

DETAWU General Secretary address at the national launch of operation khula Detawu and the handing over of Union vehicles.

Comrade President comrade Tjaitjai and your team, Gauteng Interim leadership, SAFTU National organiser cde Lebogang, shop stewards, and officials, receive my revolutionary greetings.

As I begin let me send our heartfelt condolences to all our members and their families who perished from the pandemic covid-19, and we call upon all our members to observe the level 2 regulations to save lives, as we are concerned about a possible third and aggressive wave.

I am humbled to stand before you this morning to mark another significant and symbolic occasion in the life of our Trade Union, wherein we are launching one of the most important campaigns and we are delighted by your presence in this national launch of operation khula DETAWU, particular our shop stewards who most of them have not participated in recruitment campaigns for a while now.

We are launching our campaign under the theme

“build worker’s power, consolidate revolutionary consciousness to defeat workplace and class exploitation, failure is not an option.

As we prepare for this launch we were encouraged by Steve Bantu Biko when he said,

It is better to die for an idea that will live than to live on an idea that will die.

Today’s launch is taking place a few days after the commemoration of the assassination of comrade Chriss Hani, our failure to build a strong and militant DETAWU is a betrayal of cde Chriss Hani and what he stood for.

Our failure to build a vibrant and independent DETAWU is equal to the continuation of the killing of comrade Hani and what he stood and laid his life for.

Comrade Hani wanted a strong and conscious working-class base that could grow and be powerful enough to overthrow capitalism.

Clearly, capitalism has consolidated through the assistance of the state and the state itself has become hostile, brutal, and aggressive, it is now clear that the working class liberation can only be attained through a revolution and an insurrection.

In honour of cde Hani, we must devote ourselves to building a militant, strong, and fighting DETAWU, he would be happy to see strong Unions.

June Dube, our founding President would be happy to see us here today launching a campaign to build his Union, DETAWU.

The best honour we can give to cde Hani is to devote ourselves to building a strong working-class organ.

The best gift we can give to cde June Dube is to build an independent, fighting, and vibrant DETAWU which he sacrificed everything to establish.

As your General Secretary, I hereby relay to you a simple but yet very important message on behalf of Hani, Dube and many other departed pure working-class leaders that let us build DETAWU, a DETAWU that can fight and abolish workplace exploitation, abuse, stop the employment of illegal immigrants in various companies and industries and fight victimisation.

Let us build the working-class organ. All shenanigans confronting the country and the world today are a product of capitalism and it reinforces our shared resolve that we should work even harder to build strong working-class organs of power to confront and ultimately defeat capitalism.

Our beloved trade Union movement is under siege from all cylinders – the orchestrated -attack to collective bargaining led by the government of Cyril Ramaphosa, the rise of precarious work, depreciation of worker-to-worker solidarity, retrenchments, and outsourcing.

All these are compelling reasons to build a strong trade Union movement, build working-class power, and raise class consciousness.

Generally, there is a shortage of strong trade Unions in our Industries, except for the few. The working-class power is in disarray in Industries where we are supposed to be organised.

Workers are given raw deals year in and year out in our industries as a result of weak and compromised Trade Unions. There is a political vacuum to deal with.

DETAWU is the hope and the missing voice of workers in our industries which can fundamentally alter the balance of forces and redirect the lost ship.

Today I am calling on all of us comrades to rise, to rise and pull up our sleeves and dirty our hands,

From today we are declaring the next 36 months our moment, a moment of aggressive and uninterrupted quantitative growth through uninterrupted recruitment campaigns.

Today we are all baptised to be volunteers in chief and champions of operation Khula DETAWU, we are declared unshaken ambassadors of the campaign.

Please heed our call to join hands as we move from truck stop to truck stop, factory to factory, mall to mall, airport to airport, gatehouse to gatehouse, industrial site to industrial site, bus terminal to bus terminal, truck depot to truck depot, government site to government site, and everywhere else where workers within our scope are found.

Comrade leaders. Officials and shop stewards, we have been calling upon you to join hands to build your Union and you have not responded positively, we are calling upon us once again as we launch operation Khula DETAWU to stand up and join hands and build our Union, a strong DETAWU.

To give further meaning to our growth path and operation khula DETAWU, we have now established a new department at Head office, the national organising, campaigns, and recruitment department headed by a committed and hard-working comrade Praisewell Nsibande, a mop.

The habit of standing on the sidelines and pointing fingers must fall, let us join hands to build our Union, make operation Khula DETAWU a success.

We expect all of us for the next 36 months to march side by side with our organisers running successful recruitment programs under operation Khula Detawu.

For us, failure is not an option and we need each one of us here to make a supreme sacrifice to help build a strong DETAWU that we can all be proud of.

We are now under severe political pressure to build organisational livers in locals, sectors, sub-sectors, Provinces, and everywhere else, this is very important both politically and organisationally and it cannot be overemphasised.

Operation Khula DETAWU is meant to expedite the realisation of our shared vision to build a credible organisation with proper structures in place in order to apply solid internal democratic controls that are structures driven and constitutionally structured.

We cannot afford moonlighting leaders anymore, we just can't afford, we cannot afford to run the entire organisation on interim arrangements more than five years down the line.

We should not be prepared to celebrate the 10th anniversary without solid compliant structures in place.

We should not be prepared to celebrate the 10th anniversary without taking lead in Bargaining Councils on behalf of our members.

We are tired of being on the periphery and being political spectators whilst our member's lives are messed up.

Now is about time for our Union, to rise against all odds, and I do not doubt in my mind that through your commitment and determination DETAWU shall rise and assume the point of reference status in our industries.

Comrades I must categorically mention that high-heel shoe moments are over, we are entering a new revolutionary season of tracksuits and running shoes as a preferred and fashionable dress code in DETAWU, starting with the President and the GS has already complied right down to the administrator.

Today we seriously declare all Union officials and shop stewards the ground leading forces and champions of operation khula DETAWU.

For the next 36 months, we declare ourselves as pure field workers in a strategic, systematic, and coordinated approach.

Officials must from now onwards have serious reasons to sit around offices doing nothing, that moment has passed and from Monday when we find officials in offices, we shall seek reasons why because we expect all officials to be in the field of play recruiting new members.

We must not allow this momentum to lapse, never, as early as next week we must all hit the ground running, we will monitor this through regular and random evening feedback zoom meetings.

We need to work towards removing the compromised Unions out of Bargaining Councils by organising workers out of those Unions in large numbers. Ayamosha lamaUnions in Bargaining Councils.

To demonstrate our absolute political commitment in building the Union, today we are releasing to the hands of organisers the first batch of 4 spotless cars and bank petrol cards for purposes of running operation khula DETAWU and rendering decent service to our members.

These vehicles as you see them here are part of building blocks in enabling a conducive operational environment for DETAWU to thrive in our sectors.

We call upon the recipients to take care of our vehicles as if there are theirs.

This means another tick in the box as we fulfill our desire to build a strong and self-sustenance Union, and this represents another new era of setting a new growth path for the manifestation of greater things to come.

We do not want to see these cars standing in the office's parking bays doing nothing, they must be in the field servicing members and running operation khula DETAWU if we see them standing in Union buildings we will want to know why, and we will seriously demand answers and accountability.

Depending on the performance and outcome of this project, which we are very positive, soon we could be releasing another batch of cars

because ultimately there must be no organiser in the Union who is a pedestrian and miss or arrive late in appointments.

The Union is operating in modern-day society and it must be shaped to compete with the circumstances. We want to attract high-quality and hardworking organisers to the Union, not liabilities.

We want to take the Union closer to workers, we aim to open offices in almost all strategic towns and cities. This mission must be achieved in our lifetime because working together we can do more.

We want to attract to the Union individuals who would say what can I do for my Union as opposed to those who usually say what can my Union do for me.

This is a new chapter of countless possibilities. We are thankful to the comrades who through all difficulties remain dedicated and loyal to the cause.

Our militant collective worker consciousness and identity leave us with no option other than to take the struggle of workers forward.

As we release these cars we are at the same time issuing gazebos each to MP, WC, GP, and Limpopo as a sign that you should be found in every truck stop.

You are now well-armed comrades, and we are releasing you to the battlefield, well equipped and we are confident that you shall not disappoint.

We are fearless and determined, failure is not an option, victory is certain.

Very soon before the end of next week will be deploying NOBS to come and stay with you and join your recruitment programs. Things have to be different comrades.

On behalf of the leadership let me extend our gratitude to Gauteng Province for ensuring that this event becomes a success, you have punched above your weight and you have set an interesting challenge to other provinces as we will be going there soon.

With this enthusiasm we witnessed here today, there is no doubt that Gauteng could meet the constitutional numbers and go to their launching congress this year, having launched locals.

The reality is that if Gauteng takes the responsibility and lead this campaign the rest of the provinces will follow and I strongly challenge Gauteng to occupy its rightful position as I have done in the past.

As I conclude comrades I must say that today we are making a most important class choice and responding to a fundamental material question on who will we serve between fear and bravery, the working class or capitalism we are overwhelmingly choosing the working class and bravery.

I want to draw similarities between our situation and the chronicle in the holy book, that at some point there was a man called Joshua, we are told that he convened a meeting of his trusted forces and he reflected on their situation, towards the end of the conversation he asked them an important question as I do to you now.

Uma kukubi emehlweni enu ukumkhonza uJehova, khethani namuhla ukuthi ngubani eniyakumkhonza na, noma oNkulunkulu abamkhonzayo ayihle besengaphesheya komfula, noma oNkulunkulu bama Amori enihlala ezweni labo, kepha mina nendle yami siyakumkhonza uJehova.

And I say to you just like Joshua me and my comrades we shall serve and build DETAWU.

Khula DETAWU khula.

Qina operation khula DETAWU qina

Phansi ngamagwala phansi

Phambili ngamaqhawe phambili

Phansi ngamavila phansi

Phambili ngeyishosho phambili.

Viva operation khula DETAWU viva