

Mining Indaba & Alternative Mining Indaba 2023

For the first time since in the convening of the various Mining Indaba's, this year, Industry had acknowledged the imperative role of Labour and their input in the Indaba, hence Labour including NUMSA as part of the Industrial Global Union representation were speakers at the Mining Indaba 2023 as well as the Alternative mining indaba at the University of Capetown with academic researchers from all over the world that focused on "Africa amidst the Energy transitions and opportunity.

The Energy indaba primary focus was about unlocking Investment and Technological advancements within the Mining and associated industries, but our views as Labour was about job sustainability, equity, diversification and transitions based on a pace and cost affordable for the workers and the country to make such transitions which has always been NUMSA core position

The core views of Labour focus was bringing workers on board in the technological change, considering the future of mining and mobility, Trade Unions from all Sub Saharan Africa were represented in this event to guide industry *into a good transition plan* that benefits workers and society at large. Below were some of the key issues raised in the various speaker's discussions.

Overall and particularly in the coal sector, Trade unions were pushing for a comprehensive approach to job security and job retention that involves anticipation, mapping and planning. We put firmly on the table in dialogue with mining companies, for example, the retention of the highly qualified workforce, negotiation of transition agreements. We also looked at issues "*beyond climate change and the drivers of the impacts on the world of work in the current transition underway and Trade Union proposals for a mitigation pathway*", amongst other. The other urgent questions raised were in terms of where are the future 'green' jobs and what were the prospects for such jobs in the low carbon energy transition (Renewable energy solar, wind, battery storage, hydrogen etc.), as well as who will be occupying these jobs, and whether these jobs will be jobs be decent and sustainable. Conversations was also had with Botswana that has joined the Canadians towards sustainable mining initiatives taking into account other forms of informal mining as well.

The core of conversation were centered around on what the deepest and fundamental concerns of workers are in relation to the transition to a low carbon energy future and to what extent Just Transition dialogue takes place in the operations between all stakeholders (workers Trade unions and companies, both on a Global and local perspective) and what the demands for a just transition were, of which Labour articulated its various positions in a unified manner of what a just transition should look like. This summarised as making the transition but "not at the cost of Labour".

These were some of the highlights that were emphasised in the conversations.

The response to climate change brings its own challenges arising out of technological innovations, throwing therefore a curve ball beyond climate change that determines the future world of work consistent with low carbon energy transition to which workers must adapt. To mitigate these impacts, both the ILO Guidelines and the Paris Agreement highlight the imperatives of a just transition and the creation of decent work as essential dimensions of climate change, since the challenges of the transition and transformation, more than anyone else, mineworkers know how unsettling and

disruptive changes to the world of work can be because they are at the coal face (no pun intended) of these impacts. As workers navigate these impacts, they must consistently remind the captains of the mining industry and governments about the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as an expression of commitment by governments, employers' and workers' organizations to uphold basic human values and as foundational principles for decent work.

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