

Media statement

COSATU Congress must listen to the workers

The Nine-Plus unions who opposed the expulsion of NUMSA and Zwelinzima Vavi from COSATU have noted with great concern media reports, in particular that by Theto Mahlakoana in Business Report on 9 July 2015, that the federation's leadership is "vowing to kick out anyone who sought to speak or act against COSATU's constitution and agenda" at its special national congress (SNC) next week.

It is standard practice that one of the first items of any agenda of any Federation meeting must be the adoption of the agenda – with room to move amendments. The leadership should be aware that the Constitution, Clause 11.2.1, states that COSATU meetings "must follow the agenda *unless the participants decide otherwise*". The SNC must be no exception.

The Chairperson of a session cannot deny them this right and the Acting General Secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali is out of order to say that "COSATU would not be entertaining calls for the reinstatement of expelled former general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi or NUMSA".

The Nine-Plus have every right to move amendments to the agenda from the floor, including to call for their reinstatement, and other matters for discussion by delegates.

Even more alarming is the report that COSATU's second deputy president, Zingiswa Losi, alleged that NUMSA had budgeted R250 000 for the congress, insinuating it could be used to bribe delegates and that "Money is used for delegates to be hyper at times in congresses".

If true, the Deputy President's statement portrays a desperate leadership that feels under threat and fearful of the members' response to their brutal dismissal of its biggest affiliate and General Secretary.

The Nine-Plus unions reiterate that they will be attending the SNC in order to exercise their democratic and constitutional right to discuss the implementation of COSATU Congress resolutions and opening a pathway to unity and cohesion.

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