



**SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARY  
WORKERS' PARTY**

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**22 February 2021**

### **Press Statement**

### **Support the SAFTU National Stay-Away!**

***IF WE DO NOT STRUGGLE, WE WILL DIE!  
EVERY STRIKE IS A POLITICAL STRIKE!***

The call by the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) for a **National Stay-Away and targeted pickets, protests and demonstrations** in major cities of the country on Wednesday 24 February 2021 is a ***call to action*** for the working class and poor of our country. In the middle of a severe social and economic crisis, worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic, the ruling class and its ANC government are determined to impose further hardships and suffering on the working class in defence of their wealth and profits.

The working class must unite and fight against the growing inequalities, retrenchments, austerity measures and generalised poverty, or face death by hunger and diseases, including COVID-19.

- The Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party (SRWP) endorses the actions planned for 24 February. We call on all our members, supporters and the working class to say, “Enough is Enough!”. Stay-away, disrupt the operations of this dysfunctional corrupt capitalist system, protest and demonstrate our unhappiness and disgust with a system that oppresses, exploits and literally kills us!

### ***The Pandemic is the Capitalist System!***

According to the IMF, global growth in 2020 fell by 3%, making “The Great Lockdown the worst recession since the Great Depression, and far worse than the Global Financial Crisis.” Finance Minister, Tito Mboweni, will soon implement his *Mid-Term Expenditure Framework* that outlines how the wages of all public sector workers will be frozen for the next three years, on top of the pay rise already cancelled. A further R300 billion will be cut from government departments, provincial and local government over the next four years. Taxes will be increased by over R40 billion. This means that while prices increase, the wages of public servants will remain at 2019 levels, reducing our ability to sustain ourselves. Service delivery will deteriorate as the budget for public services are cut and the tax bill for the working and middle classes will increase. This is a massive assault on the living standards of the working class and even the middle classes!

The capitalist class will of course blame the pandemic for the crisis of their system. This is not true as the economic slump had already begun in 2019 and the working



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class on an international scale fought back in a global wave of class struggles and popular uprisings. The South African economy was already in recession and accelerating job losses pushed unemployment beyond 30%. The pandemic and the lockdown exacerbated these contradictions, as it exposed the true nature of the capitalist system.

While the mass media remains silent, the number of localised protests have increased exponentially. During July 2020, at least 232 demonstrations took place, an average of 8 demonstrations a day, the highest recorded in a single month since January 2013. *Everything in the situation points to a decisive showdown between the classes developing quickly in the next period.* This a battle that cannot be ignored but that must be organised to ensure maximum effect.

### ***SAFTU demands must be supported!***

We fully support and endorse the SAFTU demands as enunciated in their document '*It is Time to Fight Back! Save Jobs! End Poverty!*' Drawing from these demands and our own Party documents we put forward a condensed set of immediate demands:

#### **1. Implement policies and measures for a People's Vaccine to save lives!**

*We demand a clearly stated vaccine action plan which outlines a transparent scientific understanding of what the trial vaccines are and a costed, time-bound clear plan of how they will be distributed! Provide safe and efficacious vaccines that have been ethically tested, free of charge! All intellectual property rights must be waived to create a universal vaccine for all! The government must provide free masks and sanitisers to pensioners and all unemployed people!*

#### **2. A moratorium on retrenchments and an end to unemployment!**

*All jobs on hand must be shared between all the workers without loss of pay!. The government must immediately save and fill all vacancies in the public sector. It must create a massive public works programme, create more jobs in farming and fishing to protect food sovereignty! A Basic Income Grant of R3500 must be provided for all unemployed!*

#### **3. Guarantee the right to health services, food, water, sanitation, shelter, electricity and the internet!**

*We demand a mass scale food programme run efficiently by the government and overseen by reliable trade union and community organisations to prevent corruption and theft.*

*All private hospitals and healthcare providers must be nationalised under one national management system. The government must immediately supply regular and high quality PPE,*



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*upgrade the health infrastructure, repair clinics and hospitals, replace health workers lost to the pandemic and fill all vacancies in the health sector immediately. We demand an end to all water and electricity cut-offs, and the cancellation of all rents, rates and electricity arrears for working class communities. A massive program of public works to build the five million houses needed to provide a decent and comfortable home for everyone, and provide adequate and cheap electricity, water and sanitation. An end to tenders, outsourcing and privatization of public works. Build the capacity of local government to provide all services!*

**4. Free, Quality, Compulsory, Equal and decolonized Education for All!**

*The demand for free, quality, compulsory and equal education for all remains a valid demand of the working class and poor. We demand nationalisation of all private schools, colleges and universities to end class apartheid in education.*

**5. Fight for Genuine Democracy – for a Worker’s Government as a step towards a Socialist Workers State!**

*Capitalism is Corruption. The capitalist system is a system of theft! Over and above the legal theft of surplus value from the labour of the working class the capitalists steal from the public purse and from each other to maximize profits and wealth! All the parties in parliament are Capitalist parties who legislate for capitalist interests. We must defeat the capitalist class and the ANC compradors who serve on their behalf! The only solution to the problems of society is the establishment of a non-racial, non-sexist, socialist state governed by workers’ control and ownership of the means of production!*

***If the virus does not kill us, hunger will!***

***Join the SAFTU Stay-Away and demonstrations on the 24 February 2021!***

***Fight for a society owned and controlled by the working class and poor!***

***Fight for a Socialist South Africa, Africa and world!***

Issued by Motebang Oupa Ralake  
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