless, there are pockets though sparse of formations influenced by Marxism in a few African countries.
- The formal political terrain remains highly contested in Latin America and Asia between rightwing and progressive forces and in some instances this includes revolutionary movements. However, there is a general rise of populist religious fellowship across the global-south, including ultra-conservative interpretation of Christianity and Islam.
- In Africa, the post-colonial elites remain dominant in formal political structures and discourse. As a socio-political force it is often ideologically incoherent, although the struggle for independence produced great leaders and struggles in some countries. However, many of the African countries that were colonised by Britain and France did not experience protracted national liberation struggles on the road to their independence. Thus, their independence came at the time when radical movements against colonisation had not matured in their development and when the colonializing countries themselves were voluntarily giving up their formal political control of such countries in order to retain economic power relations.

2.6 Key contradictions of capitalism in the neoliberal-globalisation phase

The fundamental contradiction in the capitalist mode of production is one that is based on the social character of the material

reproduction of society on the one hand and the private ownership and appropriation of the products of social labour on the other hand. This contradiction is expressed in the raging class struggle arising from the relations of production in workplaces between the workers and the capitalists. Simultaneously, this contradiction is just as much expressed in the broader social relations in society between the working class and their allied social forces on the one hand against the ruling class and its political representatives on the other hand.

This fundamental contradiction in the capitalist system intersects with other three and interrelated contradictions that have been progressively aggravated in the current Neoliberal-globalisation phase of imperialism. Ultimately, these contradictions constitute the basis of the key polarising socioeconomic and political questions that confront capitalism today and to which it has no solutions:

- Firstly, it's a contradiction that arise in the further development of the capitalist productive forces through mechanisation. Despite the centralisation and concentration of capital through monopolies in the imperialist epoch, competition still forces capital to mechanise production, as a result of which machinery is increasingly used as a substitute for labour. In the 21st century, mechanisation has now advanced to an unprecedented scale of intelligent digital technologies deployed in production and provision of services. This means that this over-accumulation of capital is increasingly replacing labour which is the source of surplus value, hence since the World War II there has been a steady fall in the average rate of profits. Labour arbitrage and financialisation have thus been the primary ways in which capital is responding to this endemic trend of falling profit rates but still without resolving the system's tendency to stagnate and regularly erupt into crises. In other words, the rise in the organic composition is forced upon capitalists by competition in the drive to reduce the production costs in order to maximise profits. But as capitalists use machinery to replace labour they are simultaneously reducing the source of their surplus value since labour is the only factor of production that produces more than its own value, which then leads to the fall in the rate of

profits and thus causing stagnation.

- Secondly, under the Neoliberal regime of accumulation economic and social inequalities are deepening, even in the context of spans of economic growth. In turn, these inequalities compound the already underlying societal inequalities in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, geography and even religion. Resultantly, the capitalist society is increasingly highly polarised and these endemic inequalities produce forces that undermine the political superstructure and the hegemony of Neoliberalism. At the same time they cultivate progressive and revolutionary political forces as much as they generate extremist and reactionary political tendencies.
- Thirdly, for thousands of years humanity has coexisted with nature relatively on a sustainable basis. It has now been scientifically proven that since the industrial revolution capitalism's exploitation of nature has rapidly scaled the level of intensity and proportions that is generating ecological degradation. In its development capitalism has caused a drift or rupture, in which its use and appropriation of nature for material reproduction is progressively disrupting the planetary ecological balance without any capacity to restore it. Capitalism's inherently anarchic mode of production impedes humanity from reconcile its existence with nature as it does not allow for a rational path of sustainable development. The continuing existence of capitalism means there would be further ecological disruption and degradation, hence capitalism's inability to meet even the minimum requirements stipulated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Paris Agreement. Thus, every year that passes the temperature of the earth breaks a new warmest average on record. This underscores the fact that capitalism has already placed the earth and humanity on a catastrophic path as evidenced by global warming, climatic changes in different regions, rising sea-level, desertification, draughts, regular destructive weather patterns, etc.

SECTION 3: CURRENT NATIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXT

3.1 Preface to the National Analysis

This section of the SPF is concerned with understanding the present historical moment with specific reference to the national political situation. This is to answer the important question: what are the key political challenges and dynamics characterising the present historical moment that our SPF must address itself to and how are these identified challenges concretely expressed? In answering this question our SPF must tabulate both a national political analysis and national political programme to help us advance from this objective historical political moment to the desired future that ideally reflects our strategic vision. However the stated process to analyse and understand the present historical moment does not arise from a vacuum; it rather gets formed in circumstances determined by a distinguishable history, political practice and ideological tradition of the working class from which we borrow our tools of analysis.

The union, in line with our political character and ideological lineage as earlier reflected, has a clearly established political perspective and long term political programme. The political perspective of the union programme is embodied in the National Democratic Revolution. Therefore the proper understanding of the present historical moment, for our purposes, must be an understanding of the state of the NDR as manifested in our present material conditions. Among the elements in this framework of analysis is the question of national balance of forces, the state of the revolutionary organisation and the progressive forces at large, the current state of the class alliance claiming the NDR, the state of the working class, working class organisation, the overall national development trajectory and the politics that characterise it as well as the state of the socialist struggle and its future; the opportunities and threats for the socialist cause in South Africa.

Therefore, within the organising theoretical perspective of Marxism-Leninism as our tools of analysis, we endeavour to understand and formulate a comprehensive position on the contemporary national political situation as key component of our SPF.

3.2 Contemporary Class Configuration and the NDR

3.2.1 Background and Framework

As earlier stated in the international balance of forces section, South Africa occupies a semi periphery position in the international hierarchy of imperialist power structure. That power structure is hegemonised by neoliberal political economy framework. By logic of core and periphery and by reason of historical evolution of imperialism, South Africa occupies a particular position in the said hierarchy and therefore fulfils a specifically determined role. The resultant shape and character of class structure reflects this fact. In the context of the existing power structure the process of class formation in South Africa and elsewhere in the world must correspond with the fundamentals of an imperialist economy built on monopoly in general and finance monopoly in particular.

Thus the process of historical and contemporary class configuration in South Africa finds its cue from the overall requirements of imperialism and its perspective. To that extent our analysis in the SPF must reflect how the national situation is embedded on this class formation so established. Given that South Africa is a relatively industrialised country in the global south its economic composition reflects a relatively matured production system, a relatively well developed industrial working class, a dynamic and significant middle class, a historically well-developed finance system that reinforces and guarantees the industrial structure, a relatively effective state apparatus that serves as a political mechanism for this system to be maintained and a strong monopoly industry with a consumer class facilitating internal circulation of capital. The historical years of economic boom that South Africa experienced were greatly influenced by the post-World War 2 industrial reconstruction which located South Africa as industrial outpost for the international economic system particularly the West as the drivers of that economic boom. The position therefore of economic privilege for South Africa also facilitated its stature as a regional economic power in Southern Africa; which politically necessary for the Western and European political objectives in the African continent. Thus South Africa accumulated a status of a regional superpower, in both political and

economic terms.

However the collapse of the Soviet Union and the coming into being of the unipolar world dominated by liberalism had far reaching implications for the picture of international relations. The collapse of the Soviet Union also had some specific negative implications for economic trajectories of different countries in the global south and Africa in particular. The crisis that was experienced in the African continent in the 80s and 90s can be traced to the rise of Neoliberalism in the late 70s and the stagflation crisis that characterised the 70s and 80s. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a logical culmination of a widespread crisis of the global situation. The lack of investment, the crisis of inflation and other resultant forms of crisis changed the global picture.

3.2.2 South African Transition and Neoliberalism

Politics and ideology of present day class formation. South Africa increasingly moved towards a neoliberal framework towards the transition from Apartheid to a democratic South Africa. This framework was rising in prominence especially in the face of Liberal triumphalism at the end of the Soviet Socialist state. The liberation movement was increasingly adapting its left transformative posture about the future of South Africa to conform to the dominant political and ideological framework of cooperation with centrist and minimalist positions. At the ideological level there developed at the leadership level a liberal and conservative ideological core that drove a false ideological narrative towards forms of ideological distortions under the guise of liberal notions of practicality.

To that extent, the evolution of the objective economic environment changes in international liberal conditions was accompanied by a cooperationist political perspective among the leading detachment of the liberation movement. Following this scenario the revolutionary fervour of the national transformation project was getting increasingly diluted in favour of Neoliberal concessions. This conservative core led a charge to make minimal political demands as key demands of transition while abandoning the long-term systematic and structural objectives that would temper with the organisation and logic of the

system as a whole. This political tendency came to be characterised as the 1996 class project; this project can be historically credited for placing our national political economy on a more conservative path.

While deindustrialisation and other objective economic weaknesses of the economy may have preceded the 1996 class project, it is a historical fact the 1996 class project systematically ushered an era of neoliberalism which deepened the crisis of unemployment and jobless growth, further deindustrialisation, and a dawn of a new form of a reactionary welfare state in line with liberal ideology. The class configuration in the post 96 era was, and continues to conform to the fundamentals of the liberal political economy with several anomalies and distortions.

3.2.3 Declining Private Industry Trade Union; Intra Working Class Dynamics

The NDR and its radical posture developed on the back of a conscious, organised and radical working class whose revolutionary posture served to heighten the whole of the struggle for national liberation and national transformation. As the motive forces of the National Democratic Revolution these working class forces have always served as the core revolutionary constituency whose reliability guaranteed the sustainability of the transformation project. The hegemonic position of the working class forces has always ensured that the political programme of national transformation and the corresponding national vision is rooted on the demands and the needs of the majority of the oppressed thereby sustaining not only its separate class interests and unity but also constituting an objective basis for a wider national unity required for a progressive future. This hegemony of the working class forces and other popular forces meant that the national democratic revolution maintained a majoritarian character and a progressive policy content.

However the historic rise liberal sympathy as part of outlook and the politics of the leading organisation of the democratic forces meant beginning of conservative politics and suppression of politics of popular power and its replacement by liberal concessions. The

wholesale privatisation of the key state enterprises at the point of transition begun the historic process of dismantling of the core constituency of the working class forces. The privatisation of key state entities and the concurrent structural reform of the economy meant that the productive sectors of the economy went into private corporations who were neither willing nor expected to avail their resources through investments to the reconstruction and development project. The RDP project was thus unsustainably resourced despite its obvious requirements.

The whole liberal trajectory limited any idea of meaningful participation of the state in the shaping of the post 94 economic landscape and therefore the historic objective to transform the economy.

The watering down of the industrial capacity of the country meant the numerical reduction of the industrial working class and the reversal of its strategic influence meant the legitimisation of capitalist interests in national development. Various industries experienced a fundamental decline which was characterised by precarious work, retrenchments, downsizing and streamlining, pressure on the wages of workers and all related manifestations of crisis. This was true of the mining industry, steel and metal industry, and manufacturing sector more widely and several downstream industries related. The nation-wide general collapse of the manufacturing sector naturally was followed by a rise of unemployment and the decimation of the proletariat as we knew it.

As a reflection of this historic condition the South African industrial working class currently is fundamentally smaller by comparison, more fractured, less organised, organisationally weak and lacking in unity of purpose, politically and strategically incoherent, informal and vulnerable. The trade union organisation has faced more fundamental organisational challenges reflecting a splintered base and objective weaknesses of the class as a whole. This is most true of the industrial working class which has historically carried a more radical impetus by reason of its intimate familiarity with the daily exploitative actions of capital in the face of production.

The reduction of the private industry trade union means that the

public service unions have been historically propelled to the coal face of leadership and influence in the battles of the working class organisation. The formation of the working class now reflects, as a result, a dominant public sector union and a private industry union in decline. This fact is also reflected in the wider economy in that the state is now the biggest employer while private industry is the smaller employer; meaning the sphere of capital circulation carries more burden than the sphere of production. In a state that has a minimal role in the productive economy as our neoliberal state this state of affairs is the kind of irregularity that places the idea of long-term transformation of the economy in jeopardy.

While it is unusual and undesirable for the industrial proletariat to be overtaken in terms of numerical growth and influence by the government employees, there is historical evidence still that where class consciousness has been raised to the maximum the revolutionary capacity of the class as a whole should not be automatically diminished. While that is the case, it is in the interests of the totality of the progressive forces that the ranks of the industrial working class be replenished to fight against unemployment and broader national development goals. The numerical and strategic disjuncture between the industrial and public sector workers presents an unsustainable economic and political equation.

The working class is also constituted by the mass of the unemployed people that are located on the periphery of the economy. Among the unemployed people is the large and ever increasing informal sector entrepreneurial section composed of those who trade on subsistence basis. The army of the unemployed serves a fundamental capitalist purpose by its sheer existence; to be presented as “willing” competitors to the employed workers and thereby constituting moral and economic justification for the reduction of the wage of the actively employed workers. By the same logic the unemployed and other vulnerable sections of the working class are set in competition against one another using legalistic and social categories such as nationality, permanent status and temporary work status, other forms of discrimination existing and deployed as instruments to facilitate the economic race to the bottom.

The common fate of these sub strata in the displaced working class is the precariousness of their subsistence, the desperation of their economic condition and the instability of their social existence. It is when one considers the commonality yet differentiated relation of the different strata of the working class that one can see the unending cycle of crisis characterising the capitalist organisation in South Africa and the world in general. The strategy of our union is not only concerned with understanding the whole dynamic of those in the employ but seeks to build a cross-section struggle for the working class in the broad sense as opposed the narrow workerist approach.

The general state of the working class as reflected is that of a class declining in power, a class with increasingly uninviting future prospects, a class that is continuously splintering and lacking in organisational unity. The formation of SAFTU and the strategic rapture in COSATU reflects a class lacking in strategic coherence leaning more and more towards internal contradiction and mutual cannibalism rather than solidarity and building of common struggle. The precarious state of public service bargaining system reflects a public service union trade union sector that similarly is facing a medium term struggle to protect its very relevance in a neoliberal state and a long term struggle to assert the interests of its members. The strategic interests of the working class are, as a result, increasingly disadvantaged and the working class political leadership unable to chart a uniting and effective way forward for the class as a whole. This weakness of the working class leadership is true for the organised working class and true of the political party of the working class; the vanguard party of the working class, the SACP.

At a structural level the class is unable to transcend its internal weaknesses and imaginatively unprepared to build a new strategic consensus from among its ranks as to the nature, character and extent of political and organisational tasks to be fulfilled to secure its future and that of society. The vanguard Party as the political party of the working class stands historically charged with the task to unite and the working class and create conditions for the elevation of its historic struggle for a new society.

3.2.4 Middle Strata and National Political Leadership Core

The 1994 transition created new conditions that precipitated the coming into being of a new middle strata that had the responsibility to oversee the historic transition from minority rule to a democratic state. The middle strata constitutes the both an economic section playing a peripheral role in the monopoly dominated national economy and a political class overseeing the state and its day to day activities. The middle strata is constituted by the high-ranking leadership core of the progressive political activists, the progressive intellectuals, the national intellectual contingent more widely, the working class intelligentsia, the petit bourgeois sections of the black majority, the new professional class and the erstwhile professional class as well as the emergent tenderpreneur class arising out of the privatisation of state services. Among these sections of the middle strata there exists both the transformative potential and the reactionary potential depending on the general formation and expression of balance of power at a given historical time.

Moving towards the transition the dominant section in the middle strata was the alliance of the political leadership core of the progressive movement (ANC), the progressive intellectuals and the working class intelligentsia. As a matter of historical fact the working class intelligentsia and its leadership represented the revolutionary component of this class alliance, thereby commanding by its influence a more progressive path for the collective national political programme.

However the systematic ransacking of the working class ranks and its leadership core through ideological assimilation, co-option and political displacement increasingly weakened the hegemonic position of the working class. The weakening of the working class position of power is also expressed through a systematic ideological assault of the National Democratic Revolution whose results are represented by adaptation of classical neoliberal ideas into the mainstream politics of the progressive forces. The political forces at the centre of this trajectory is the petit bourgeois intellectual contingent and the conservative neoliberal political tendency in the leadership ranks of the ANC and the progressive political arena more

broadly. The neoliberal political and economic outlook over the last 25 years has taken decisive control of the overall agenda of national transformation. The middle class and the intelligentsia have been engulfed in a status quo promoting and status quo defending political orientation.

Therefore the weakening of the working class coincides with the erosion on the revolutionary leadership core in the wider national political space and the suffocation of the progressive intellectual tradition a combination of which results in the proliferation of the reactionary individualist politician influenced by careerist survivalist notions of power as opposed to the tradition of revolutionary service to the people. It is on the foundation of this individual constituting the middle strata in the post 94 political practice that the unproductive and consumptionist corrupt capitalist who has a parasitic relationship to the state evolved. This new breed of “capitalist” stands out because of its unique characteristic rooted mainly in the parasitic relationship it has systematically developed with the state institutions. The state contracts issued out through a tender system as part of liberalisation of functions of the state have effectively become a perfect ecosystem to facilitate consumption by this new breed of aspirant capitalist while corruption and looting of state resources is the fuel that propels its perpetuation to the detriment of the collective interests of the underclasses and society as a whole. The SACP has coined the term ‘tenderpreneur’ to characterise this particular social and economic phenomenon.

In the classical Marxist vocabulary this tendency can be characterised as a particular or unique form of the petit bourgeois category influenced by the historic South African situation at this present historic moment. The tenderpreneur phenomenon has the obvious impact on the whole orientation of the middle strata from a social point of view as well as ideological point of view. With that fact considered, the middle strata has generally pulled to the centre right of the political spectrum with no innovation other than reciting of the dominant liberal perspectives. The national political leadership core leading the state in its implementation of the national transformation project and carrying out of its programme over society has also been objectively placed on a conservative path.

This therefore the formation of the middle strata and the political class effectively favours the political economy of the status quo.

This is worsened by the fact that the progressive components of the middle strata, both the politicians in power and their intellectual base, have been facing extreme pressure from the conservative sections of the opponents and facing threats of their own extinction given that the education system produces no new intellectual crop. The new intellectual is produced to reason for the system and master it than to critique its essence and formation at a structural level. The progressive intelligentsia that is depleting with a weakened working class intelligentsia places the views of the left and the left agenda in great peril.

3.2.5 The Woman's Liberation Question and Class Formation

All worthy revolutions acknowledge that no freedom can be achieved when freedom from gender oppression has not been achieved. The struggle for liberation of the oppressed in society contains within it the struggle for the liberation of women from racial, class and gender oppression. The union's orientation on the question of woman's liberation perceives the gender question as interrelated with the rest of the other contradictions that the revolutionary effort seeks to resolve. To that end the woman emancipation question permeates all the different sections of society indiscriminately. Among the propertied class there is specific gender dynamics at play in the same way among the deprived classes there exists peculiar social circumstances for the woman. Being part of the whole historical struggle for social progress from oppression to freedom, the struggle for gender against reflects the rest of the other contradictions whether they be national contradictions or class contradictions.

The solidarity among women in struggle against patriarchal power relations however is concurrently imprinted with differences emanating from their class, race or nationality. While all women generally occupy a position of subjugation the male gender, a rich white woman's experience of gender oppression is incomparable to that of a black working class woman and therefore they cannot be imbued by the same urgency for change and orientation towards

revolutionary ends. Therefore on the basis of material class position the working class woman seeks a far reaching change in gender relations than the bourgeois woman does. Despite the similarity of gender the difference of perspective and orientation based on race and class positions shapes the world view of women involved differently and therefore their conceptions of alliances in their struggles will thus be different. Therefore the most oppressed black and working woman is the motive force for the thoroughgoing transformation of gender relations as power relations and a natural ally of the totality of popular forces in struggle for total liberation.

The liberal feminist narrative influencing the contemporary gender perspective strips the struggle for gender emancipation of its foundational class content favouring instead superficial positions of identity and false solidarity discounting the relation of the gender question to other constituting elements of liberation. The formation of the women's movement reflects the class composition of society and the current weakness of the working class women's movement reflects the position of the working class as a whole.

3.2.6 Bourgeoisie and its Dominant Position

Big capital occupies a dominant position in the national political economy and continues to consolidate its dominant position over the whole of the economy. The economic instruments it the control of this class determine the resource allocation to the rest of the sectors of the economy including the downstream sectors of the main monopolies that this particular class controls. The organising logic of the capitalist class is the building and continuous consolidation of monopolies in several sectors of the economy thereby securing an unquestioned market control in service of their own interests. The key strategy that guarantees the continued dominance of monopoly capital is the general financialisation of the whole market; this to ensure that the few economic players have access and benefit from new ventures and investment opportunities in the economy do so in manner that helps their position.

Financial sector, real estate sector and retail sectors are the dominant sectors in the South African economy. The fact that

these sectors dominate the economy explains the reason why on the whole the economy has less and less industrial potential required for creating jobs. Real estate, retail and finance are blood relatives and their interests are mutually reinforcing. This trend of the dominance of the finance, retail and real estate is also an international trend of monopoly capitalism in this historical epoch. The domination of the monopoly capital does not only arise out of absolute control of the productive structures of the key sectors, but it arises out of the dominant ideological and political position of the bourgeoisie over power structures of society and the state in particular. Hegemonic position of the capitalist class has both local and international influences given the previously mentioned South Africa's position in the international political economy division of labour. The most definitive feature of the national bourgeois is its increasing monopolisation and internationalisation.

3.2.7 NDR, Class Alliance and National Balance of Forces

The national balance of forces reflects the correlation of forces and balance of power among the key political and economic forces that define the political terrain at a given time in history. The balance of power determines the strategic questions related to the trajectory of national development and national transformation in the context of a society in transition. In the context of our National Democratic Revolution the balance of forces answers the question of the direction and the tempo of our struggle. Our analysis is based on understanding how class formation presents at a given time and how the strength of each of the component classes influences the big picture. To that end the balance of forces for us is not mere contemporary political relation between political parties but a deeper relation explaining how the contemporary politics explain the underlying class power and struggles; how social classes impose their power or react to power imposition by another class.

Applied to the ongoing national struggle that is our NDR, an evaluation of the balance of forces should reflect whether the objectives of the NDR to create a non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous and united South Africa are being achieved. To answer the question as to the position of the popular classes in national democratic revolution, whether

the struggle develops in a manner and direction favourable to their interests. For purposes of our SPF as the union our continuous evaluation of the national and international balance of forces should reflect whether our activities and programmes are leading us to an outcome acquiescent to an idea of a united working class effectively claiming a hegemonic position in the ongoing national transformation project.

The current correlation of class forces in our NDR reflects a struggle at a historic strategic impasse. The class alliance that is leading the national transformation project has proven unable to untangle the contradictions and tensions that have come to stall the progress of our revolution. The historic impasse of our struggle reflects a combination of both the objective and subjective weaknesses of the revolutionary class and its class organisations. The objective weaknesses have to do with the historically unresolved social and structural challenges that hamper national development and progress contemplated by the NDR. These objective challenges have to do with the persisting racial patterns of development that present a tragedy of continued underdevelopment of the African majority and the working class in particular. The objective weaknesses also have to do with an untransformed structure of the national economy that reproduces inequality which is in conflict with the objectives of social justice espoused by the NDR. The coexistence of great wealth, wealth accumulation and consumption in a country characterised, at the same time, by dispossession and massive poverty reflects this objective state of crisis; an economic and social crisis of historic significance. An NDR engulfed by these systematic and historical limitations and expressions of crisis reaches a point of degeneration where progress is no longer conceivable unless a comprehensive rethink of strategy and tactics occurs.

The subjective conditions have to do with the political agency required to contemplate and carry out the correct political strategy to resolve the objective limitations and crisis. The subjective have to do with the state of the class forces engaged in struggle and their state of preparation for the struggle. The preparation includes the levels of consciousness and awareness as to the nature of the challenges they seek to resolve; the individual and collective

ability to understand and carry out the tasks of the revolution. The existence of the minimum agreement among the social and political forces as to the nature of the tasks involved and the objectives that are intended as outcome is key; the representation of the highest ideals of the revolution. The subjective also has to do with the leadership of that revolution as well as functionality, coherence and unity of purpose of the organisations body.

The South African struggle faces great challenges on the subjective part of the struggle. The organisation has been facing real challenges related to internal divisions, factionalism and decline of quality of leadership. As result of this weakness the rise of individualism has replaced the thoroughgoing collective perspective that has been the leadership practice among the progressive forces. The organising practice in the ranks of the progressive forces at large has drastically declined giving rise to political careerism that is associated with the petit bourgeoisie politics and the tenderpreneur orientation. These challenges thus have resulted in an inward looking leadership core that is less interested on the resolution of the larger objective contradictions that face society at large but rather on individual survival and career sustaining actions. The working class leadership too has suffered from the challenges of leadership facing the wider community of the progressive political forces. The long-term corrosion of quality leadership based on a common vision of the NDR as a uniting programme among the progressive forces has created an overarching crisis of lack of cohesion and strategic coordination of the struggle and the national development project.

On the basis of the stated objective and subjective weaknesses, our NDR can no longer be characterised as progressing in the correct direction or with the appropriate tempo; the direction and pace required for its objectives to be attained. On the contrary, and as earlier stated, the NDR is currently characterised as one that is at a strategic historic impasse. The class alliance that between the working class movement and the multiclass organisation leading the NDR characterised by disorganisation, internal contradiction and strategic discord. The strategic discord emanates from the lack of consensus on the priorities of the NDR in the current phase. The lack of consensus is not merely a lack of agreement between individual

leaders but it is rather a divergence of class interests as reflected by policy choices that the ANC makes through its government manifesting in political formulation in the alliance structures. The lack of consensus also reflects how the neoliberal trajectory driven by the political leadership of the ANC through the state has failed to provide the results that satisfy the objectives of the NDR with particular reference to the objectives of economic transformation and building of a developmental state.

The combination of these factors reflect a dominance of the interests of those who defend the political and economic status quo as the primary feature of the current balance of forces. The alliance find itself conforming to this compact of power dynamic.

3.2.8 Socialism; Opportunities and Threats

The struggle for socialism is related to the medium term programme to build a national democratic revolution. A successful NDR creates the necessary conditions for a seamless transition to laying the basis for a socialist society. Therefore the struggle to defend the revolutionary character of the NDR is the process to build necessary conditions for socialism. In light of that reasoning the current state of the working class and the working class organisation is relevant as a key ingredient in imagining the process towards socialism. The threats to the socialist struggle are internal to the working class and external to the working class; they are also political and strategic as well as organisational and subjective.

The objective threats to socialism include the ideological dominance of the bourgeois ideology over society and the working class in particular as permeating through several arms of its power structure that exist to legitimise its control over society. The dominance is not only through the primary instruments of communication but in the general notions of popular democracy in the liberal ideological fold. The general political and economic hegemonic position of the bourgeoisie is the main threat to the NDR and therefore by implication to the socialist struggle. This dominant position of the ruling class is heightened by the corresponding weakness of the rest of the popular classes historically positioned to counter this said capitalist hegemony.

The primary subjective threat to socialism is the state of the working class in general. The working class is fractured and divided which means it is not immediately prepared for the decisive battle to change history and bring socialism. The NDR pursuing class alliance with the ANC has placed the working class leadership in a position of weakness given that the NDR is necessary for the struggle for socialism.

The opportunities for socialism lie in the fact that capitalism is crisis ridden and the new revolutionary spirit of the underclasses has the necessary revolutionary impetus to change society. Despite its momentary weaknesses, the South African working class remains relatively impressively organised to serve as the primary constituency for the socialist struggle. The youthful composition of the working class ranks reflects positively for the long-term struggle of socialism. The organised working class in particular hold a decisive position, under the strategic leadership of the SACP, to sustain the long term struggle for a new society.

SECTION 4: ON OUR SOCIO-ECONOMIC PILLAR

1.1 Understanding Our Socio-economic Pillar

- The socioeconomic pillar pivots the union beyond the workplace as it deals with issues that are located and arise from the colonial structure of the economic base of our society. Therefore, it constitute another site of our struggle, which is mutually reinforcing with our political and workplace sites of struggle. In this regard, we seek to advance transformatory economic and social policies and to drive the related campaigns that are geared at addressing the three underlying and intersecting contradictions of our society, i.e. class, race and gender contradictions. The state is a key component of the superstructure of the economic base and it undertakes the function of allocating and redistributing resources emanating from the economic base in society. In this regard, it can either reproduce or even reinforce the prevailing social relations and structure of the economy or it can undertake an interventionist

role of forging transformation, hence the state itself is an integral part of our socioeconomic pillar. The overarching task of transforming and building working class hegemony in the state would enhance the capacity to forge a new path of radical transformation of the economic base, so that at least in the short to medium-term the crisis levels of unemployment, poverty and inequalities that afflict the working class and rural poor are address.

- We seek to advance transformatory economic and social policies and to wage such campaigns not in isolation but by forging unity with progressive workers across sectors and the working class in the broader society. Therefore, our economic and social policies and campaigns are aligned to those of COSATU and SACP and these are the leading working class organs in this front. However, as a class-oriented union our socioeconomic pillar seeks to place us in the forefront of advancing such transformatory policies and campaigns in the domains that are within our organising scope and these include the state, healthcare, social security and post-schooling education, whilst at the same time contributing in overarching economic and social policies and campaigns advanced and driven by COSATU and SACP.
- The COVID-19 epidemic put into sharp relief the poor state of the South African healthcare system, exposing poor management of the institutions and endemic corruption. It also exposed the embedded vast inequalities between the private and public healthcare system in terms of clinical personnel and infrastructure. Together with the fact that 84% of the population are condemned to the crisis-ridden public healthcare service has made the National Health Insurance (NHI) all the more urgent, as its implementation it is already well behind its 14 years schedule, having started in 2012.
- The Post-Schooling Education system is woefully inadequate in terms of its quality of provision, size and shape amidst crisis level of the high proportion of the youth that is out of the education system and out of work. As well as the

urgent need for its expansion, the PSET system must also be inverted so that its largest component must be in technical and vocational education and training to address the national goals of industrialisation and to address the mismatch between size and quality of the skills required and the degrees and certificates. Therefore, the engineering skills revolution is key in building the developmental state and transforming the structure of the economy to private decent jobs as the median wages of workers with a degree are more than six times as large as those of workers without a matric qualification. This against a background of a society whereby only a third of adults have secondary schooling as their highest level of education attainment and only 6 percent of adults have a degree, which makes South Africa to compare unfavourably with its peer middle-income countries.

4.2 Transforming the Neoliberal State and Building the Developmental State

4.2.1 Overview

- The 1994 democratic-breakthrough, the 1995 local government elections and the 1996 adoption of a democratic constitution together marked a relatively peaceful transitional process of the demise of the oppressive Apartheid state (including its white state-apparatus and peripheral “homelands” and “black local authorities”), the transfer of political power to the majority of our people and ushered in a unitary democratic state, reconstituted as a central government, nine provincial administrations and 278 municipalities.
- However, today the post-Apartheid state is a product of a quarter century of uninterrupted Neoliberal reforms, both in terms of the socioeconomic policies that it has driven and in the restructuring of the state apparatus. It has maintained and entrenched a practice that keeps the South African Reserve Bank and Treasury, which are key institutions driving macroeconomic policies, aloof and accountable to popular

democratic control. It undertook the privatisation of strategic assets and commodified the basic municipal services, which are provided with subsidies that amount next nothing to the poor. It is characterised by fragmentation through the corporatisation of its enterprises, agencification of key departmental functions and outsourcing of numerous of its operations. This entrenched Neoliberal orientation of the post-Apartheid state has further eroded discipline, coordination and capacity as the state increasingly became dependent on the private sector both in terms of policy formulation and implementation. This in turn has engendered a deep-seated culture of corruption, unaccountability and detachment from the electorate.

- The sixth democratic dispensation has now set out an economic strategy that seek to deepen Neoliberal reforms, which is called the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). At the heart of this plan is a rolling programme of crushing austerity measures lasting up to 2024, imposing significant budgetary cuts on vital services for the working class and rural poor, including transport subsidies, housing, social grants. The flagship of this austerity programme is the R160 billion cut in the salaries of the public service workers, through the imposing of rolling wage freezes. As part of this Neoliberal offensive, the sixth democratic dispensation has taken a posture of undermining collective bargaining and entrenching casualisation by perpetuating fix-term contracts, stipends as well shutting down public service vacancies. Whilst on the other hand, in the interests of capital it has cut corporate taxes, deregulated electricity generation for the private ownership, given up public control of the national airline and it is embarking on measures to deregulate the ports with a view to allow for privatisation and concessioning.

4.2.2 Building the Developmental State

- At the 8th National Congress, we have said that: “whilst, in itself the developmental state would remain within the bounds of a capitalist economic system, the working class must campaign for a ‘progressive developmental state’ based on the demands and claims of the Freedom Charter as a means of deepening

of the NDR and advancing the struggle for socialism”. In other words, our medium-term strategic perspective is the realisations of the demands and ideals of the Freedom Charter, as part of our overarching struggle for socialism in both the immediate and long terms. Thus, some of these demands are realisable in the short to medium-term whilst others may be fully realised in the transition to socialism but we call for the Progressive Developmental State to set out a radical orientation of the state and to mark its distinction from the reactionary developmental states that existed in the 20th century.

- The following are some of the key features of our perspective of progressive developmental state:
 - a) A state apparatus characterised systematic central planning for government action around economic growth and socioeconomic development enhancing medium-term plan. Ensuring that all tiers of government, State Owned Companies and agencies contribute in the areas of their focus on the identified strategic objective and outcomes to address unemployment, poverty, gender and spatial inequalities.
 - b) Developing a dedicated programme to build capacity of the public sector personnel through training on technical occupations to ensure that the state has the capability to insource and execute policy development and implementation, especially at the local level. Similarly, a rational creation of a single-public service across all the three tiers of government, to ensure that departmental personnel structures and skills requirements are determined by the national policy and service delivery imperatives rather than by abstract fiscal ratios.
 - c) A macroeconomic policy framework that makes a break with the current Neoliberal macroeconomic policies. Both the fiscal and monetary policies must ensure increased spending to address the basic needs and eliminate backlogs in the provision of municipal services such as housing, potable water, sanitation, electricity, streetlights, paved roads as well as universal broadband service. These public services must be provided in good quality and at liveable minimum subsidies that are regularly adjusted to the cost of living.

- d) An extensive infrastructure programme to facilitate and enhance local economic development and socioeconomic transformation in the townships and rural areas to transform Apartheid geographies, leveraging a public works programme for job-creation in building schools, healthcare centres, schools and other social recreation and amenities closer to where people live.
- e) An active industrial strategy, which must include state-led supply-side and demand-side interventions to facilitate the beneficiation of strategic mineral resources and development of new green economic sectors; public ownership and control of key industries in strategic sectors; support for collective forms of ownership such as cooperatives, large-scale expropriation and broad-based redistribution of arable land to ensure sustainable livelihoods, food security and environmental sustainability.
- f) Social and labour-market policies to achieve a comprehensive social security system, including basic income grant and social wage, decent jobs and environmental sustainability.
- g) A strong participatory democracy - including the active participation of working class communities and organised mass formations in the formulation and implementation of policies at different scales and levels of governance, decision-making and the workplace.
- h) An anti-imperialist stance - asserting the country's sovereignty and national self-determination on all policy matters including socioeconomic and a foreign policies based on solidarity, mutual benefit, peace and friendship among the peoples of the world.

4.3 Transformation of the Healthcare System

4.3.1 National Health Insurance

- The South African healthcare system is a microcosm of the deep-seated inequalities characterising our society. It is divided into two vastly unequal tiers, the public and private sectors. Whilst South Africa is already spending a huge share of its national income on healthcare, at around 9%, which is well above the 5% of GDP recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the prevailing maldistribution of these resources between the

public and private healthcare sectors reinforces the existing racialised, gendered and class inequalities. For instance, about 45% of this total spending on healthcare takes place in the private sector for the benefit of only 16% of the population that are members of the medical aid schemes. Whereas, the remaining portion is spent on 84% of the population in the public sector and those who are members of the medical aid scheme enjoy tax subsidies whereas those who are not and have to seek medical care out-of-pocket are forced to pay VAT whenever they consult with private practitioners or purchase medicines in pharmacies. Similar maldistributions are reflected in the healthcare personnel despite the fact that by far the majority of them are training in the public sector, be it terms of the ratios between patients and nurses, doctors and specialists.

- In the short to medium-term, the implementation of the National Health Insurance (NHI) is our overarching strategic objective for the transformation of the healthcare system in the country. However, the NHI is only a step forward in our long-term struggle towards complete decommodification of healthcare - to disconnect healthcare provision from the profit-motive and thereby building a socialised healthcare system in the context of a revolutionary socialist society. Therefore, NHI constitutes our flagship campaign in healthcare which also interconnects with the need for improvements in infrastructure, training of the clinicians and the integration of the Community Healthcare Workers into the public service. The implementation process of the NHI was envisaged by government to span about 14 years, from 2012 to 2016. However, there have been numerous challenges and obstacles that have significantly delayed implementation (including austerity), in fact even the enabling legislation, the NHI Bill is still yet to be passed by Parliament. Therefore, proper engagements must take place with organised labour on the implications of the provision of this legislation.
- Arising out of the NHI legislation, are the task to ensure that the administration of the NHI Fund is by the public sector and its board is adequately representative of the relevant stakeholders, including healthcare workers. Similarly, the devolution of

functional powers from provincial health departments to the NHI Fund and District Health Office but not displace healthcare workers out of the public service dispensation.

4.3.2 National Core Standards

- Whilst technically the NHI is a financing system designed to pool all healthcare funds in order to ensure access to quality and affordable health services to all irrespective of their health needs or income, there are a range of systemic fault-lines in healthcare that have to be address for the success and sustainability of the NHI. These include dysfunctional district health system, incompetent and indifferent management of institutions, abuse of patients and healthcare workers by supervisors, lack of community-based and accountable hospital boards, shortages in medicines, dysfunctional laundries, poor and outsourced security, cleaning and catering services, etc.
- We support the implementation of the government's National Core Standards, which were developed as part of quality assurance standards - against which the quality of service delivery by healthcare institutions can be assessed by the Office of Health Standards and Compliance. These standards are two-fold. The first three domains pertain to Patient Rights, Safety, Clinical Governance and Care, and Clinical Support Services. These domains deal with the core mandate of the healthcare system in ensuring the delivery of quality health care to the patients or citizens take place. The other four domains, are Public Health, Leadership and Corporate Governance, Operational Management and Facilities & Infrastructure and these relate to the responsibilities of the management of institutions and departments. They have powers and obligations guaranteeing that there is a sound support system for the fulfilment of the core mandate at the point of service in every institution.
- To ensure successful implementation of the NHI, we shall monitor and campaign for the implementation of the National Core Standards. In addition, our campaigns for transformation in this regard shall focus on:

- a) Occupational Health and Safety: we shall ensure that the National Department of Health establishes a fully-fledged Directorate of Health and Safety at the national level, with provincial offices to ensure that all healthcare institutions comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations. Our campaign shall include the establishment of OHS Committees, monitoring and reporting of malpractices and non-compliance to the Department of Labour and Employment for accountability and consequences.
- b) Campaign to ensure that the Office of Health Standards and Compliance is fully established and its reports on the state of healthcare service have consequences for managers of healthcare institutions and District Health Officers.

4.4 Transformation of the Post-Schooling Education System

4.4.1 Overview

The Post-Schooling Education and Training (PSET) system in South Africa comprises five key sectors with different areas of specialisation, i.e. the public and private universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, Community Education and Training (CET) colleges, private colleges, and Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). Currently, there are about 503 registered and established PSET institutions, comprising 26 public universities, 131 registered private universities, 50 TVET colleges, 287 registered private colleges and nine CET colleges and 21 SETAs. The DHET defines its role as one of “steering” the PSET system, which involves conducting system planning (including planning for skills needs and enrolments), developing and implementing policies, providing core funding for a range of public institutions, providing regulation and monitoring mechanisms for oversight, and oversight on the governance and management of institutions. Thus, with regard to our strategic perspective of driving transformation in the PSET system, our strategic target for influence and campaigns at the national level is the DHET whilst at the branch level it is the governance and management bodies of these institutions.

Since the adoption of the White Paper for the Post-Schooling Education in 2014, in fact since the fourth democratic dispensation beginning in 2009, there have been some noticeable progress in the transformation of the PSET system. Today, African students comprise over 80% of total student enrolment at public universities and enrolment at TVET has seen phenomenal growth from 2010 to 2019. However, improvements in access both in terms the racial and gender demographic profiles have been countervailed by the onset of the Neoliberal phenomenon called corporatisation at the institutional level. Corporatisation is the drive to restructure public institutions in a manner that mimics private enterprises and this is manifested in the outsourcing of some operational and service delivery functions as well as the casualisation of employment. It also includes the creation of executive management and pay structures that resemble private corporate entities. Corporatisation is particularly prevalent in historically white institutions, which use their statutory autonomy to engineer exclusions of the working class through the steep annual hiking of fees to replace the Apartheid racial exclusion. Hence, the 2015-2017 student' uprising, which also involved workers, sharply raised the twin issues of the fees and outsourcing. Sections of the university employees bear the brunt of this process of corporatisation as increasingly university management imposed fixed-term contracts on academics, casualisation and outsourcing of sections of the administration and general staff. On the other hand, governance structures such as councils and senates remain heavily weighted in favour of the elite and have been using the statutory provisions to marginalise the Transformation Forums at the institutional level.

Despite the positive change in the demographic profile in the PSET system, especially in the student population, the move towards systemic integration has stagnated as the historical fragmentations and unevenness in the quality of education provision between components of the PSET system and within subsectors remain. The following are some of the current key features and trends representing a summation of the present reality in the PSET system:

- With regard to the expansion of access the PSET system has made some progress, except for the CET sector. Enrolment in public universities actually doubled in size since 1994, increasing from

about half a million to over a million students in 2019. Notably, this growth in the student population accelerated in the fields of Science, Engineering and Technology (SET). Enrolment in TVET increased by about 53% from 1999 to 673 490 in 2019, whereas enrolment in the CETs was only about 171 409 in 2019, way off the target of 1 million by 2030.

- In terms of success and efficiency, graduation in public universities grew by 45% from 2010 to about 221 942 graduates in 2019 and the majority (29.1%) of graduates in 2019 were in SET. However, between 2013 and 2018, the total completion rate in the TVET sector across N3, N6 and NC(V) Level 4 programmes increased by 38.6% and notably with a relatively higher increase for N6, from 35.6 to 87.1%. Whilst completion in CET sector for the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC): ABET Level 4, remained below 50% for the period 2010-2017 and only reaching 77.2% in 2019.
- In terms of the quality of provision, in particular the upgrading of the lecturing staff in universities, the share of black lecturing and research staff with PhDs grew from 19.4% in 2010 to 30.1% in 2017, while that of the whites declined from 67.4 to 52.8% over the same period. However, black academics still make up the majority of academic staff at all qualification levels below PhD. In the CET the student-to-lecturer ratio fluctuated between 17 and 21 between 2010 and 2019. The CETs that are located in the big urban centres tend to have relatively high student-to-lecturer ratios compared to those with a lower urban population.
- In terms of equity and transformation, the South Africa's Gender Parity Index in the PSET system scores very high even by international measurement, whereby the Gross Enrolment Ratio of women was already at 1.4 in 2014, which means that there are more women enrolled in universities than men by about 40% and this is even more so in the cohort of the Coloured students, already registering about 1.75 in 2016. Women are in majority in all major fields of study except in SET, where in 2019 they made up 47.8% of the total enrolment. In 2010, Africans

in public universities were about 28.6% of all academic staff, and this proportion had increased to 41.3% by 2018, while the white share had declined from 55.9 to 41.2%. With regard to the TVETs, the African population participation grew from 3.3% in 2010 to 8.8% in 2016. On the other hand, in terms of gender the Gross Enrolment Ratio by 2016 had increased to 7% whilst for females it was 9%, from 4% and 3.5% respectively in 2010. Women students have consistently outnumbered men in the CET subsector, consistently at around two-thirds and African were about 93% of the student population in 2019.

4.4.2 Campaign for PSET Transformation

We support the broad thrust of the strategic objectives outlined in the White Paper for Post-Schooling Education and its overarching framework of building an expanded, integrated and effective PSET system. Our programme and campaign for the transformation of the PSET system provides a relevant platform for critical engagement with government's measures to realise the strategic objectives of the White Paper. Our approach is inspired by the Freedom Charter, which states that: "Higher education and technical training shall be open to all by means of state allowance and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit." Hence, expanded access and demographic representation have been the primary demands in campaigns for transformation and in this regard the question of financial exclusions featured at the heart of these struggles. Expanded access and demographic representation remain key transformative objectives. However, in the medium-term these objectives must be pursued side-by-side with the transformative objective of quality improvements in the PSET system. Thus, the inputs and outcomes of the PSET system, (including funding, operations, infrastructure, governance, management, practicals, graduation and certification) also become central in our transformation campaign. Therefore, the following are the medium-term strategic tasks of our transformation campaign in the PSET system:

4.4.3 Fighting Austerity

At the centre of the sixth democratic dispensation's economic

strategy, ERRP, is an austerity programme intended to last up to the end of its tenure in 2024. This means that government is embarking on a widespread budgetary cuts, which are even targeted on what are supposed to be national priorities such as the PSET system. Thus, about R24.6 billion would be cut from the allocations to the PSET over this period. This means that the PSET budget going to be kept below the rising costs, with allocations to university education being kept at 2%, TVETs below 1% and CETs at 3%. The implication of these cuts is that both the TVET and CET sectors are definitely going to fail to meet the national objective of 2.5 million and 1 million enrolments by 2030, thus the strategic objective of using the technical and vocational training as the driver of the skills revolution and creation of decent jobs is definitely also to dismally fail. Similarly, to the extent that the salaries of the workers across the PSET system are derived from these allocations, there is going to be an attempt to freeze them by institutional authorities. Therefore, all the features of our project of the transformation of the PSET system are definitely going to be derailed by the government's austerity programme, be it expansion of enrolment, infrastructure, lecturing staff, insourcing and quality improvement. Hence, resistance and the fight against austerity must be at the heart of our medium-term strategic framework, calling for:

- Adequate funding to cover the operations of institutions. This must include insourcing, permanent employment and increasing lecturing staff and related administration and general staff.
- Adequate funding to cover maintenance and infrastructure, including students' accommodation, WIFI access and online learning materials, to allow for the sustainable expansion of access.
- Adequate bursaries, covering tuition, accommodation and a living allowance, for the working class students.
- Subsidised funding covering tuition, accommodation and a living allowance, for the so-called missing-middle students. Since the introduction of the new bursary scheme under the

National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) in 2018, this matter has not been dealt and the DHET is exploring creating a loan scheme through the private finance institutions.

- Call for the revision of the Fee Regulation Framework to ensure that there is a move towards parity in the fees structures across universities and similar degrees and that annual fee increases are limited to the actual cost of education in the sector.

4.4.4 Quality Improvement

- Call for a dedicated and funded programme to address the challenges arising from the parallel provision of Nated and NC(V) curriculum. The DHET is running the University Capacity Development Programme, which provides support for curriculum, student and staff development yet such a programme is desperately needed in TVET and CET sectors. This programme must also address the high drop-out rate in the NC(V) programme and across the TVET sector in general.
- Currently only 50% of university academic staff have PhD qualifications, against the national goal of 75% PhD by 2030. We call for adequate funding and the creation of international bilateral partnership to rapidly increase graduates towards the realisation of this national objective. This must be accompanied by initiatives to increase the pipeline of the academic staff, especially black and female academics to improve the current and deteriorating student and staff ratios. Therefore the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) was be expanded.
- Call for a DHET-led and coordinate programme to ensure in-built articulation across the PSET system, from CET, TVETs to university level and to eliminate the current dead-end curriculums in CET and TVETs and to create pathways for artisan trades, apprenticeships for further education and qualifications.
- DHET must implement the open education resources initiative as set out in the White Paper, to endure educational resources

are openly available for use by institutions, educators and students, without an accompanying need to pay royalties or licence fees.

- Call for a nationally coordinated programme of building partnerships with key business sectors linked to the vocational certificates to facilitate work-integrated learning, apprenticeships, job-placement and responsiveness of the TVET curriculum of the labour market developments.
- All the SETAs in the domains of their occupational specialisation must set medium-term and long-term targets of building partnerships with TVETs and CETs to support further training of teachers and lectures, both in terms of improvement in qualifications and work-integrated learning.
- Occupationally oriented courses in TVETs and CETs must be directly linked with the Expanded Public Works Programme Community Works Programmes to develop work-integrated learning and to create jobs. The Department of Public Enterprise must introduce a mandatory requirement in the annual performance plans of the State Owned Enterprises and the same must be applicable to national departments such on projects such as water, sanitation, roads, education, health and public works.
- A curriculum for the training of Community Health Workers must be created supported through the HWSETA and PSETA to standardise skills and introduce theoretical knowledge in the CET sector to ensure a sustainable pipeline of CHWs.
- The DHET must make mandatory requirement of all universities to practicalise the language policy and fund the development of the indigenous languages.

4.4.5 Expansion of Access

- In the CET sector the national goal is the expansion of the student population to about one million by 2030. As of 2019

there were only 172 142 students in the sector, which means that enrolment in CETs is about 481% off the target. Enrolment projections in CETs are held constant at under 1% up to 2025. To realise this national goal, the CET sector must on average grow enrolment by 43,7% per year up to 2030. This means that there must significant investment in the infrastructure, students and lecturing staff expansion.

- In the TVET sector, the national goal is the expansion of the student population to about 2.5 million by 2030. As of 2019 there are about 673 490 students, which means that enrolment in TVETs is about 271% off the target. Enrolment projections in TVETs are held constant at under 1% up to 2025. To realise this national goal, the TVET sector must on average grow enrolment by 25% per year up to 2030. Similarly, the current target of producing 30 000 artisans a year by 2030 is inadequate and must be reviewed in proportion to the expansion of the TVET sector.
- In the university sector, the national goal is the expansion of the student population to about 1.6 million by 2030. As of 2019 enrolment was about 1 283 890 students, which is about 25% off target. At the currently projected rate of about 5%, the sector is likely to achieve its national goal of 1.6 million enrolment by 2030. However, the White Paper set a participation rate target in the sector of about 25%, which is already below that of some peer middle-income countries. We call for the increase of the participation rate target to 30% led by public universities in favour of expansion in Science, Engineering and Technology studies and using this to consolidate the three new and two more universities to be built by 2025.
- The realisation of these enrolment expansions calls for expanded training of university academics and TVET lectures, especially in science, and technology and as well as in the programmes of the world of work.
- The infrastructure build programme to expand the TVET and CET sectors, upgrade the historically black universities, to

expand the new universities and build the two new universities, including students' demand for accommodation must be appropriately funded to realise the objective of expanding access.

4.4.6 Strengthening Governance and Management

- Fight against the outsourcing of functions and operations and building of capacity for insourcing, especially regarding catering, security, maintenance and gardening across the PSET system.
- Fight against fixed-term contracts and casualisation, ensuring parity in pay, benefits and other conditions of work, especially for academics, administration and lecturing staff across the PSET system.
- Call the expeditious creation of uniform examination and the eradication of the certification backlogs in the TVET sector.
- Call for the establishment a stake-holder based anti-corruption forum in the PSET system located at the Presidency, just as in the health sector.
- Call for the establishment of the fully-fledged South African Institute for Vocational and Continuing Education and Training (SAIVCET) , which in line with the White Paper, amongst others would be mandated to:
 - a) Develop innovative curricula for TVET and CET
 - b) Upgrading the technical knowledge and pedagogical skills of existing staff in TVET and CET
 - c) Promote the professionalisation of lecturers, instructors and trainers
 - d) Provide a forum for experts to develop materials for TVET and CET programmes;
 - e) Advise the Minister on vocational and continuing education;
 - f) Initiate research on the TVET and CET
 - g) Promote dialogue, coordination and linkages between TVET

and CET, and between these institutions and universities, SETAs, employers and workers, in order to enhance coherence and articulation;

- h) Undertake monitoring and evaluation of the TVET and CET sectors.

SECTION 5: ORGANISATIONAL PILLAR

5.1 Preface

A trade union is the prime mass organisation of the working class which should fulfil its purpose by being as broad as possible in order to fight to maintain its legal status along unity on an industrial basis all workers at whatever level of political consciousness in order to understand the elementary need to come together to defend and advance their economic conditions.

It is now 24 years since the Strategic Policy Framework of the national union was adopted which has been measured by the implementation of its ten year plan adopted in 1998. Indeed, efforts and attempts to adopt the renewed SPF with its ten year plan were made at the 10th national congress as an application of the union's ideological and political outlook as to guide its practice at different material conditions as dictated by changes with new organisational outlook essentially reflecting the kind of an organisation that is capable to pursue the overall revolutionary through strategy and tactics pointed-out in the policy framework to appreciate the changing world today. This framework helps in building the organisational ability and strength of the national union in reflecting to such changes taking place in terrain of struggle - the workplace and society by continuously grasping with global and domestic political and socio-economic realities using its pillars as adopted at the 9th national congress held in 2010 as its instrument to contribute in changing the world.

In doing so, these pillars necessitated the union to thoroughly define its organisational outlook supported and influence highly by its programme of action places its organisational priorities.

Central to this section of our policy framework therefore, our organisational outlook to drive fundamental programme of establishing a workplace organisation as a foundation and basic of the union as a strong shelter where members are, with capable members, shop stewards and office bearers of defending their base through a robust and intensive education and training strategy enabling for the representation of the actual aspirations and interests of its members by employing a strategic approach to collective bargaining dedicated to improve the conditions of service and working environment for members. This strategic approach is draw from a dedicated membership registration and vigorous quality recruitment campaign driven from the centre underpinned by keeping what we have in search of what we do not have, supported by a well improved attitude and commitment to case management and handling in defence of our membership at material times.

More than ever, we are more convinced that the realisation of a trade union centre with such a strength and feature is pivotal towards the successful achievement of this strategic policy framework as understood as Mid-term vision of the national grounded by concrete material conditions in anticipation of its future.

In regard, this section of our strategic policy framework addresses three key aspects of organising namely:

5.2 ORGANISATIONAL OUTLOOK

NEHAWU strongly believes that the working people need a militant, strong, fighting and democratic trade union capable of representing the interests and aspirations of its members and workers in general with the leadership at its helm that is able to measure the tasks posed by the times they are living in. Drawing from its experience, NEHAWU had accepted to prioritise building itself as a solid organisation with capacity to organise and service workers, while at the same time waging social and economic struggles locally and internationally against colonialism and capitalist exploitation.

With this kind of organisational orientation, the union regards the workplace as a contested terrain between workers and bosses

and between progressive unions and reactionary ones and further recognises the space where it (NEHAWU) operates as no devoid of contestation. In pursuit of its fundamental project of building strong workplace organisation with visible political and socio-economic footprints, the union adopted a set of pillars as part of its contribution to the overall revolutionary task of providing alternative to the current world outlook.

5.2.1 Unitary Nature of Our Union

The unitary nature of our union is largely drawn from the principles of democratic centralism and collective leadership which pull the entire leadership and structures of the national union at all levels into a coherent collective in the execution of the organisational work. These principles essentially are about distributing powers and functions from individual into a single group. In essence, democratic centralism is a process of adopting a policy through participation by majority and then carrying out that policy as a collective in a manner that all those who had opposed this policy in discussion being obliged now to carry it out with the rest.

The national union understood this principle to mean once higher structures take a decision based on representative democracy such a decision is binding to all structures at different levels the union. This principle imposes the responsibility to all members not only to accept the decisions of higher structure but to take a responsibility to defend and implement such decisions as if they were theirs in the first place even if they initially held an opposing or contrary view or mandate.

5.2.2 Unity and Cohesion Imperatives

NEHAWU as a democratic organisation understands that society has different ways of looking at the work hence individual members and leaders naturally will have different opinions on how particular issues are to be addressed. From its inception, the union understood that the strength of a revolutionary organisation lies, among other things, in the ability to synthesise these views and emerge with the wisest possible approach. Once a decision has been taken on the

basis of the majority's views, it binds everyone, including those who held a contrary view. In this regard, the unity in view of the union cannot or should be equated to the absence of differences within the structure of the organisation.

The strategy of the national union is to manage and turn contradictions into a source of strength, rather than a source of splits and divisions. While the contestation of ideas and leadership position is an inherent part of internal democracy, it is usually the form of contestation that undermines the character of the organisation.

Indeed as the union that has come of age, we should clear that whatever and whenever a change has been demanded such change was never and will never be about the ideological and political orientation of the union as articulated in our reviewed strategic policy framework (SPF).

While there is general unity on the central task, there are substantial differences on how the particularities of the nature of the task itself, how to carry it out, but the union has put forward definite lines on uniting and winning the advanced as we plan to unite NEHAWU along our strategic policy framework hence it is imperative to clarify the kind of unity we are seeking in our struggle in reconstituting the union our calibre. Everyone knows that the simple call for “unity” indicates little. At this point the strategic policy framework recalls Engels when stated some time ago that “One must not allow oneself to be misled by the cry for ‘unity’. Those who have this word most often on their lips are the ones who sow the most dissension...the biggest sectarians and the biggest brawlers and rogues at time shout loudest for unity”. (“Engels to Bebel, June 20, 1873”, SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE OF MARX AND ENGELS, FLPH, Moscow, p.345

The strength of the union for unity and cohesion is our strategic policy framework as an overarching vision that preserves unity of members and workers in sectors we organise and will keep NEHAWU going.

5.2.3 Seamless as a Strategic Approach

The 9th National Congress of the union introduced seamless as an approach to connect things the union is doing together both at the systematic and structural manner to show membership service is a valuable priority to day to day activities of the national union. While on the other hand, it was introduced to help in building capacity to improve membership service in the changing world and contextual changes in order to ensure efficiency and effective structures for representation and service delivery. This organizational task included a thorough-going assessment and review of union structures to identify where the strengths and weaknesses lies upon and located appropriate measures to address the subjective weaknesses of the union operations and overall work.

5.2.4 Operational Structures Integration

First and foremost, the national organizing service center was initially established as an operational structure to consolidate and improve the organizational efficiency and effectiveness at all levels. Later, the union decided to enhance the work of operational and constitutional structures through a new mandate located in the national organizing service center to develop proper coordinating structures at all levels in order to operationalize organising and servicing as an integral part of the system of operation or one machinery in the national union. The system dictated a comprehensive and single-coordinated program of action which defined the relationship between the National Organizing Service Center, Provincial Organizers, Regional Organizers with Provincial and Regional Secretaries. This operational structure would not only act as an organizational center purely coordinating the national, provincial and regional machinery but also providing strategic leadership support to enhance the Secretariat capacity as a central centre for coordination and implementation in the national union.

The operational machinery is structured as a singular centre responsible for implementing the organizational priorities in a programmatic and practical way in various sectors in terms of strategic and operational priorities of the union through development of work plan as basis for effective monitoring process of identifying weaknesses so as to plan for appropriate interventions.

Our policy framework reaffirms seamless as a necessary and strategic approach to ensure coherent and uniform machinery from the centre (national or head office) up to regions in order to operationalize the organizational work based on a national program of action. The essence of seamless in the union of our orientation and caliber needs drastic changes from time to time given the changing world and interests of our members, particularly the way our organisers work and report.

It further ensures flow of information between and among organisers in a sector throughout the union and also extended service centres who support organising such as education, paralegal, policy, international and communications hence things are dictated to change, improve and to be done better, faster and differently at all levels of the national union.

In this regard, the union in its execution of achieving seamless as a strategy will apply both horizontal and vertical integration as an approach:

(a) Horizontal integration

Horizontal integration serves to strengthen the seamless machinery. We will institutionalise weekly and monthly planning and reporting meetings within service centres and between service centre heads at national and provincial levels. The extent and success of horizontal integration will largely be determined by the meetings to plan, implement, monitor activities and the extent of quality outputs recorded.

(b) Vertical Integration

Vertical integration is a necessary requirement to implement the national program of action in a consistent, systematic and programmatic manner at all levels. This will be possible through institutionalising mid-year review meetings, provincial planning meetings and convening regular provincial organiser's forums to plan, operationalise and monitor implementation of the union's program of action.

5.2.5 Constitutional Structures integration

Constitutional structure's integration ensures the overall integration of the union work by all levels as anchored by the national office in ensuring that all provincial, regional and branch executive committees implement and take forward the agreed common national programme. This implies that the central and national executive committees will spend time monitoring, evaluating and supporting these constitutional structures towards fully integrating the union work as the unitary organization.

5.3 ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

5.3.1 Workplace organisation

The biggest task for the union is to continuously keep the notion of the workplace organisation that time to time will be dictated by changing working environment so as to maintain the ideal basic unit or branch capable of representing the interests and aspirations of members at all material times. The union should be strong in building the workplace organisation as a concrete foundation hence everything and anything it does or do should be about the workplace where its members are always be - the base. Thus, NEHAWU regards every workplace as a site of struggle and a strength of national union to represent the actual aspirations and interests as a pillar of strength for its survival. Without a workplace organization, there will be no pillar to keep the union alive and relevant and without a foundation - the basic union it will be easy to fall and irrelevant to the cause of improving the conditions of service and changing the working environment favorable to the interests of its members.

Notwithstanding, the building of strong and vibrant branches has never been an easy task but a necessary task to pursue as always as an ongoing process necessary for the stability of the union and a point of service to members. Indeed, this task will require strong regions as engine of service delivery to keep the militant, fighting, campaigning and political activism of the branch of the national union consistent with its ideological, political and organisational orientation with strong shop stewards and office bearers capable of representing members at all costs.

The basic unit of the union is where the membership of the union is located, where members are interfacing the employer daily and experiencing exploitation - the point of production in our context as the union. It is for this reason therefore that the strength of the workplace lies on the mobilisation, unity and militant branch of the union. To achieve this ideal branch and for it to function optimally, the union upper structures will need to properly service and support the basic unit.

A strong workplace organisation will be clear and efficient on lines of communication, proper reporting and accounting mechanisms through being empowered by a well-run induction and education programmes which plays a crucial role in building vibrant effective union branches in order to produce capable shop stewards to exercise worker control and represent the actual interest of members; close ranks and defend the base.

5.3.2 Education and Training

Trade unionism not only teaches workers the value and strength of unity and solidarity in fighting for their rights but also serve as a school to teach workers about their class position in society, the organising principles of their organisations, the dynamics of the workplace and their responsibilities as trade unionist. Thus education in the trade union is imperative and should take two forms namely:

- (a) through informal experiential learning that takes place through participation in the life of the union, and
- (b) through formal training sessions and workshops.

Well rounded experienced trade unionist possess both forms of training at a high level. The practical implication of this is that, in the union, every meeting, picket, strike, mass meeting should exhibit an educational element that educates the workers on why it takes certain policy positions and engages in particular actions and link such actions directly to the interests of workers and the working class. NEHAWU should have a clearly articulated education strategy relating to the induction, training and education of the various

layers of its leadership that corresponds to its political objectives, organisational priorities and individual needs of local structures.

In this regard, the union has taken a conscious decision to develop education and training dedicated focus on political and ideological resolutions as a strategy to strengthen the workplace organisation to defend collective bargaining, deepening class consciousness and advance internationalism for now and the future. This is not an easy task though as it requires the union to think deep and thoroughly on the type of a union to be built to implement these resolutions and going back to the theatre of struggle; the workplace. This task needs the union to refocus its approach into strengthening workplace organisation preciously because it is where management exerts itself and exercise their authority over workers who happened to be our members.

Thus, the need to empower and capacitate workers are not provided with tools to build, manoeuvre and master, the struggle in the workplace all is null and void.

Indeed, the prevailing material conditions and environment is marred by ideological precariousness which demands the rooting of our union from the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist tradition by deepening class consciousness and advancing internationalism in order to strengthen workplace organisation to defend collective bargaining. The only way to win is to position workers and the working class as a class for itself, as a conscious working class fighting side by side with the vanguard party for the total liberation of our class as a whole.

The union therefore is positioning itself as the defender of the majority of the workers in the public sector in light of the current struggles against neoliberal policy and as an organising and servicing union through placing education and training at the centre of its overall work.

It has been the commitment of the national union in the mid and long term as it strengthening workplace organisation to build socialism in the belly of the capitalist state by heightening education and training by deepening class consciousness in order to advance internationalism.

Indeed, the union regards workplace democracy underpinned by

worker control as a back of building a strong workplace organisation sustained by consistent roll-out of ideological, political and organisation education.

5.3.3 Collective Bargaining

Since the founding of ILO in 1919 collective bargaining has been acknowledged as an instrument of social justice. The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949- was ratified by South Africa in 1996. Collective bargaining helps to ensure that employers and employees have an equal voice in negotiations. It contributes to sound labour relations and should help prevent disputes. Collective bargaining it's a means to democratise the workplace and ensure equality. It is therefore not a mistake that the union identified collective bargaining as one of our key prioritise in building a strong workplace organisation.

The union's approach takes into consideration the strategic importance of collective bargaining and the imperative to defend it. Indeed, the effective collective bargaining strategy of the union largely relies on strong workplace structures ready to be mobilised for its strength for bargaining power. For us, collective bargaining requires a range of skills and competencies within the union in order to match the expertise of the employer at the bargaining table, within this context, a proper understanding of the sectors the union organises in and knowing the problems workers face, it is extremely vital to develop a thought-through and effective bargaining strategy towards concrete material changes in benefit of our members and workers in general in sectors where we exist.

A critical question remains mandate-taking and reporting-back task in the union as it is crucial in ensuring members participate in drafting or formulating their own demands. It becomes inevitable and necessary to establish well-functional internal bargaining structures which are efficient and effective on the lines of communication and reporting mechanisms as these play a pivotal role on this area of work. The national union has always and still understood collective bargaining as a terrain that can either deepen the weaknesses of the union or it can amplify its strengths depending on the organisational

strengths and weaknesses within the union itself.

Given the gender demographics of the union, and its long standing progressive stand point on women and gender issues, it is also important that the union mainstream gender issues so as to make gender issues as part of the union's bargaining demands and strategy.

Notwithstanding, the public service naked attack on collective by government is based on the false argument that the public service wage bill is too high relatively to the budget as it refers to the total of public sector wage bill of the 2 482 125 people on its pay roll which include judges, parliamentarians, university staffs, traditional leaders, etc. Yet, its austerity axe is narrowly focused on cutting the means of livelihoods of the coalface and largely low-income public servants under the PSCBC. Just as during the "rationalisation" of the public service under GEAR, the elites once again expect the working class to shoulder the burden of the public-debt, which has been caused by their misguided policies, mismanagement and looting. So, clearly this is a class offensive! The coming years of the deep austerity wage freezes are not only going to be about the defence of collective bargaining and conditions of work but also about the fate of the working class, the direction of our revolution and in fact about the survival of the progressive trade union movement itself - as viable agent in defence of the workers at the time they need it the most.

The union is now required more than ever before to return to basics in order to review and revitalise its bargaining strategy for all sectors it organises. In line with our government neoliberal policy outlook, the union's strategy should detail the need to establish collective bargaining forums that sets parameters and give life to the union in order to deal with the implications of the austerity budget cuts and also functioning as permanent structures fighting to the interests of members through developing and implementing national program of action. Time to time, the union should put in place measures to assess and review its collective bargaining structures and teams including capacity needs.

5.3.4 Recruitment Campaign

The union believes that the coherent recruitment and organising strategy remains central in maintaining a positive membership growth trajectory for power and politics in bargaining set up and society. Our strategy is keeping its focus on organising young workers, improving servicing to members and member-benefits.

In the final analysis, the essence of trade unionism is about numbers when the union cannot achieve its demands on the bargaining table, the ability of a union to engage successfully with the employer depends on numbers it commands. While on the other hand, prospective member's interest is not numbers but particular issues and demands that resonate well with their interests and concerns. Thus campaigning plays an effective role in the process of taking up issues and demands of workers that resonate with them.

If the union has the machinery and capacity to run campaigns on local issues in the branches, and such branches are ideal vibrant branches then as workers are drawn into struggles around those campaigns the likelihood of them joining the union thus also increases. So, recruitment, just like campaigning and education is not a seasonal or occasional activity it is a continuous process that revitalises and regenerates the union.

In this regard, the workplace remains the centre of all campaigns and the union recruitment campaign serves as a basis to ensure growth numerically so as to strengthen the union quantitatively and qualitatively as one of the most important campaigns of the union. At the heart of the recruitment campaign should be membership retention. Thus, NEHAWUs growth is guaranteed if it remains a campaigning union and every workplace becomes a site of struggle through workplace campaigns.

Moving forward, the national union will apply a strategy of servicing what it has in search of what it does not have. This means improve quality of service to the current membership that makes members happy, which by application, draws attention to those who are outside the fold of the union to be more interested to that happiness. This strategy is against the historic approach of the union of always searching for new members at the expense of its current members

by defaulting quality to service members. By doing or applying this strategy, the growth of the union becomes a guarantee to remain a campaigning union whose logic is placed on the understanding that every workplace becomes a site of struggle through workplace campaigns.

5.3.5 Case Handling and Management

As per NALEDI Workers' Survey 2013, argues that the most important reason for members joining a union was for protection against dismissal and unfair discipline (38% of members), followed by improving wages, benefits and working conditions (33% of members). The remaining 29% of members joined the union to change society (9%), or because of union benefits (3%). This tells us that we have to put efforts first and foremost into successfully defending members in disciplinary cases, conciliations, arbitrations, unfair labour practices (grievances, etc) and into wage bargaining. It has been established that in our quest to bargain for the improvement of the working conditions of members disputes arise which lead to cases at different forums.

By implication, this indicates that there is a correlation between the bargaining and representation of members in disputes. To effectively and efficiently meet the demands therefore, paralegal teams at all levels have to possess strong skills and be capacitated to handle cases. As a result of the experienced volume of referral case load within NEHAWU, the hand-over of cases process becomes non-negotiable. Case handling and collective bargaining have therefore been identified to serve the other priorities of the union, namely recruitment, retention and building strong branches.

While as an overarching objective of the union is to ensure that the twin-tasks of improving member representation and reducing the legal costs hinges on a coherent paralegal strategy.

Indeed, proper case handling and management relies on the conscious building of effective and efficient paralegal teams at all levels of the national union with specific emphasis at the regional level so to ensure that regions become the hub of case handling and

management. This means that organisers, through the assistance of Paralegal officers, must capacitate these teams and build a well-oiled paralegal machinery on the ground.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

As a red union forming part of the family of class oriented trade unions under the umbrella of the WFTU, NEHAWU understand the limitations of seeking to end worker exploitation and class oppression through narrow trade unionism. After all, trade unionism arises out of the belly of capitalism as a resistance of workers against the exploitative nature of the system. Therefore, as part of the daily struggle of class oriented trade union movement, NEHAWU is permanently on guard against the institutionalisation of the conflict between workers and the employer, the bureaucratisation of the union and its general co-option into the camp of reformist trade unionism. We fully understand that while trade unions are working class formations, their sectoral nature imposes certain limitations on them when it comes to pursuing the class struggle in its totality for the benefit of the whole working class.

While the union is cognisant of its primary role in the workplace and responsibilities toward its members and workers in general, it also understand it will require more than just trade unionism to completely abolish workers exploitation and class oppression. Both Marx and Engels made a distinction between the economic movement and political movement of the working class; while the economic movement seek to win economic benefits for the workers under conditions of capitalism, the political movement led by the communist party sets itself the goal of overthrowing the exploitative capitalist system and establishing socialism in its place. However, class oriented trade unions are not just organisations that merely address the grievances of their members and workers. They also serve the purpose of inducting workers in class struggle and raising their class consciousness in the course of their involvement in such struggles. When workers unite to form trade unions to fight their exploitation, they begin the first step in building schools of socialism that condition them for the class struggle. NEHAWU believes that, workers, and the working class broadly, can only be freed from the

yoke of capitalist exploitation and oppression through the overthrow of capitalism.

At the same time, it is important that the union derives its reason for existence and strength directly from the workplace; the hegemony and influence of any union stems from winning the confidence of the workers in the workplace, having vibrant and effective structures at all levels of the union and running campaigns that responds to and resonates with the interests and needs of worker. To achieve this the principles of solidarity, worker control and internationalism become indispensable. It is only after having mastered the above that we can hope to wage an effective struggle against the political challenges confronting workers, run strong and effective campaigns to pursue our demands and build a strong voice with which to negotiate in collective bargaining forums. In the final analysis, trade unionism is a numbers game and those numbers are won and retained in the workplace through a principled programme that serve as an extension or part of the broader class program against capitalism. The work of class oriented trade unions becomes even more vital if one takes into consideration that the workplace constitutes the coal face of capitalism.

In summary, the SPF serves as a theoretical and political guide in setting and determining the conceptual boundaries of policy development in the union. The union thus uses the SPF, in conjunction with its constitution, to arrive at decisions in policy matters as broad as; its affiliations and alliances it enters into, its attitude toward government and the state in general, how it regulates its internal affairs and the organisational and structural arrangements that facilitates internal decision making. The SPF itself is in turn rooted in the Marxist-Leninist worldview which is the universal theoretical guide of working class praxis.



REVIEWED STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

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