



**NUMSA statement on the National Elections results and Coalitions: A coalition with the DA will squash and liquidate the working class!
6 June 2024**

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) has noted the election results following the elections which took place on the 29th of May. For the first time since the dawn of democracy, the governing party, the African National Congress (ANC) lost majority control of the National Parliament, giving way to a scenario where it must co-govern either through some kind of coalition or a government of national unity. South Africa is experiencing a monumental shift in the country's political landscape. The ANC lost 71 seats and for the first time in its 30 year history, it has lost its parliamentary majority. It managed to get 159 seats out of 400 parliamentary seats, and it lost its majority in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and the Northern Cape provincial legislatures.

The ANC is between a rock and a hard place. The conservative media, investors and the business community, are pressurizing it to go into a coalition with the DA. The ANC/DA coalition is preferred by the 'markets'. If the ANC chooses the DA as a coalition partner this will be the final betrayal of the working class. NUMSA rejects outright the characterization that an alliance which excludes the DA, namely, an alliance of the EFF, ANC and MK Party as a 'Doomsday alliance'. This characterization is blatantly racist. It reminds us of "Swart gevaar" tactics of the apartheid government. We have noted that the DA has become an expert of "swart gevaar" propaganda.

It is also extremely important to be honest with the South African public and the ANC itself, that the reason why the ANC lost political power, has been the failure of the ANC since taking power in 1994, to stick with a liberation vision, and key to the liberation vision is the following:

1. Full implementation of the Freedom Charter.
2. Taking ownership and control of all the commanding heights of the economy and all our country's minerals.
3. At the back of those minerals, to champion manufacturing and industrialisation.
4. To address the land question, and to transform the South African economy which we have always characterised as the minerals-energy-finance complex.
5. As NUMSA we have consistently raised and registered the neoliberal and destructive nature of the macroeconomic policy in the form of GEAR that the ANC government adopted in 1996 which:
 - a. Liberalised trade leading to disastrous levels of deindustrialisation.
 - b. Removed exchange controls, allowing money we desperately needed to be invested into productive sectors of the economy to leave the country both legally and illegally.
 - c. In the past 3 decades we have bemoaned the crisis caused by the neoliberal macroeconomic framework which championed austerity

measures and as such it hollowed out the role of the state in the economy and in delivering critical strategic infrastructure to our people such as roads, schools, hospitals, leading to closure of agriculture, nursing and teachers colleges. As a result of this macroeconomic framework and its belt-tightening, government failed to deliver free and compulsory education.

- d. These global market forces even dictated to the ANC government not to touch coal and as a result the whole country was plunged into the catastrophe of rolling blackouts, crippling the South African economy at the expense of many jobs that have been lost when all that was supposed to be done was to do all what other countries are doing which is a continuous quality maintenance of power stations in order to secure 75 % Energy Availability Factor. All of these countries and institutions who dictated to south Africa to follow a wrong transition in handling the movement from fossil fuels to renewables, their baseload is on coal, nuclear and gas but they had guts to dictate to South Africa and its people, despite us being a sovereign country, what energy mix we must have, instead of allowing us as a sovereign country to decide on an energy mix that will suit our economy and enable us to power our communities. This agenda of collapsing Eskom is not a neutral agenda. It is a dangerous agenda that has got a mission to privatise our country's energy provision and that as NUMSA, we remain firm in rejecting the breaking Eskom up into 3 separate divisions such as generation, transmission and distribution.
- e. When the National Development Plan (NDP) was introduced, which was supposed to be an alternative to GEAR, we were very clear then that this was nothing but pacification of the South African public and it did nothing to restructure the South African economy. It didn't prioritise job creation, the only jobs it talked about were window-office cleaning and hairdressing. What was extremely bad was that we discovered and exposed the fact that this was a clear policy of the Democratic Alliance, as we compared it clause by clause with the DA policy. That is why the NDP failed dismally to meet all its targets and objectives.

It is against this background that as a union we want to be on record and remind the ANC and its leadership that it has lost political power and the confidence of the masses, because of not implementing this revolutionary agenda we are talking about. Therefore, it is not in choosing any political party to be in coalition with the ANC that will not advance solutions to the frustrations of the masses of the people who are victims of poverty, unemployment and inequalities as a result of the ANC in 1994 political breakthrough having secured political power without economic power for the masses of our country, which will resolve the crisis in South Africa today.

For the ANC to regain the confidence of the people, it needs to move away from the hollow and now clearly expired negotiated settlement and go for the affirmation of the masses of our people into ownership and control of the economy, including addressing the burning land question through nationalisation without compensation as the only way of changing power relations in order to realise the fundamental vision and goals of our liberation struggle and genuine non-racialism, non-sexism and fundamental transformation of South Africa. This, the ANC cannot do through a coalition with the

DA, as the DA in its political posture, its policies, define it as the political axis of the ruling class, and it is its mission and reason for existence to oppose the liberation of the oppressed and still colonised Black and African peoples of this country. It advances nothing that is about the liberation of the Blacks and African people in our country who remain economically marginalised, landless and dispossessed in the past three decades.

It is NUMSA's clarion call for a couple of reasons, that yes the ANC must engage with all other black left political parties in order to form a government. It must leave out the Democratic Alliance and Freedom Front Plus for obvious reasons. Freedom Front Plus champions no aspirations for blacks and Africans.

The DA is worse as it has demonstrated that it is a right wing Zionist organisation, which supports Apartheid Israel. It supports Israel's ethnic cleansing and therefore genocide of Palestinians. In its manifesto, it promises to abolish the National Minimum Wage, and it wants to make embarking on a strike even more difficult, by forcing unions to pay a deposit; the DA also wants a 'flexible' labour market which means that basic protections and benefits which workers have fought decades for, will be lost with a coalition with the DA.

The DA in its manifesto, vowed that if it were to win political power (which now we hear that it must win political power through a backdoor through a coalition with the ANC) has announced that it will abolish all incentives that are supporting the auto industry, the tyre industry, the component value chain in the manufacturing sector and the textile sector. and this is what they said in their manifesto:

"Perpetual subsidies, which provide benefits based on ongoing operational behaviour. Perpetual subsidies can become difficult to reduce as they eventually form part of the operational budget of beneficiary companies. These types of subsidies are aimed at creating or retaining industries that would not ordinarily reside in South Africa were it not for the subsidy. An example of these types of subsidies includes our automotive and clothing industries, which would unlikely continue operations within South Africa if subsidies were reduced. However, it is not clear that these industries produce benefits to South Africa that justify their high levels of subsidisation. If the subsidies are not yielding an economic benefit larger than the support provided, then their continued provision should be reconsidered. One example is the number of subsidies provided to the automotive industry, with only 9 out of 42 national departments receiving a budget larger than the R31 billion in automotive subsidies provided in 2021. Furthermore, from 2009 to 2021, subsidies to the automotive industry grew by 130 percent, while employment grew by 15 percent."

If this vision of the DA were to be implemented in partnership with the ANC in a coalition, it is poor provinces who are already victims of austerity measures of GEAR who will be rendered ghost towns where the poverty of our people will continue to be their life experience. If VW, Isuzu, Mercedes Benz, BMW, Toyota South Africa, Ford Motor Company, and Nissan were to close as a result of this reckless policy of the DA, provinces like the Eastern Cape and rural towns, and KZN, community of Uitenhage in Nelson Mandela Metro, East London and the people of Mdantsane, the people of Tshwane, if these auto companies and the component value chain that benefit from

the incentives to be closed by the DA, the levels of unemployment that is already worse will deepen. The level of crime, and all other social ills associated with it, will skyrocket. It is against such a backdrop that we are asking permission from no-one, but we are calling on all of those who care in the ANC-led alliance and the rest of all other progressive political parties in the country, that there should be no coalition of the ANC with the DA. But the ANC can enter into coalition with the rest of other progressive political parties that have won seats from the 29th of May elections.

This call is in the interests of the working class and the poor of our country whose outcome of elections constitutes a clarion call to all progressive political parties that it is about time to go back to the revolutionary agenda which cannot be pursued with the Democratic Alliance, and John Steenhuisen and Hellen Zille.

The strategic important task is to put together a government that is going to address the crisis of unemployment, poverty and inequalities through an expansionary budget with a particular focus in building infrastructure in order to stimulate demand and that all our country's SOEs that have been weakened and collapsed must be recapitalised, to play their catalyst role in stimulating economic growth and that procurement and designations must be deployed to champion localisation, and create the most needed jobs, and deliver quality basic services and meet the basic needs of the people.

We reject with the contempt it deserves the misleading of the public that a coalition with the DA would create economic stability. The fundamental question is stability for what and for whom? The very same argument was advanced when GEAR was adopted in 1996, GEAR was adopted as a macroeconomic stabilisation policy for markets, but in South Africa the unemployment rate is 41.9%. South Africa is number one in the world in terms of inequality.

NUMSA views the coalition with the ANC and DA as not a light at the end of the tunnel, but an oncoming train that will squash and liquidate the working class. Should the ANC/DA coalition happen, we shall be left with no option, but to go back to basics given the despondence of the working class and the poor and call on all trade unions and all left political parties that represent the working class to unite and embark on a rolling mass action in pursuit of the demands of the working class and to pursue class struggle for a Socialist South Africa as the only guarantee for fundamental change.

There will be no necessary "stability" of Black and African hunger, unemployment, poverty and inequality that will be provided by an ANC coalition with the DA, instead this would spell a final nail in the coffin of the ANC.

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