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The Congress of South African Trade Unions and Free Trade: Obstacles to Transnational Solidarity

Stephen R. Hurt

ABSTRACT This article considers the response of the largest trade union federation in South Africa, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), to an extended free trade agenda, which has formed a key part of neoliberal restructuring during recent decades. It focuses in particular on South Africa's position in multilateral trade talks and its negotiation of three Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). COSATU's critique of these FTAs is considered and in particular the analysis focuses on its attempts at building transnational solidarity with other national labour movements. It argues that despite COSATU's opposition to trade liberalisation there are a number of obstacles to developing effective international links.

Introduction

During recent decades we have seen numerous international trade agreements that entrench the liberalisation of economic activity. As a result, one of the consequences of neoliberal globalisation has been the emergence of a global division of labour, whereby the defence of workers' rights has become much more challenging. In order to understand the significance of neoliberal restructuring for workers and their respective national labour movements we need to consider the structures of global capitalism. As Bieler (2013) has argued, uneven and combined capitalist development means workers in the global South are more likely to lose out as a result of trade liberalisation. Whilst this structural context does exacerbate the difficulties of transnational solidarity between trade unions we should also retain some

agency in our analysis. As Munck reminds us, ‘labour is not just ‘done to’ by globalisation processes but is itself an active agent within these processes’ (2004, p.3). Hence, this article addresses these concerns by focusing on the response of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) to post-apartheid South Africa’s engagement with this expanded free trade agenda.

The rest of the article proceeds in the following fashion. First, I briefly discuss the negotiated nature of the democratic transition that took place in the early 1990s, COSATU’s role during this period, and the significance this has for the economic trajectory that has been pursued by the African National Congress (ANC) government since 1994. I then review the government’s post-apartheid development strategy, highlighting the centrality of trade policy to this, and consider COSATU’s influence on policy-making. The major part of the article then considers COSATU’s position with regard to both multilateral trade liberalisation and the negotiation of three major free trade agreements (FTAs).¹ Here I also analyse the extent to which organised labour within South Africa has attempted to develop solidarity with other national/regional trade union federations. The first of these is the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) agreed with the EU in 1999. Then I examine the continuing negotiations toward an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).² Finally, I consider the FTA agreed between twelve of SADC’s fifteen member states, which provides an interesting contrast, because unlike the other two it is an agreement solely between states in the global South.³ The article concludes by considering the prospects for transnational labour solidarity in response to FTAs and in doing so highlights a number of obstacles that may undermine COSATU’s attempts at developing enhanced relations with its international partners.

Trade Unions and the Post-Apartheid Development Strategy

COSATU remains the most significant and influential trade union federation within South Africa. Since its formation in 1985, COSATU's membership levels have grown significantly so that in 2012 total membership stood at just under 2.2 million (COSATU, 2012b, p.6).⁴ As such, COSATU stands out within the broader African context as a particularly strong and historically successful labour federation. As Buhlungu (2010, p.16) suggests COSATU has been effective in 'fighting for political reform (liberation and democracy), and championing economic development and social reconstruction'.

Prior to the first multi-racial elections in April 1994 there were competing conceptions, within the liberation movement as a whole, as to the desired form that the transition to democracy should take. Given that the transition to democracy was achieved by a negotiated settlement with the leaders of the apartheid system, the form of democracy that was adopted favoured an emphasis on the procedural elements of democracy combined with a reliance on the private sector to generate economic growth. Moreover, as will be discussed below, the 'new' democratic South Africa was faced with reintegration into a global economy that was in the midst of a period of economic restructuring where neoliberalism had become hegemonic. The extension of trade liberalisation was one key aspect of this restructuring. Hence, South African trade unions were faced with what one observer described as the 'paradox of victory', whereby 'the opening up of the South African economy to global markets had an extremely negative effect on union organisation' (Buhlungu, 2010, p.162).

Nevertheless, trade unions did have a say in shaping the direction of the post-apartheid economy. COSATU's influence was central to both the adoption of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as the ANC's development strategy in 1994 and the introduction of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) in 1995 (Buhlungu, 2002, p.187). The RDP took a broadly Keynesian approach to development by arguing that growth should be

generated through redistribution, whilst the LRA was generally regarded as an exemplar of progressive labour legislation. However, the RDP also included more conservative statements on the need to reduce the budget deficit, government borrowing and levels of taxation. This historic influence was also reflected in some potentially important institutional developments after 1994. In particular, the formation of the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) in 1995 created the potential for a corporatist-style arrangement where representatives of labour, business, government, and community, attempt to achieve consensus on socio-economic policy issues. However, as an institution NEDLAC has often been ignored by government, especially on macroeconomic policy decisions (Buhlungu, 2010, p.6).

In June 1996 the government published its new macroeconomic policy, Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), which was drafted by a small group of economists appointed by the government. It represented a clear shift towards a neoliberal development strategy. For the GEAR strategy to successfully create additional jobs in South Africa, it needed to generate an expansion of exports, and manufacturing exports in particular (Legassick, 2007, pp.467-468). COSATU was critical of the GEAR strategy and commissioned the National Institute for Economic Policy to conduct a study but surprisingly, despite its detailed critique, this was never released to the public (Marais, 2011, pp.112-113).

The failings of this approach to deliver significant socio-economic gains to the majority of the South African population led to a renewed debate over what role trade should play in the broader development strategy. Since the early 2000s, COSATU has played a key role in reminding government of the need to consider the employment effects of trade negotiations (Makgetla and van Meelis, 2007, p.111). COSATU's general position has been that South Africa needs to engage with the global economy in a strategic fashion, whereby the

government adopts an active industrial strategy and redistributive mechanisms to minimise the negative effects of trade liberalisation (COSATU, 2002).

In recent years this view is now increasingly reflected in government. A document published by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in 2007 highlighted the beginning of a shift away from unilateral trade liberalisation so that ‘trade policy is appropriately integrated into a broad economic development strategy, underpinned by a robust industrial policy’ (Department of Trade and Industry, 2007, p.40). Previously, industrial policy had tended to favour only specific sectors, such as the car industry, which received state support through the Motor Industry Development Programme (Marais, 2011, p.149). This renewed focus on employment was also reflected in the ‘New Growth Path’ (NGP) launched by the Economic Development Department in February 2010 and the DTI’s revised Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP2) published in November of the same year. In response, COSATU together with FEDUSA and NACTU and notably a number of businesses based in the manufacturing sector, published a declaration of strong support of IPAP2, which they felt ‘correctly places the revival and expansion of our manufacturing sector at the heart of a broad-based industrialisation strategy’ (COSATU, 2010a). However, COSATU’s leadership has expressed serious reservations over the National Development Plan (NDP), published in 2012, which they feel ‘ignores recent consensus which has emerged around the need for a state-led industrial strategy’ (Coleman, 2013).

COSATU’s Response to Multilateral Trade Liberalisation and Free Trade Agreements

During the post-apartheid era it was natural that COSATU’s role would change and this was reinforced by the external context. According to Southall and Bezuidenhout we have seen a change from ‘a social movement union federation campaigning nationally for democracy and labour rights to...supporting the struggles of other social movement unions in the context of

regional integration and global economic liberalisation' (2004, p.146). The ANC government's initial commitment to free trade was demonstrated by its implementation of tariff reductions faster than was required under the terms of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Average import tariffs on manufactured goods were reduced from 14 per cent in 1994 to 5.6 per cent in 1998 (Southall and Bezuidenhout, 2004, p.128). In response, COSATU (1999a) published a declaration outlining their opposition to this approach, which they argued had resulted in significant job losses. Workers from the Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU), in particular, took action against the government's commitment to trade liberalisation, protesting against the threat of job losses as early as February 1996.

COSATU also engaged in attempts at building transnational labour solidarity against a number of aspects of the Doha Round of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In particular, it focused its attention on the proposal on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA), which COSATU argued would result in tariff cuts to labour-intensive sectors. As a result they were actively engaged in lobbying government on this issue, sought solidarity from the European Trade Union Council (ETUC) to put pressure on European governments, and urged the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to ensure its affiliates supported such a critical position (COSATU, 2006). Linked to their support for an active industrial strategy, COSATU (2008a) argued that the proposals on NAMA would undermine the macroeconomic policy choices available to the government.

COSATU's attempts to generate transnational solidarity against the WTO's NAMA proposals, however, did run into difficulties. The European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF), a member of ETUC, joined forces with the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), to issue two press statements expressing concern that emerging economies would not be engaging in sufficient opening of their markets to European exporters. In particular,

Peter Scherrer, General Secretary of the EMF argued that they would ‘undermine the competitiveness of the EU industries, putting pressure on production costs and employment’ (ACEA/EMF, 2008). COSATU’s Central Executive Committee was critical of the EMF’s joint statement and suggested that it was ‘effectively congratulating their governments and blaming the collapse of the talks on the developing nations’ (COSATU, 2008b). Given the central role played by the EU in supporting the NAMA proposals, COSATU continued to seek support from ETUC. In December 2008 Zwelinzima Vavi wrote a letter to John Monks, General Secretary of ETUC, urging the trade union movement in Europe to inform the EU Trade Commissioner of ‘the very negative effects of the NAMA proposals for developing countries’ (COSATU, 2008c).

While progress towards a conclusion of the Doha Round remains problematic, a number of the world’s major trading powers have shifted their focus to the negotiation of bilateral agreements. The EU, in particular, has adopted this as its core trade strategy in recent years (see European Commission, 2006). South Africa has been involved in negotiations with the EU on the bilateral TDCA and the continuing negotiation of an EPA with SADC. Meanwhile, SADC itself launched its own FTA process and by 2008 had achieved the minimum conditions necessary. In the analysis that follows I consider COSATU’s position towards the negotiation of these FTAs and the extent to which they have sought to utilise transnational links with other national labour movements as part of their response.

The Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement with the EU

The EU began formal negotiations with South Africa towards an eventual TDCA in June 1995. In addition to qualified membership of the Lomé Convention, which allowed South Africa to receive development assistance via the European Development Fund, negotiations

focused on the creation of a FTA between the two parties. South Africa took until January 1997 to formulate its own negotiating mandate and this process included consultation with a wide range of domestic stakeholders including business groups, the agricultural sector and trade unions (Hurt, 2000, p.70). The main forum for these discussions was NEDLAC. However, despite COSATU having the ability to express its opinion, the government continued to pursue the eventual conclusion of a FTA. Moreover, despite making a request to be formally part of the negotiating process, COSATU did not have direct involvement. Hence, Bilal and Laporte concluded that ‘they did not contribute in any substantive way to shaping the trade agreement’ (2004, p.15). The limitations of NEDLAC, from COSATU’s perspective, were clear in their reflections on the TDCA negotiations, which included a demand that trade unions should be able ‘to participate more substantively in future trade negotiations’ (COSATU, 1999c).

There is very little evidence of attempts by COSATU to develop transnational solidarity over the TDCA negotiations. In 1997 they did send a delegation to the UK and meetings were held with a number of stakeholders including the British Trade Union Congress (TUC). A number of issues were discussed, including the trade negotiations with the EU, with COSATU arguing for a revised approach ‘which takes account of the historical realities in South and Southern Africa’ (COSATU, 1997). Alec Erwin, formerly a key trade union leader, is credited with neutralising, to some extent, any significant disquiet amongst the labour movement towards the TDCA. It is suggested that, in his role as Minister for Trade and Industry, he was central to ‘shifting the labour party movement...from protectionism to market thinking’ (Levermore, Gibb and Cleary, 2000, p.8).

A detailed exposition of COSATU’s views on the TDCA negotiations was only presented in October 1999 during a public hearing on the final agreement held in the National Assembly. Given the timing, most of the document was deliberately focused on questions of

implementation rather than a detailed critique of the agreement itself. Since the implementation of the TDCA, the stance of COSATU has become more overtly critical, with free trade and the EU's agricultural subsidies being linked to many of South Africa's economic challenges (Fioramonti and Poletti, 2008, p.174). Interestingly, COSATU questioned the sequencing of South Africa's trade negotiations, suggesting it 'would have been desirable for the SADC Agreement to have been implemented in advance of the EU Agreement' (COSATU, 1999c). They also queried the underlying logic of the TDCA, which assumes that trade liberalisation results in increased exports and that this in turn creates South African jobs (Hurt, 2006, p.111).

The TDCA came into effect on 1 January 2000. It was claimed that the differences in levels of development between South Africa and the EU were acknowledged by the inclusion of the principles of asymmetry and differentiation, so that the EU would reduce trade barriers faster and to more of its imports than South Africa. However, with the twelve year period of liberalisation now concluded, South Africa is effectively trading with the EU on a level playing field. Critics of the TDCA, including COSATU, have noted that South Africa faced much more significant adjustment costs because the EU's trade regime was already much more liberalised (COSATU, 1999c).

EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement Negotiations

Under the terms of the Cotonou Agreement with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states the EU has been negotiating EPAs with seven different regional groups since 2002. The initial deadline was the end of 2007 when a WTO waiver for non-reciprocal trade preferences was set to expire. However, full EPAs were not concluded in most cases and interim agreements (iEPAs) were signed instead.⁵ The negotiations with the 'SADC minus' group resulted in South Africa, Namibia and Angola refusing to sign an iEPA. COSATU

congratulated these governments for the stance they had taken and continued to call for a rejection of the iEPA (COSATU, 2009). Nevertheless, the EU's desire is still to conclude comprehensive EPAs and the European Commission set a deadline of 1 January 2014, beyond which if an EPA is not agreed, trade preferences for ACP states will end (see European Commission, 2011). However, the European Parliament took the decision in April 2013 to extend this cut-off date until 1 October 2014.

COSATU's critique of the EPA proposals includes numerous different arguments. They maintain that it will undermine regional integration efforts given that SADC member states are involved in three different EPA negotiating groups. COSATU has also been critical of the narrow range of actors involved in the negotiations and especially the lack of engagement with trade unions and civil society organisations. The main thrust of COSATU's critique is that EPA negotiations reflect an attempt by the EU to open up the markets of developing countries for the benefit of European capital. The EU's pursuit of this bilateral trade agenda is seen as an attempt to introduce the so-called 'Singapore Issues' (competition policy, transparency in government procurement, national treatment for foreign investors, and trade facilitation measures), which have been rejected by developing countries within the Doha Round of the WTO (Hurt, 2012, p.502). In a speech in October 2007, COSATU General Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, was highly critical of attempts by the EU to coerce developing countries into signing Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) noting that 'their aim is to secure all what [sic] developed nations demand through the backdoor' (COSATU, 2007).

COSATU has sought to promote regional resistance to the EU's attempts to finalise its EPA negotiations by building links with the major regional trade union confederation, the Southern African Trade Union Coordination Council (SATUCC). SATUCC has a formalised relationship with SADC and since the end of apartheid has adopted a reformist approach centred on shaping SADC protocols and initiatives. SATUCC did eventually make an

intervention in the debate on EPAs in 2006 when it published a very brief ‘Declaration on EPAs’, which outlined many of the same criticisms of the EPA negotiations that have been made by COSATU (the lack of participation by trade unions in the negotiations, the attempt to introduce the ‘Singapore Issues’ and the threat to local industry and jobs).

Meanwhile both ETUC and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) expressed their position on the EPA negotiations. In September 2007 they published a joint open letter to Peter Mandelson (then European Commissioner for Trade) which merely urged him to extend the negotiating period beyond the original deadline of 31 December 2007 (ETUC/ITUC, 2007). However, this letter did not challenge the underlying ethos of the negotiations; specifically the aim of integrating ACP states into the global economy. These developments led one analyst to conclude that there is little evidence of any cooperation between ETUC and either SATUCC or any of the national trade union federations in the region (Lorenz, 2011, p.11).

The Southern African Development Community Free Trade Area

In 1996 a Protocol on Trade was signed by the member states of SADC, which envisaged the liberalisation of trade in goods and services within the region. Reductions in tariffs on the trade in goods eventually began in 2001 and by August 2008 sufficient liberalisation was achieved to meet the minimum conditions required for a FTA. The reduction of tariffs on sensitive products was due to have been achieved by 2012. However, some SADC member states have sought extensions beyond this deadline. Like the TDCA, the dominant trading power (in this case South Africa) was scheduled to reduce its trade barriers faster than the other countries.

In contrast to its views on the TDCA negotiated with the EU, COSATU noted that because ‘the South African economy far outweighs those of the region, our approach needs to

be totally different from our approach to trade with the EU' (COSATU, 1999d). As a result, COSATU has been broadly in favour of closer regional integration within the SADC region. However, this support is qualified with an acknowledgement of the need to ensure inequalities within SADC are reduced, in part, by the adoption of a regional industrialisation strategy, which should have preceded the process of reducing barriers to trade (COSATU, 1999d). Compared to its trade profile with other parts of the world, South Africa's exports to the rest of the SADC region are much more diversified, with the majority being manufactures, whilst its imports are mostly mining and agricultural products (Makgetla and van Meelis, 2007, p.103). As a result there are divergent national interests, which have shaped both the South African government's position, and to a lesser extent COSATU's views, on the SADC FTA. This was highlighted by the debate over the adoption of common rules of origin, which are crucial for ensuring that goods qualifying under the terms of the FTA do actually originate from within the SADC region. South African negotiators argued for the rules of origin to be much tighter and this was perceived by non-Southern African Customs Union member states as an attempt by South Africa to protect its own industries in sectors such as textiles and clothing (Lee, 2003, pp.130-131).⁶ The government's stance was endorsed by COSATU, who argued that otherwise the SADC FTA could result in 'goods manufactured elsewhere on the basis of even lower wages and working conditions to be imported into South Africa' (COSATU, 1999d). COSATU noted that the textiles and clothing sector, in particular, was likely to suffer relocation to other parts of SADC due to lower labour costs and standards. As a result, SACTWU sought to build regional links with other trade unions in the sector to develop improved labour standards (Horton, 1999, p.48).

Like the other FTAs discussed already, despite rhetorical claims that integration within SADC would be driven by developmental concerns (most notably articulated in SADC's 2003 'Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan'), it is a project based on open

regionalism and market liberalisation (Söderbaum , 2004, p.72). Although COSATU has raised concerns over the potential impacts of the SADC FTA for development across the region, national imperatives reflected in the desire to protect certain labour-intensive sectors (such as textiles and clothing) have meant that they have been far less vocal in their criticism in comparison to trade negotiations conducted with the EU. Meanwhile trade unions across the rest of the SADC region have been ineffective in influencing the SADC FTA negotiations.

Obstacles to Transnational Solidarity

Like many national trade union confederations COSATU prioritises domestic jobs and workers. In 1999 it launched its ‘Buy local, buy South African’ campaign in an attempt to encourage South African consumers to purchase products and services that have significant local content (COSATU, 1999b). This idea became formalised with the launch in 2001 of the ‘Proudly South African Campaign’, which received the backing of all four partners of NEDLAC (government, business, labour, and community groups). These links with domestic capital and government are clearly evident in COSATU’s approach to FTAs and they pose an obstacle to attempts at transnational solidarity.

Moreover, COSATU is in a formal ‘tripartite alliance’ with the ANC and South African Communist Party (SACP), which provides the potential to influence the policy-making process. However, it also creates tensions when COSATU does not agree with government policy. Although COSATU has been able to have limited influence on government policy-making during the post-apartheid era, membership of the Alliance does constrain its potential for genuine resistance. This is something that COSATU’s leadership is increasingly aware of. In September 2010 a discussion document was published that questioned the effectiveness of COSATU’s continued membership of the Alliance in its current form (COSATU, 2010b).

However, as long as most of COSATU's membership continues to support the ANC and its leaders enjoy individual benefits from membership of the Alliance, this is unlikely to change (Pillay, 2008, p.57).

South Africa has witnessed an increasing casualization of employment in recent years and the informal sector is growing. This raises the question of the form that transnational solidarity needs to take. Particularly on an issue like FTAs, there is likely to be a disjuncture between its apparent significance for union leaders, compared with both the rank-and-file trade union members and those employed in the informal sector. So far, COSATU has failed to build any meaningful relationship with these workers although the issue is now recognised. Zwelinzima Vavi in a speech made at the launch of the South African Informal Traders Alliance acknowledged that COSATU must 'build alliances with civil society organisations working in the informal sector and organisations of informal-sector workers' (COSATU 2013). This leads Buhlungu to caution of the dangers resulting from trade unions becoming 'even more isolated and vulnerable to charges of being a privileged and self-serving minority that does not speak for the rest of the working class' (2010, p.98).

Regional trade union solidarity is reflective of the weakness of the majority of national affiliates outside of South Africa. This is compounded by the limitations of SATUCC, which together with many of the unions and national federations, relies heavily on donor funding (Buhlungu, 2010, p.7). SATUCC is largely detached from both national labour movements and activist networks more broadly. Moreover, it is not always the case that national labour movements within the region have a common position. COSATU, for example, at the launch of the Doha Round negotiations argued for the inclusion of a social clause in the WTO. In contrast a workshop in November 1999, organised by SATUCC and members of various social movements, rejected the inclusion of a social clause on the basis that it would provide

legitimacy to the trade liberalisation agenda and power relations inherent within the WTO (Bond, Miller and Ruiters, 2001, p.138).

Solidarity between trade unions based in the global North and South also faces significant obstacles, as demonstrated by the tensions between European trade unions and COSATU over the WTO's NAMA proposals. In 2012 four trade unions affiliated to COSATU took the unilateral decision to leave ITUC in favour of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). This issue was then discussed at COSATU's National Congress in September 2012 and a compromise was reached whereby COSATU would maintain its membership of ITUC but would also investigate the possibility of joining WFTU (COSATU, 2012a). This reflects disquiet amongst some within the labour movement in South Africa over the limitations of ITUC given its domination by major federations based in the global North and its failure to fundamentally critique the global capitalist system (see Masuku, 2010; Majola, 2012).

Conclusions

This article has argued that the ANC government's trade policy has, in recent years, begun to converge with COSATU's views on the deleterious impacts of *unilateral* trade liberalisation and the need for an active industrial strategy. The contradictions between the position on free trade, of some trade unions within the global North and COSATU, is unlikely to be resolved by ITUC and the industry-specific global union federations, whose main response is to lobby for the inclusion of labour rights in trade agreements. ITUC's reformist position is based on a belief that the use of a 'social clause' can ameliorate the adjustment costs of trade liberalisation. One of the lessons from the South African case is that the international labour movement needs to move beyond this approach to 'ensure adequate scope for development

policies in the South, including where necessary to protect infant industries and industries that serve basic needs' (Makgetla and van Meelis, 2007, p.111).

Therefore, we may need to look to regional initiatives within the global South for more effective resistance to trade liberalisation. COSATU has been involved in the Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights (SIGTUR) since its first meeting in 1991, when it was known as the Indian Ocean Regional Initiative (Southall and Bezuidenhout, 2004, p.141). SIGTUR is grounded in the existing organisation of trade unions and as such avoids the problem of limited democratic accountability often prevalent in networks (Webster, Lambert and Bezuidenhout, 2008, p.199). Optimists point to the potential of SIGTUR in developing 'global social movement unionism', which will encourage trade unions to 'move beyond their traditional workplace boundaries to form alliances with other civil society movements within the nation state, whilst at the same time creating a new global union form' (Lambert and Webster, 2001, p.350). However, as I have demonstrated, with respect to the SADC FTA negotiations, 'South-South' trade union solidarity can still be undermined by national considerations. COSATU have been critical at a general level of the potential impacts of trade liberalisation on regional development but they have reserved much of their energies in resisting the ongoing EPA negotiations with the EU.

In sum, COSATU has a clear position against the deepening of the free trade agenda. However, its attempts to develop transnational solidarity remain limited and face multiple challenges. COSATU General Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, recently noted that despite the efforts of both COSATU and a number of its affiliate trade unions, international issues are not prioritised within the organisation (COSATU, 2012c).

Notes

¹ South Africa has also agreed a FTA with the European Free Trade Association and Preferential Trade Agreements with both Mercosur and Zimbabwe. It also enjoys preferential access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

² The negotiating group only comprises Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Mozambique, Angola and South Africa and is often referred to as ‘SADC minus’.

³ Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo and Seychelles remain outside of the FTA.

⁴ The other two major trade union federations are the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU); at the time of writing, according to their respective websites, FEDUSA has 515,000 members and NACTU approaching 400,000.

⁵ Only the Caribbean region agreed a ‘full’ EPA by this deadline.

⁶ The Southern African Customs Union is an agreement between South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland.

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