



Nelson Mandela joins the NUM office bearers at the Central Committee meeting

CC calls for action

UNLESS the mining bosses meet a deadline on 31 May to end racism on the mines, the industry will be in dispute with mineworkers who will take national united action.

This was the main decision of

the NUM Central Committee which met in Johannesburg on 21 April. Three hundred and twenty worker delegates attended the Central Committee meeting - the NUM's second highest decision making body.

Delegates discussed the 1990 wage demands, nationalisation, socialism, the problems of skills

in a post-apartheid South Africa, negotiations between the government and the ANC, and the alliance between COSATU, ANC and SACP.

Mine apartheid continues

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said while apartheid in South Africa was being changed, no changes or moves to end apartheid were happening on the mines.

The CC decided it was the duty of mineworkers to end racial discrimination in the industry.

The meeting also endorsed the 1990 wage demands which have been submitted to the Chamber of Mines for the 1990 negotiations.

The CC gave its full support to the African National Congress in

its negotiations with the government to attempt to resolve the political conflict in the country.

The CC also said many mineworkers were denied opportunities to get education and skills because they were black. The mining industry had done very little to improve the skills of black workers.

Worker study scheme

Because of this the union had started a scheme to help mineworkers get technical and managerial skills. "The creation of a skilled work force was the key to economic prosperity in a post apartheid South Africa". The scheme involved the sending of workers to universities and training colleges.

The CC passed a resolution in favour of nationalisation noting the concentration of wealth in the hands of a small number of white monopoly capitalists promoted racial oppression. "Nationalisation and a mixed economy will facilitate the distribution of wealth", the resolution said.

A resolution on the liberation alliance noted the unbanning of the ANC and SACP and the phasing out of SACTU and incorporation of SACTU members into COSATU. It recommended that COSATU join the liberation alliance and the alliance be based on "mutual respect of each other's independence."

Mandela receives NUM life honorary presidency

NUM LIFE Honorary President Nelson Mandela was presented with his honorary life presidency and a union membership card at the NUM Central Committee meeting.

Comrade Mandela, who worked as a mine security guard at Crown Mines in 1941, thanked the 320 delegates for the great honour and the trust the union had placed in him.

He reminded delegates of his days on the mines. In 1941 he had worked as a mine security guard on Crown Mines. Crown Mines was the branch that proposed his election to Life Honorary President in 1986 while he was still in prison.

Comrade Mandela called on mineworkers to intensify the struggle against racism on the mines. De Klerk was starting to move away from racial discrimination in South Africa,

said Comrade Mandela, but there was still open apartheid and racial discrimination on the mines.

He understood on some mines black recruits were ordered to strip naked, while the same did not apply to white recruits.

"You are not allowed to have visitors and are also prevented from visiting your friends on other mines."

Comrade Mandela said in other countries mineworkers were among the best paid workers. "In South Africa black mineworkers are among the lowest paid", he said.

He said the ANC and COSATU had to come together to discuss ways of ending racial discrimination and exploitation of workers.

"The future government must be a government of the workers so that they too can enjoy the riches from the mines", he said.

Resist racism, says Motlatsi

"WE will rather die fighting, than crawl and accept apartheid and racism."

These were the stirring words of NUM President Comrade James Motlatsi at the NUM Central Committee.

Comrade Motlatsi said the past few weeks had seen union members challenge racism on the mines. "Our members have been defiant." "They have said in a clear and united voice - that there should not be any discrimination. Comrade Motlatsi said "the time has come for us to ensure that this system of racism and discrimination is destroyed".