



# Nothing will stop the mineworkers

NUM general secretary, comrade Cyril Ramaphosa said in spite of the emergency, the dedication, commitment, spirit and enthusiasm of mineworkers remained high.

He said 1987 was the year in which the NUM made its mark on the mining industry with the historic Great Miners Strike.

"It was in this strike that our union - its brave and gallant members, old and young - took on the combined forces of the Chamber of Mines and the state. This challenge to the most powerful institutions in the country showed to all and sundry the brutality of the forces of repression and exploitation," comrade Ramaphosa said.

The strike captured in a very clear way the determination of the capitalist mining industry and its trusted ally, the apartheid regime, in defending the system of poverty wages, migrant labour and general oppression," he added.

## Chair for Mandela

A symbolic empty chair, which comrade Motlatsi said was not only a fountain of inspiration but a symbol of fortitude, commitment, hope and faith in victory, was reserved for the union's honorary president, comrade Nelson Mandela.

To comrade Mandela's jailers, our oppressors and exploiters together with their lackeys, the empty chair is a threat - a millstone around their necks, comrade Motlatsi said.

## Gwala spoke

Comrade Harry Gwala, a veteran stalwart of the African National Congress recently released from apartheid's jail, delivered the honorary presidential address on behalf of comrade Mandela.

As a listed person, comrade Gwala cannot be quoted.

Comrade Jay Naidoo, Cosatu's general secretary, told the congress the democratic forces in southern Africa are poised to seize the initiative that would propel our people towards victory over the forces of apartheid that have stained the subcontinent with the blood of millions of our people.

That victory, comrade Naidoo said, lies centrally in the hands of the working class of which the mineworkers are the backbone.

He said in treading the path of sacrifice, courage and resistance, workers must remember that they are walking in the footsteps of giants such as comrades Mandela, JB Marks, Gwala and countless others - many of whom have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

## Regime in crisis

Comrade Naidoo said the repressive state with its vast arsenal of repressive laws from detention without trial, treason trials, vigilante strategies, banings and restrictions have failed



Stewart HARRY GWALA is embraced by NUM organiser MANOKO NCHWE after delivering the honorary presidential address on behalf of jailed leader, NELSON MANDELA

to dampen the resistance of the masses.

The capitalist system is facing a structural crisis which it cannot recover from. There has been virtually no investment in the job creating sector because of the lack of political confidence in the regime.

Within the rulers conflicts are intensifying as the social base of the reactionary forces narrows. Diverse groupings within the white community are now looking to the ANC for future solutions.

He called on workers to work towards the establishment of a "broad coalition" of anti-apartheid forces opposed to repression and exploitation.

## Rebuild structures

He also called on workers to rebuild structures that have been weakened or crushed by the racist regime and to strengthen those that have survived and kept the flames of resistance alive.

Comrade Murphy Morobe, former acting publicity secretary of the restricted United Democratic Front (UDF) warned delegates against imperialist manoeuvres.

He told the congress there is talk in the imperialist chambers that after Namibia the focus must shift onto South Africa. He

warned against the double-standards of the West so clearly displayed in the recent Namibian crisis. The Western world condemned Swapo for the latest clashes when it was clear who the aggressor was - South Africa.

Our attitude to the imperialists must continue to be based upon

sound scientific principles.

The sudden clamour for negotiations by the Western world, comrade Morobe said, is a response to the significant advances made by the democratic movement and the growing uncertainty of the ability of the regime to safeguard the interests of the Western world.



General Secretary CYRIL RAMAPHOSA congratulated mineworkers on their strength and courage

"We must never think of negotiation outside of our strategic objective, which is genuine transformation of our society through the transfer of political and economic power to the masses of the people."

He said for us to consider negotiations there must exist conditions within which the Democratic Movement is able to mobilise and organise freely.

Whatever settlement reached in the future dispensation in this country, must not be in spite of us but because of our achievements, demands and clarity of political positions.

Earlier the NUM's general secretary, comrade Cyril Ramaphosa, told the congress that relations with the mining industry reached an all time low in the past two years.

This confirmed the union's view that the principal concern of the employers is profits and production, and that the well-being of mineworkers and their families is not a priority.

"The repressive measures now in operation in the mining industry are a microcosm of what the whole of South Africa really is. The State of Emergency is now a permanent feature of life in this country," comrade Motlatsi said.

The past two years has witnessed the bombing of Cosatu House, Khotso House, Khanya House and several regional trade union offices.

"We have also witnessed the mass production of kitskonstabels and vigilante groups, all with weapons and a licence to kill our people at random," he added.

## High level of discipline

The congress was characterised by a high level of discipline and incisive participation from delegates. The high level of critical debate and discussion once more highlighted the quality of leadership at both regional and local structures of the union.

The apparent current reluctance of Western leaders to condemn the South African regime and the racist mining industry came under strong attack from delegates who resolved to gather all discriminatory laws and statutes and hand them over to major Western leaders.

Delegates pointed out that Western leaders have slowed down on their promise to dismantle apartheid.

At the end of four days of deliberations, the union clearly charted the course it is going to follow in the next two years.

The following national office-bearers were elected into full-time positions:

President - Comrade James Motlatsi.

Vice President - Comrade Elijah Barayi.

General Secretary - Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa.

Assistant General Secretary - Comrade Marcel Golding.

Treasurer - Comrade Paul Nkuna.