

CONGRESS CHARTS

THE WAY FORWARD

Important resolutions were adopted by the National Congress of the NUM to serve as policy guidelines for the union until the next Congress in 1993.

On matters of collective bargaining, resolutions on retrenchments, wage demands and restructuring of the mining industry were intensely debated.

Delegates acknowledged the crisis facing the industry and its effect on job security.

These factors were taken into account when wage demands for 1991 were formulated.

On retrenchments the Congress resolved:

- * to intensify the call for a Summit of the mining industry which should be attended by all mining unions, all mineowners and the government to discuss the crisis the industry faces;

- * to pressure the government to declare this crisis as a national economic crisis;

- * to pressure the Chamber of Mines to agree to negotiate a national retrenchment agreement;

- * to start a campaign that will ensure that a fair retrenchment procedure is made into law;

- * that retrenchment packages should not be taxed;

- * that the NUM, COSATU and allies should develop strategies on how the mines can be structured to avoid the retrenchment of thousands of workers.

On restructuring of the mining industry Congress resolved:

- * that the NUM should campaign for the restructuring of the mining industry to enable mineworkers' participation to take place, and

- * that effective structures be set up to enable workers to participate at mine and industry level.

On wage demands for 1991 it was resolved that:

- * for the gold mining industry, negotiations should focus around certain non-wage issues which should combine to improve the living, working and social conditions for our members;

- * these proposals should be formulated around the following:

- trade union rights;
- social rights;
- industry demands;
- economic demands, and
- a wage increase that is in line with our wage policy.



Delegates arriving at the Congress: the Congress theme stands out on a delegate's T-shirt.

These demands will be formulated in line with the NUM wage policy as adopted at the 6th National Congress of 1989.

Noting that the shortage of skilled labour contributes to low productivity, thereby worsening the economic problems of the mining industry, Congress resolved that:

- * the NUM, COSATU and the entire democratic movement must make training and skills acquisition the top-most priority;

- * a national literacy campaign should be embarked upon with the active participation of the NUM, COSATU, COSATU affiliates, the ANC, the government as well as employers' organisations such as SACCOLA;

- * literacy courses should be developed at a national level;

- * workers should be given paid time-off to attend literacy and skills courses;

- * the mines must provide facilities for literacy courses;

- * all artificial education barriers to skills training should be scrapped, unless educational qualification is a requirement for the skill involved;

- * skills acquired at one mine or centre must

be transferrable to other mines and/or industries;

- * there should be several paths to qualification - modular, on-the-job and formal training routes to enable workers to opt for career paths; and

- * that skills acquired must be flexible, adaptable and portable.

Compounds and hostels remain a constant source of humiliation for black mineworkers. At the root of these structures lies the policy of cheapening black labour through migrant labour.

In addressing this social disease Congress resolved that:

- * housing must be negotiated between management and the NUM;

- * workers must determine the quality of their living conditions;

- * the upgrading of hostels into decent accommodation should be a matter of high priority;

- * mine management has a responsibility to provide affordable housing options for workers, particularly for those who do not want to buy houses; and

- * that single sex hostels must be abolished by 1993.

Single sex hostels must be abolished!