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DEMOCRATISED TRANSPORT LOGISTICS AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

PRESS RELEASE

17 FEBRUARY 2021

DETAWU SUPPORTS SAFTU NATIONAL STRIKE 100%

The Democratized Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union (DETAWU) unequivocally supports the national strike by the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU) on Wednesday next week.

The national strike is set to take place on the same day as Minister of Finance Tito Mboweni is to deliver the budget speech, to highlight the numerous economic problems facing the country including unprecedented unemployment, abject poverty and widening inequality.

In addition to the many problems highlighted by the federation, DETAWU is concerned by the increasing attempts to collapse collective bargaining in the country. It is unfortunate that government is the one leading this misguided charge as exemplified by its refusal to implement the remainder of the public sector wage agreement signed in 2018. Taking a cue from the state, unscrupulous private sector employers such as those in the private security industry have indicated their intention to emulate the move and not comply with signed wage agreements.

DETAWU has also noted multiple activities aimed at retrenching workers and reducing working hours across sectors such as contract cleaning, road freight and road passenger. Employers claim that this is due to the adverse effects Covid-19 has had on their businesses.

As a union that organises workers in the trucking industry, DETAWU is especially worried by government's lack of commitment to ending the violence that has wreaked havoc in the sector since 2018. We are also aggrieved that government has failed to provide financial assistance to the struggling road passenger bus sector.

The effect of the budget cuts at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) are bound to be felt soon as commissioners attempt to keep up with an increasing workload. Bearing in mind, the commission was already under pressure following weeks of lockdown last year, now with the budget cuts an even smaller pool of commissioners will have to contend with a mounting caseload.

The collapse of state-owned entities following years of corruption and looting has a direct impact not only on the core staff employed at these organisations, but also on support staff such as cleaners and security guards, who lose their jobs as a result. Efforts to clean up these entities must be galvanised for the good of all.

In response to Minister Mboweni's call for tips on what to include in the budget, DETAWU strongly urges him to increase the R350 grant for unemployed individuals as it is too little particularly as food prices continue to skyrocket.

DETAUWU reiterates its support of SAFTU's national strike on 24 February and is calling on its members to stay away from work or join the Covid-19 safety regulation compliant activities that are planned across the various provinces.

There will be no retreat or surrender as we continue to fight for an equal and just society free of corruption.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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