



COSATU 96

TRADE UNION
LIBRARY AND
EDUCATION CENTRE

SALHA 22a COSATU
1996

alliance PROGRAMME

A programme for the Alliance

In November 1996, Cosatu released a discussion paper which proposes a programme for the Tripartite Alliance to blow life into transformation in our country. Here is a summary of the document, for discussion in Cosatu structures. If you have any comments, raise them in your union structures.

BACKGROUND TO THE ALLIANCE

From Cosatu's inception in 1985, the federation developed a close association with the Congress movement. Conditions in the country dictated the need to go beyond bread and butter issues to embrace national and class struggle. This perspective was formally endorsed with Cosatu's adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1987. The 1987 Congress agreed Cosatu should build alliances with mass-based organisations with a track record of struggle and whose principles did not conflict with those of Cosatu.

After the unbanning of the liberation movement, Cosatu's 1991 Congress resolved that the Federation should join the ANC and SACP in alliance in place of Sactu, thus becoming part of the Tripartite Alliance as we know it today. It was understood that this Alliance:

- Would be the motive force for national liberation, democratisation and transformation at the political and socio-economic level.
- Consists of independent organisations with independent structures for mandating and decision making. These independent organisations agreed nonetheless to co-operate, consult and take joint decisions on collective action for the emancipation of our people.
- Would need to work on the basis of proper mandate and consensus.
- Would be based on a programme which would be evaluated from time to time; and
- May need to be redefined, taking into account the prevailing objective conditions.

We agreed to build the ANC and SACP and to encourage workers to join.

In the pre-election period, the Alliance parties consulted one another on major issues. A number of summits were held to look at positions on negotiations, mobilisation in support thereof, joint struggle on VAT, and the elections. Finally, we developed the RDP, not only as an election platform, but as a programme designed to achieve the objective of transforming our society to meet the social and economic needs of our people.

AFTER THE 1994 ELECTIONS

Since the elections, the Alliance has never sat down to systematically look at the challenges of the transition and formulate a strategy, and the role of our various formations in that strategy. Nor was this done for those in parliament, government, various formations outside of government and the state sector. No programme was formulated for engagement of the masses. To date the masses largely remain spectators in the theatre



of the struggle for transformation. Notable exceptions were the negotiations on the IIRA and the Constitution, where the alliance spoke with one voice.

CURRENT SITUATION

Political

We have a new political situation, with a legitimate government and parliament. However, we have not been able to use organisational and political space to alter the power balance at a socio-economic level. Good legislation has emerged from parliament, with Cosatu's participation. However, there was no prior strategic planning or systematic Alliance approach to policy development. We have depended on the views of individuals in government, rather than the position of the organisation as a whole.

Socio-economic

This area has been the most difficult one for the Alliance. There is no single view of how to implement the RDP. Government positions on privatisation and GEAR have been presented to the Alliance as a *fait accompli*. This was a clear case of policy driven by panic. No one from the movement, except some in government, was involved in its formulation.

Local and international business and the media have pressurised government to adopt economic policies in direct contradiction to those they were mandated to implement. The movement seems to be paralysed by the threat of globalisation and the business investment strike. The defeatist view that the balance of forces is not in our favour and that we have to give in to "the market" appears to have taken hold. This ignores the significance of our access to state power and the potential of organisation, using the new political space, to tilt the balance of forces.

The economy in the new South Africa is largely what it was in 1993, except for some growth (jobless) and a few black faces and companies. Otherwise it is business as usual.

Organisational

There is general demobilisation of our

people. Most activists are not sure of what the strategic objectives are. There is little participation and involvement in decision and policy making. ANC structures have no visible mass mobilisation programme. The Alliance itself has no programme except the often cited RDP which means many things to different people. Our structures are either weak or not functioning.

LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSFORMATION

Marx: 'We change the world, but not under conditions of our own choosing.' This statement is true of our situation. We are attempting to transform our country yet we face various constraints which we did not choose. They have been thrust upon us by history.

These include:

- The legacy of apartheid: including mismanagement of our economy, the debt burden, destruction of our human resources, a deformed public sector, vast unemployment and poverty, concentration of ownership in the hands of the conglomerates, marginalisation of the majority from economic activity, massive income and social inequalities.
- The **new world situation**: There is no serious alternative to the power wielded by the G7 countries and their international financial and trade institutions. The world economy has been organised into powerful trading blocs.

While we inherited enormous problems, the elements are present for us to perform our own 'social miracle' comparable to post-war Europe, the Asian Tigers, and aspects of the Socialist advances of the 20th century.

As with all other societies facing reconstruction challenges, the critical factor will be our ability to mobilise the masses in support of the programme — to unleash huge national energies to achieve what would normally not be possible. The objective basis has been laid, for this scenario to unfold. Our rich history of struggle has resulted in one of the most politicised and conscious mass movements, rooted in a strongly organised working class.

The organisation of the main mass

formations under the leadership of the Alliance has catapulted a progressive people's government into power on the basis of an overwhelming popular mandate.

The major social forces have subscribed to a programme of transformation, which was the product of extensive discussion and mobilisation. Our society has a strong tradition of an active progressive civil society and social institutions. Compared to other developing societies, the country's industrial base and the advanced organisation of workers into a progressive trade union movement, give the progressive forces considerable strategic leverage. SA has more potential international allies and goodwill than probably any other comparable struggle.

These positive factors are potentialities, which have to be harnessed to be fully realised. Given our potential strengths, is it possible to achieve fundamental transformation under the constraints inherited from apartheid and the new world order?

Two dangers arise. The first is **fatalism** — passively accepting that these forces ranged against us are too powerful to counter and we must simply accept our fate. The second is **triumphalism** — pretending that our electoral triumph has wiped out these constraints and that we can impose our agenda of change, without factoring objective realities into our transformation equation.

The balance of forces

"The main motive forces of the democratic transformation are primarily represented by African workers and the African rural poor. These forces are also represented by black workers in general and the black middle strata. These are the forces which possess the best political and ideological potential to lead and defend the process of transformation... While continuing to strive to represent the black people as a whole, the movement must however ensure that, at all times, and in the first instance, it represents the interests of the workers, rural masses and the middle strata, those who constitute the majority of the people of this country." (Strategy and Tactics, ANC conference, December 1994)

After more than two years of democratic government, the power of the apartheid-era ruling class remains largely entrenched in critical areas: the security forces, the media, the bureaucracy, and above all in the commanding heights of the economy. While the leading partner of the Alliance, the ANC, is in **office**, there are real questions as to how far the democratic forces have taken **power**. This has been raised on more than one occasion by both Comrades Thabo and Madiba.

This is not to discount the fact that significant advances have been made. However, the programme of the democratic movement, the RDP, has been systematically undermined by a range of forces attempting to halt transformation.

The power of the masses, concentrated in the Alliance, is the main driving force to counter those forces attempting to divert the state off the path of fundamental transformation.

However, instead of mass mobilisation being seen as a vital force for driving transformation, we have reduced mass involvement to appeals for payment of rents and services.

The lack of leadership from the democratic movement and the lack of a people-driven transformation, has led to demobilisation and demoralisation, particularly of activists. This in turn undermines the cohesion and power of our organisations and their ability to intervene decisively in the transformation equation.

Remove the masses, the progressive forces for change from your calculation, and the power of the reactionary forces becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

It is time for the movement to problematise the transformation process and to mobilise our forces behind the new challenges.

How do we characterise this phase of our struggle?

We face a situation which is similar to “dual power”. The new democratic government, while fully legitimate, popular, and apparently in full control,

neither has its hands decisively on all the tillers of state power (the security forces, bureaucracy, parastatals, reserve bank, judiciary etc.) nor has it been able to strategically direct the economy of the country based on our own agenda. The call for blind adherence to privatisation, a reduced budget deficit for its own sake and the immediate removal of exchange controls are part of an attempt to weaken and ultimately remove the state’s role in the economy.

This sense of ‘dual power’ helps to convey the strategic moment in which we find ourselves: the existence of a popular bloc, with its representatives in government, parliament and other institutions, pitted against a minority bloc, attempting to use its access to economic and other power to abort the NDR. The debate is not about whether we are in the phase of completing the struggle for so-

While the leading partner of the Alliance, the ANC, is in office, there are real questions as to how far the democratic forces have taken power.

cialism or national democracy. The question is: having successfully held democratic elections, are we able to seriously **enter** into the task of beginning to decisively transform our country in a manner which will ensure the success of the NDR?

This moment of transition — crudely put, either moving forward to a fundamental transformation, or backwards to the consolidation of minority privilege, albeit with new features — is a **historical moment**, which can’t last indefinitely. Either of the two forces or blocs outlined above, will seize the initiative to lead and direct society. This poses a challenge to the Alliance, government, members of parliament, and progressive civil society to take our fate into our own hands.

This implies two things: firstly, the need for a popular **programme**, which is implementable, broadly supported, and able to achieve the social hegemony required to break this deadlock and continuously shift the power balance qualitatively in our favour. Secondly, the **political will**, and organisational ability to drive this programme.

Can we present a hegemonic alternative to lead society?

The great Italian revolutionary Gramsci used the concept of ‘hegemony’ to describe the process whereby a particular class in society successfully puts forward its programme for adoption by society as a whole. The RDP was an extremely powerful intervention by the democratic forces in our country to assert their hegemony.

However, there is a concerted attempt to impose capital’s agenda on society as the only feasible alternative to social and economic transformation. Even those who don’t like it argue that we have to accept the limitations which the international environment imposes on us. A slogan coined by a multinational company in South Africa to capture this sense of ‘the end of history’ is the ‘TINA’ scenario, which stands for “There Is No Alternative”! (We need to counterpose this with a ‘THEBA’ scenario — **There Has To Be An Alternative!**)

It is critical that we as a movement have a rigorous and coherent platform which shows that the prescriptions of capital’s agenda are disastrous, that we have a viable alternative, that we won’t be blackmailed into abandoning our programme and that we are capable of mobilising our people behind it.

There is nothing inherently wrong in the RDP which suggests that it was an inappropriate or unrealistic programme. It is therefore not a question of reinventing the RDP, but demonstrating that we have a concrete, achievable programme to implement it and a programme to involve the masses in driving this process. If the alliance is to drive this process, both democratic government and progressive civil society must be fully involved.

Regalvanising the MDM

A broad front of MDM forces for transformation, transforming our mass organisations into a different type of vehicle than that used to destroy apartheid, is a basic necessity.

The Alliance needs to have a strategic open and frank discussion with Sanco on our vision of a civic movement and its role in a democracy.

Continued fragmentation of MDM forces will have serious consequences. Governments programmes for transformation in health, land, education, local government, housing and other critical areas will depend critically on the active involvement and mobilisation of these constituencies. We have failed as an Alliance to consolidate MDM organisations as a meaningful united force in society since the elections. This must be rectified through the development of an effective programme to bring these organisations on board.

TRADE UNIONS AND THE ALLIANCE

"We have won the elections as a result of the sweat and blood of the tripartite alliance. That alliance must go on. But that does not mean that Cosatu and the SACP are subservient to the ANC. No. That's why you have criticised us in the past... We want that, because when we face any issue we want the advice of strong, independent allies who can say to us 'Now you are right', and who can say to us, 'Now you are wrong'. That is why we have been so strong. We've been working with strong, independent organisations that are self-confident, fearless, and who can express their views, even when those views clash with ours." (President Mandela, The Shopsteward, May 1996)

Some in the trade union movement may write off the entire movement as having abandoned the NDR and conclude that the Alliance is no longer a viable vehicle for transformation. This would be mistaken:

- by abandoning the most powerful vehicle for transformation to other forces in society;
- by abandoning the masses, who remain convinced that the Alliance represents their strongest hope of imple-



menting a programme for fundamental change;

- by suggesting that the trade unions themselves are inherently progressive or socialist, and ignoring the fact that the unions are subject to both progressive and reactionary tendencies.

Workers are themselves grappling with how to relate to the changed situation. They want to engage with the situation. They want to work with the ANC, but are not clear as to what that working relationship should be. How does it relate to their struggles — better conditions of employment, elimination of poverty and unemployment, socialism, etc.

More engagement is needed between Cosatu and the SACP. While Cosatu has a vision that extends beyond the shopfloor, it needs a revolutionary working class party to spearhead a working class programme. This will help to locate the struggle for socialism in the current struggles.

Cosatu faces the danger of becoming reactive and defensive. As our broad social role becomes increasingly difficult to sustain, we face the danger of isolation and a retreat into narrow economism. Any attempt to play the role of a "permanent opposition" would also see the marginalisation of unions and fragmentation of the democratic forces. This starkly poses the need for a new strategy, both for the Alliance and the trade union movement.

We need a sharper focus on strategic areas which decisively improve people's quality of life and leverage power for the popular forces and democratic government in the economy

PROPOSAL FOR AN ALLIANCE PROGRAMME

Need for a new strategy

The RDP should remain the programme of the Alliance. What we need now is a strategy for its implementation. This needs to be based on strategic core areas which can lay the basis, particularly in the socio-economic sphere and in the transformation of state institutions, for a qualitative movement forward in the RDP's implementation. We should seek agreement in the Alliance on concrete measures to take us forward in areas such as social security and the social wage (health, transport, pensions, UIF etc.); job creation (especially public works and investment); intervention in the financial markets; public housing and infrastructure; training; land reform; ele-

ments of trade and industrial policy; tax reform and wage policy (especially reducing the wage gap).

We need a sharper focus on strategic areas which both decisively improve people's quality of life and leverage significant power for the popular forces and democratic government, in the economy.

These core measures would obviously need to be located within a macro-economic framework which is viable and sustainable. If the existing macro-economic framework is unable to accommodate the most basic elements of the Alliance agenda, it would need to be reworked to bring it in line with the programme adopted by the Alliance.

Alliance approach to processes of governance

The political structures of the Alliance should take responsibility to drive its own programme. However, the locus of decision-making on key political issues has not been in Alliance structures but in individual Ministries. The Alliance only engages with the product.

This has led to conflicting perspectives emerging between the democratic forces in the Executive (Cabinet) and the Legislature (Parliament) and in Nedlac and other structures on the strategy and content of socio-economic issues. In the absence of a coherent Alliance approach, other forces have

The organisation of the main mass formations under the leadership of the Alliance has catapulted a progressive people's government into power on the basis of an overwhelming popular mandate.

sometimes occupied this space. This is a recipe for ongoing conflict and division.

The alternative is for the Alliance to reach an Accord or National Agreement on strategic issues, as well as a programme to implement these at different levels of government. This would clearly bind the Alliance forces to actively pursue this agenda in all areas. The Alliance would openly mobilise people for the implementation and defence of agreed programmes in parliament, Nedlac and other areas of governance. It would ensure a cooperative approach between government and labour in Nedlac, rather than Nedlac being seen as a delaying mechanism or an institution which prevents government from governing.

This ambitious approach involves both collective decision-making and collective responsibility. It also requires a high level of ongoing coordination to ensure the process is managed effectively. It may require dynamic contact between the Alliance Secretariat with the Deputy President and the Chief Whip, Alliance NOB's from time to time and the Alliance Executive.

Re-examining the need for a Reconstruction Accord

One initial conceptualisation of the RDP was that there should be a Reconstruction Accord between Cosatu and the ANC. The idea was to have a binding agreement or Pact in terms of which broad policy frameworks would be translated into detailed commitments on how various policy areas would be implemented. In the event, this approach was not pursued and the ANC was elected on a broad RDP mandate.

Limited but important advances have been made. However, serious questions have arisen about whether the RDP vision is being followed in vital

areas.

It may be necessary to revisit the need for a pact/ accord/ agreement between Cosatu and the ANC or within the Alliance. An Alliance accord would require agreement on the priority tasks of social transformation, government, strategic areas for policy decision, and legislation or other measures needed for implementation. This would need to be an integrated package which provided a solid platform to advance towards the comprehensive implementation of the RDP.

Refusal to consider an Alliance pact or to put forward a viable alternative would be short-sighted.

A national agreement with the ANC presents us with an opportunity to have a joint negotiating position with government when entering into discussions with capital. This could also present an opportunity to the Alliance to bring about a new focus prior to and after the next elections.

Resistance to "social accords" has been largely based on experiences in other countries and fear of no-strike provisions and wage restraint. Any agreement would have to be based on mutual trust, transparency and articulation of our strategic objectives. The masses will also need to be brought on board.

A Social Accord does not necessarily imply wage restraint or no-strike provisions:

- **Wage restraint** — An Accord in South Africa would need to reorganise the wage structure and raise the living standards of the majority of workers. It may entail restraints or cuts for the high-paid, including management.
- **No-strike provisions and demobilisation** — There is no way the trade union movement would suspend its right to strike. Neither would such a call come from the SACP and ANC. Demobilisation depends on the type of accord negotiated.

Elements of an accord

The issues which form the basis of any national agreement should not be a wish-list, but strategic issues which will tilt the balance of economic power in favour of the popular forces, by giving the democratic state and its supporting institutions, effective leverage over areas

of investment, production and delivery. At the same time, they should raise effective incomes and create basic services, particularly for the poorest 70%.

The combination of supply-side measures to boost production; the effect of rising demand in the economy, as a result of economic improvements for the majority; and mechanisms by the state to target investment in job creation, would all be part of a coherent strategy to address the crisis of unemployment, particularly for the youth and rural women. Fiscal and monetary policies would have to be realigned to facilitate this strategy, as would the process of restructuring the public service and parastatals.

Two types of interventions would form the core areas of an Alliance agreement.

- **Areas driven and organised by the state.** These interventions would be targeted towards providing a social wage across the board, addressing poverty, unleashing economic activity and attacking unemployment. Proposed areas of focus are: **public mass housing and infrastructure**; **a national health system**; **social safety net** (including comprehensive unemployment insurance; old age pensions; etc.); **public transport system**; **land reform**; **public job creation** measures (including public works, procurement and taxation strategies); **public sector restructuring** accord (agreement on the re-organisation of the public service and parastatals, to ensure delivery); and **public investment strategy**.

- **Areas primarily implemented in the private sector, but require state regulation.** Some of the strategic areas which would need to be focused on are:

- **An income/wage policy.** From government's side, the commitment to increase the **social wage** — and therefore the income of working people as a whole (the goods and services government provides which increase the real value of workers' basic wage) is outlined in the above measures. Also critical is a programme to **reduce the apartheid wage gap**. A target could be set, setting out the ratios at various levels. This could be included in Employment Equity legislation. Reducing the wage gap would be linked to reorganisation of grading and training.

- **A national training** and general HRD drive. Again targets should be set. This should be seen as a key element of affirmative action for workers. The national training levy, proposed in '*Social Equity*' should be introduced.

- **Intervention to ensure productive investment** in the economy. Measures to ensure productive investment should include prescribed assets which provide that a certain proportion of investments have to go into public projects, and the introduction of tax disincentives to penalise speculation (including the tax on dividends — STC — which the Department of Finance wants to scrap). There should be a deliberate policy to lower interest rates;

- **The creation of a national retirement fund (pension) scheme.** This would be compulsory and ensure portability and worker control. It would be a key strategic lever in the economy.

- **Supply side measures** and a **social plan.** Measures to assist the process of restructuring our industries, and to put alternatives in place where industries are down-scaling. '*Social Equity*' proposals for a Social Plan Act/Fund, and a National Restructuring Fund for new technology and work organisation.

- **A national employment strategy** which limits retrenchments, and creates incentives for job creation, and disincentives for capital intensity.

It is important to note that in all areas, benefits accrue to working people and the poor across the board. Economic benefits are not limited to the employed, in areas such as health, social welfare, housing etc, which a private sector driven policy would tend to do. Proposals in these areas would clearly debunk the myth that trade unions are only narrowly concerned with the welfare of their own members.

The platform outlined may be missing key elements, or may need to be tightened up. However, it conveys the vision of an integrated platform which could provide the basis for an agreement.

Alliance conception of the economic role of the state

There are a range of views within the Alliance on the state's economic role. The RDP envisaged extensive state in-

tervention in a variety of areas, and a leading role for the state in others.

The Alliance needs to audit areas where the state has significant economic muscle and how this can be harnessed for reconstruction.

A brief survey of the institutions under the control, or potential control of the state and trade unions, reveals that the democratic state and its allies potentially have hundreds of billions of Rands directly or indirectly under their control, to lever transformation in the economy. This includes:

- The national fiscus (budget), through which the state spends billions of Rands annually. Significant portions of this can be harnessed for RDP objectives through procurement policies at all levels;

- Existing parastatals, which control huge assets and budgets, in strategic areas of the economy such as telecommunications, energy and transport;

- Potential new parastatals, such as housing, which would give government leverage over areas of the construction industry, pricing of building materials etc.

- Government intervention in the financial sector, which includes the proposal to set up Post Office Banks, which would service people throughout the country, and provide low interest loans and other services on terms more favourable than the commercial sector;

- Public control of the pension and provident funds, which are worth close on R500 billion, through the Public Investment Commission for public service pensions, and the setting up of a National Pension Fund, which would amalgamate all existing private sector funds. This would allow workers to direct investment of their capital, including through the use of prescribed assets;

- The setting up of a Reconstruction Bond for those who want to invest in public reconstruction projects;

- The harnessing of institutions such as the IDC, DBSA and others to channel investment in job-creating industry, and development projects;

- Transforming the Reserve Bank to ensure that its monetary policies assist, rather than frustrate expansionary and developmental economic policies;

- Leverage of the investment potential of the trade unions.

ALLIANCE ACCORD AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH CAPITAL

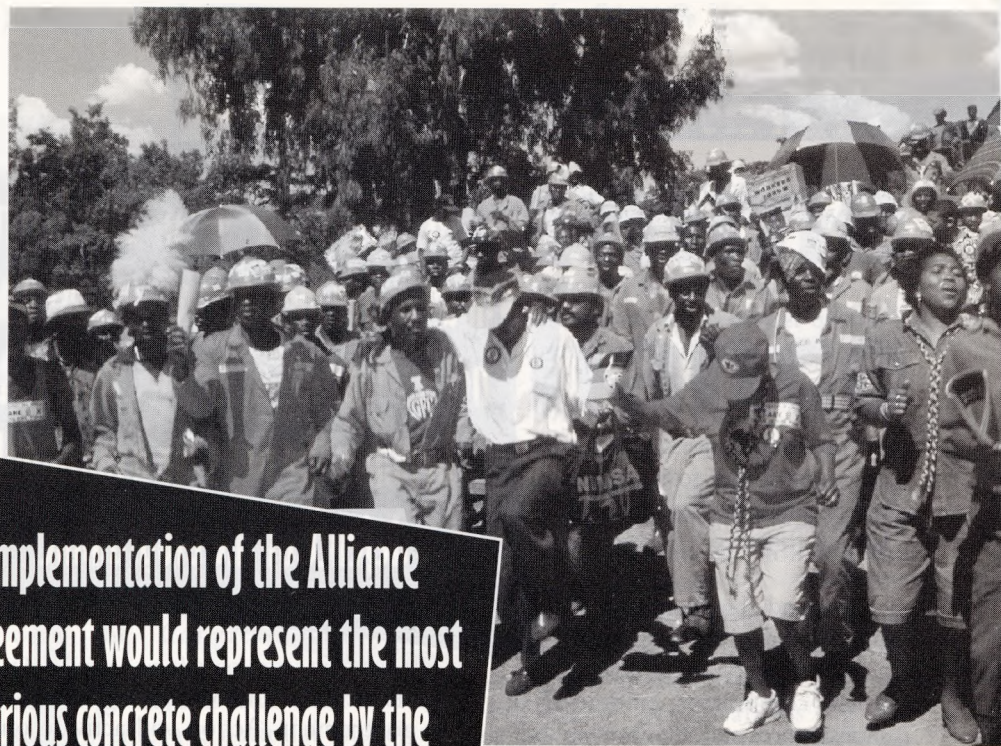
“Transformation is not possible in a developing country like South Africa - not with our history, our incompetent civil service and inexperienced politicians. One should question whether transformation is necessary at all...” (Leading businessman, Millennium magazine, 1996)

No proposal is being made for Cosatu to enter a comprehensive accord with capital, through Nedlac or any other forum. Rather, specific agreements would be entered into with other stakeholders, including capital, on specific areas, for example training. Alliance partners would go into such negotiations within the comprehensive framework set out by the Alliance Agreement.

This would not be confined to Nedlac, but would include other multipartite forums such as the NTB, and industry forums.

We should have no illusion that implementation of the Alliance Agreement will be easily accepted by business. It would represent the most serious concrete challenge by the democratic forces to the relations of economic power in the country.

We should not fall into the trap of the *quid pro quo* (‘this for that’) line, which suggests that workers have to sacrifice in order to get what is rightfully theirs. It is ludicrous to suggest for example that workers earning below the poverty line should accept a wage freeze, in order to benefit from basic social security and health care. However, there is nothing wrong with negotiating a national productivity agreement, as proposed in ‘Social Equity’, which links productivity improvements to not only wages, but job creation and investment. The trade union movement favours proposals which will lead to an expansion in the economy, as long as this improves workers’ lives.



Implementation of the Alliance Agreement would represent the most serious concrete challenge by the democratic forces to the relations of economic power in the country

trade unionism if Cosatu was to become a sweetheart federation. Our members will do to us what we have done with the old TUCSA unions.” (1994 Exco paper)

The development of an Alliance Accord in no way contradicts the process of tripartite negotiations in Nedlac or other fora.

An Accord would give a new focus to all the efforts of the alliance. It would guide the ANC in government. For the unions it would give a focus to the annual collective bargaining rounds, and for government, organised labour and the community in Nedlac, it would be the framework for national agreements.

It would be able to win widespread public support, and be the basis to win over sections of business, instead of us constantly acceding to the demands of those who want the government to abandon its election mandate.

DEVELOPMENT OF COSATU’S ABILITY TO ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY

“The changing situation demands of us to redefine our role. New methods of dealing with problems, demands and expectations will have to be found. While workers in the past may have joined us because of our links with the Congress movement, in the future they will join us primarily because they expect us to safeguard their interest... It will be a sad day for

The proposals in this paper, no matter how good they are, will have no impact unless we seriously focus our organisation on achieving the objectives we have set out. It is useless lamenting about our lack of capacity when we don’t effectively utilise the capacity we already have. We need to harness the structures, experience and expertise we have in our ranks. We are not tapping into the wealth of experience which the collective worker leadership has accumulated over the last two decades. We need to ‘regear’ the organisation for the challenges facing us.

The Federation’s structures need to take political responsibility for developing coherent policy options. Good technical research and scenario planning must be guided by the policy framework we are setting for ourselves. The organisation as a whole must take responsibility for going beyond the generality of Congress resolutions, to develop substantial policy proposals which can be placed on the table for the Alliance to debate.

The involvement of our membership is critical in two respects:

- In informing the policies and ensuring that there is understanding of the issues which will become highly contested in society at large.
- To ensure that we lead the process of

mobilising society in support of the Alliance's programme for transformation.

The involvement of our membership is vital if the programme we develop is to have long-term legitimacy. We should root the Alliance Accord in an active membership process which not only contributes to its content, but becomes the basis for a continual defence of the programme.

Beyond the shopfloor, we should make resources available to have ongoing forums in the community, embracing our shopstewards and membership, but also members from civics the ANC and SACP, and other community based organisations. A people-driven programme offers an important means of revitalising community structures. If all parts of the democratic movement contribute, a national focus will be brought to the work of all the sections of the community.

Movement for Reconstruction: Congress and various affiliates have made creative proposals ranging from the setting up work brigades to the setting up of a civil society RDP fund, and the donation of working time to the RDP. There needs to be a national campaign by the Alliance to mobilise people around these and other proposals.

We have always maintained that strong organisation is key. While attendance at meetings, marches or stay-aways is an important indicator, we should not undermine the strong shopfloor organisation we have as affiliates. While workers may be absent from Cosatu activities, they are available for affiliate activities since they relate closely to their day to day needs as workers. The challenge is to link these activities to the macro issues politically and economically. We require affiliate capacity for affiliates to reach their members and to put aside time for discussions of Cosatu-linked activities.

The challenge for us is to find creative organisational approaches to mobilise our structures around campaigns for transformation, rather than limiting ourselves to reactive oppositional activity. This needs to involve not only the

We should root the Alliance Accord in an active membership process which not only contributes to its content, but becomes the basis for a continual defence of the programme

alliance and the MDM, but even the government. Action will activate our structures.

A joint programme should be concretised in campaigns as a way of involving our members in policy formulation, implementation and struggle. We intend to use the proposals in this document as a basis for mass mobilisation of our members. We also need to use this to rekindle worker participation in the ANC, SACP and civics.

THE WAY FORWARD

This paper has attempted to outline the need for a new programme and strategy for Cosatu and the Alliance in taking forward the process of transforming our country:

We have proposed, as the core of this strategy, that:

- The Alliance enter into a National Agreement on a programme to implement the RDP in strategic areas.
- This Agreement be combined with a programme of national mass mobilisation for transformation.
- The broad MDM forces need to be involved in the development and implementation of the programme.
- The ANC, as majority party, needs to align all processes of governance towards achievement of this programme. The same should apply to other Alliance partners.

There is probably a limited window of opportunity allowing such an agreement to be negotiated. There is a danger that the current economic policy direction, and the resultant alienation of the Alliance's constituency, will become so entrenched, as to make the negotia-

tion of such an Agreement impossible.

We therefore need to agree on a number of core issues:

- Whether the broad approach in the proposal is acceptable. If so, how to take it forward in Alliance structures;
- Further identification, removal or refinement of the strategic issues in our proposal for an Alliance Accord, bearing in mind the need to avoid a wish-list;
- Mechanisms to develop joint Alliance policy proposals on areas identified for the Alliance Agreement. The Alliance must own the process;
- Proposals for a programme for mass mobilisation for transformation, and involvement of allies in the MDM;
- Proposals for transformation of Alliance structures to enable the Alliance to effectively drive such a programme;
- Measures which need to be taken in Cosatu to ensure our effective participation;
- Utilising resources available to the democratic movement to assist in development and defence of our macro-economic policies; development of policy options on implementation mechanisms; and monitoring of the implementation of agreed policies by the state; and
- An approach to governance, given that a number of policy areas have been finalised or are far advanced. Further that only some of these proposals take us forward in terms of implementing the goals of the RDP. There would need to be an agreement in the Alliance as to how to adjust these, where necessary.

CONCLUSION

This paper will be presented to all Cosatu structures, which are expected to engage in discussion with a view to arriving at a broad agreement at the Exco in February 1997. Those issues not resolved will be debated at the April CEC or the 6th National Congress.

The paper will also be made available to the ANC and the SACP to help them gain sight of the issues we are debating and to factor them into their own internal discussion, whereafter an Alliance process can be set in place. ✪