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National Public Services Workers Union (NPSWU)

As we mark Workers' Day on May 1st, 2024, the reality for many workers in South Africa is a far cry from the celebrations and commemorations. The current economic climate has left many feeling disillusioned and struggling to make ends meet. The constant increases in the cost of living, petrol, electricity, and necessities like bread have eroded the purchasing power of workers' hard-earned wages.

The statistics paint a grim picture. South Africa's inflation rate has been steadily rising, with food prices increasing by over 15% in the past year alone. The cost of electricity has skyrocketed, with some areas experiencing hikes of up to 20%. Petrol prices have also seen significant increases, adding to the burden of commuters and transport costs. The price of bread, a staple for many households, has risen by over 25% in the past two years.

These increases have a disproportionate impact on workers, particularly those in the low- and middle-income brackets. Many are forced to make difficult choices between paying for necessities like food and electricity or other essential expenses like rent, transport, and healthcare. The result is a significant decline in their standard of living, with many struggling to make ends meet.

Furthermore, the wage growth of workers has not kept pace with the rising cost of living. Many workers have seen their wages stagnate or even decrease in real terms, leaving them with reduced disposable income and limited economic mobility. This has resulted in a decline in consumer spending, which has a ripple effect on the broader economy.

The situation is further exacerbated by the high levels of unemployment and poverty in South Africa. With an unemployment rate of over 30%, many workers are forced to rely on a single income or precarious informal employment, leaving them vulnerable to economic shocks. The poverty rate remains stubbornly high, with over 30% of the population living below the poverty line.

In addition to these economic challenges, workers in South Africa also face significant social and political challenges. The legacy of apartheid continues to have a profound impact on the labour market, with many workers facing discrimination and marginalization. The lack of access to quality education and training opportunities further limits the economic mobility of workers.

Considering these challenges, workers in South Africa have little to celebrate on Workers' Day 2024. The constant increases in the cost of living, combined with stagnant wages and limited economic opportunities, have eroded the dignity and well-being of workers. It is imperative that policymakers and stakeholders take urgent action to address these issues, including implementing policies to control

inflation, increasing the minimum wage, and investing in education and training programs.

Collective bargaining is under attack!

Only through collective action and a commitment to addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality can we build a more just and equitable society for all workers in South Africa. On this Workers' Day, we must recommit ourselves to the struggle for workers' rights and dignity, and work towards a future where all workers can enjoy a decent standard of living and a brighter economic future.

"As the National Public Service Workers Union (NPSWU), we call upon all workers to take a stand and make their voices heard on May 29th, 2024. We urge you to vote for a party that has not betrayed the trust of workers, unlike the current governing party of South Africa, which has failed to prioritize the welfare of workers.

Despite promises made, the ANC lead government has failed to increase workers' salaries, and instead, reversed the 2018 PSCBC salary increase agreement. This is a clear betrayal of the trust placed in them by the workers who have tirelessly contributed to the development of our country.

Furthermore, the ANC government has failed to absorb Community Health Workers, Community Care Givers and other workers like EPWP, leaving them in limbo and without the security of permanent employment. This is unacceptable and we say enough is enough!

It's time for a change. It's time for a government that prioritizes the needs of workers and recognizes their value. We call upon all workers to unite and vote for a party that will fight for their rights, dignity, and a better future.

Let us use our collective power to bring about change and build a South Africa that values and respects its workers. Let us vote for a government that will:

- Increase workers' salaries and improve their working conditions
- Absorb Community Health Workers and others like EPWP into permanent employment
- Honor and respect collective agreements and prioritize workers' welfare
- Outsourcing must fall we demand permanent employment of cleaners, porters and securities.
- EMRs must be paid for all hours worked and be protect.
- Doctors, Teachers must be employed.
- Protect our protect, Police men and women.
- Work towards creating a more equal and just society for all

Continues marching has not changed anything, the workers struggles must be seen and heard in putting the " X" on the 29 May 2024.

Together, we can make a difference. Together, we can build a better future for all workers in South Africa. Let workers unite and vote on May 29th, 2024!"

Equal pay for work of equal Value.

Ends.

For more Information

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