

South Africa: Numsa to convene a special congress in December 2013

Divisions in Cosatu will be top of the agenda

Thursday 5 December 2013, by [NUMSA](#) (Date first published: 18 October 2013).

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15 October 2013, Posted in Events, NUMSA Special Congress, Numsa special national congress
Divisions in Cosatu will be top of the agenda in Numsa's special congress to be held at Birchwood hotel.

Numsa special congress in December will address the following issues:

- The challenges confronting the Alliance
- Building a unified Cosatu and labour movement
- Numsa's approach to 2014 elections
- Positioning Numsa as a shield and spear of struggling workers
- Update on Numsa's campaign for sustainable industrialisation as an Engine of Growth (Section 77 campaign)
- Adoption of a draft Numsa service charter

Link: Numsa special congress:

[http://www.numsa.org.za/admin/assets/articles/attachments/00224_numsa_september_2013_insert_2b_\(1\).pdf](http://www.numsa.org.za/admin/assets/articles/attachments/00224_numsa_september_2013_insert_2b_(1).pdf)

NUMSA Special Central Committee Press statement

2 September 2013

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) held a special Central Committee (CC) meeting yesterday, Thursday August 29, 2013, at Vincent Mabuyakhulu Conference Centre (VMCC), Newtown, Johannesburg, Gauteng province.

The CC was convened by the National Office Bearers (NOBs') to respond to urgent political and organisational issues confronting Numsa, our Federation – Cosatu and the broader liberation Alliance led by the African National Conference (ANC). The CC was attended by all duly elected CC members, and it was extended to our Bargaining representatives in the auto manufacturing sector and motor retail sector.

The CC had a comradely and robust engagements and deliberations on the following issues;

1. Public attacks directed towards Numsa by the ANC Secretary General and the SACP General Secretary during the POPCRU Political School;
2. The National Alliance Summit
3. Preparations for the NUMSA special National Congress scheduled for December 13 - 16, 2013;
4. COSATU's paralysis and the unfolding legal process opposing the suspension of COSATU General Secretary cde Zwelinzima Vavi;
5. The settlement or continuation of the automobile (car manufacturers) strike as per mandate from workers;
6. State of readiness for the motor industry strike (petrol stations; components; auto aftermarket; car dealerships; panel-beaters etc) planned for the month of September 2013;
7. Eskom deadlock

The CC was taking place within the context of ongoing workers' struggles in the auto sector for equal redistribution of wealth at the point of production in line with popular aspirations of the Freedom Charter; the ongoing unhidden political onslaught to isolate Numsa from Cosatu and the broader liberation Alliance; and the dirty tactics being applied by certain leaders of Cosatu and some affiliate's leaders to remove Cosatu's General Secretary Zwelinzima Vavi, from his elected position.

1. Public attacks directed towards Numsa by the ANC Secretary General and the SACP General Secretary during the POPCRU Political School;

The Numsa Central Committee noted with serious concern that the recent Popcru political school was used by the ANC Secretary General and the SACP General Secretary to launch a factional attack on Numsa.

The democratic right of Numsa to convene a Special National Congress to review what is happening with respect to the crises in Cosatu, the ANC's adoption of the NDP in Mangaung and the forthcoming 2014 elections, was rubbished by these two senior leaders of the national Liberation Movement with all sorts of insinuations and threats made against Numsa and its leadership.

More disappointing is the fact that our Vanguard who is meant to unite the working class has taken a sectarian and factional approach to the crises in Cosatu. Numsa has received a written request from the SACP for a bilateral with the Numsa. Our Central Committee is not averse to such a meeting but we wish to prepare properly for such an engagement including assessing why we would be attacked by the SACP General Secretary but on the same platform requesting an engagement with Numsa.

In the coming week Numsa shall release a very detailed response to the sentiments expressed by the ANC SG and SACP GS tracing the origins and reasons for the insults made against Numsa.

2. The National Alliance Summit

In the meeting of former Cosatu leaders, current Cosatu National Office Bearers, Affiliate Presidents and General Secretaries held on Monday 26th August 2013 Cosatu affiliates unanimously mandated the Cosatu NOB to secure a postponement of the Summit from Alliance partners on the basis that Cosatu's own preparations had been hampered by the failure of the Alliance task teams to execute the task on different subject matters.

The Numsa Special Central Committee held on 29th August 2013 noted the above and directed Numsa National Office Bearers to tender an apology to Cosatu for our inability to form part of the Cosatu delegation to the National Alliance Summit on the basis that the Numsa NOB need to pay attention to resolving the Auto National Industry Strike, engage with Eskom management and prepare for our impending strike in the Motor retail and components industry which scheduled to take off in September 2013. In correspondence received from the Cosatu DGS we noted that a number of affiliates would be unable to join the Cosatu delegation due to organisational work.

3. Preparations for the NUMSA Special National Congress scheduled for December 13 - 16, 2013;

The Central Committee received a report from the National Office Bearers on the work being done to convene the Numsa Special National Congress on 13-16 December 2013. The following themes shall guide the Numsa Special National Congress;

- a) The challenges confronting the Alliance
- b) Challenges confronting the labour movement and reclaiming COSATU as an independent, militant, revolutionary, fighting and campaigning federation.
- c) NUMSA's approach to 2014 elections
- d) Positioning NUMSA as a shield and spear of struggling workers
- e) Adoption of a draft NUMSA Service Charter
- f) Update on Numsa's Campaign for Sustainable Industrialisation as an Engine of Growth – (Section 77 campaign)

The roadmap towards the Numsa Special National Congress would involve;

- A Numsa National Political School to launch the Numsa Marxist Leninist School and provincial Mbuyiselo Ngwenda Brigades – 13 to 18 September 2013
- Convening Local Policy Workshops, Regional Policy Workshops and National Policy Workshop to consider Special National Congress discussion documents.

4. COSATU's paralysis and the unfolding legal process opposing the suspension of COSATU General Secretary Comrade Zwelinzima Vavi;

The Numsa Special Central Committee held on 29th August 2013 mandated the Numsa National Office Bearers to legally challenge the unconstitutional convening of a Special Cosatu CEC on 14th August 2013 and subsequent unlawful suspension of the democratically elected Cosatu General Secretary. The Numsa National Office Bearers has set in motion the legal processes and shall comment more fully thereon in due cause.

5. The settlement or continuation of the automobile (car manufacturers) strike as per mandate from workers;

Numsa members employed in the car manufacturing industry have entered the second week of strike action. The Numsa Central Committee deliberated on a possible settlement of the auto industry strike and in that regard developed permutations which have been shared with the auto employers on the evening of 29th August 2013.

Numsa has indicated the preparedness of our National Office Bearers and auto bargaining team to engage with employers over the weekend in an endeavor to settle the impasse in the industry.

The Numsa Central Committee resolved that feedback sessions would be convened with striking Numsa members in the auto industry on Monday 2nd September 2013 with a view to communicate the Numsa CC developed terms for a settlement. As we speak the strike continues until a settlement is signed off.

6. State of readiness for the motor industry strike (petrol stations; components; auto aftermarket; car dealerships; panel-beaters etc.) planned for the month of September 2013;

Since April 2013, Numsa has been negotiating with Fuel Retailers Association (FRA) and Retail Motor Industry (RMI) employers to improve wages, conditions of employment and benefits. The motor industry employers do business in the following sectors: petrol stations; component manufacturers; auto aftermarket; car dealerships; panel-beaters, etc. A mediated process came to an end on 28th August 2013 with no significant improvement to write home about. The current deadlock stands as follows;

- The FRA made a final offer of 9.5% increase for garage workers and later withdrew it and reduced it to 7% because Numsa refused to settle on those terms;

- The RMI offer is as follows:

1. Wages: 6.5% increase on minimum guaranteed monetary value in all Sectors except Chapter 3. Chapter 3 increase of 5.5% on Actuals.

2. They are withdrawing all employer demands

3. They are demanding that Numsa withdraw all other demands;

4. The current duration, cycle, wage model and extension of the Agreement must apply.

5. They will not review this offer until NUMSA's wage proposal is in single digit.

The Numsa Central Committee resolved that strike action is inevitable in view of the fact that employers are intransigent to resolve the impasse and the fact that the 3-year Motor Industry Main Agreement comes to an end.

The Numsa National Office Bearers were mandated by the Central Committee to undertake the following interventions;

1. Embark on further engagement with employer organizations on 5-6 September 2013 in an endeavor to find an industry settlement;

2. Should the meetings of 5-6 September 2013 not yield any results, then strike action shall

commence on 9th September 2013

6. Eskom deadlock

The wage dispute in Eskom is now proceeding to arbitration on 25th September 2013. Numsa members in Eskom are resolute to stage pickets and work stoppages to demonstrate their unhappiness with the arrogance of the Eskom management. As is known Eskom is classified as an essential services company.

Our demand for the distribution of wealth at the point of production shall be extended to confront government for re-industrialisation, redistribution of wealth and the fullest implementation of the Freedom Charter.

Numsa goes back to its members for a mandate

18 October 2013

On Saturday 19 October 2013, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) will hold 52 Local Shopsteward Councils (LSSCs) throughout the country. The aim of the LSSCs is to collate views of members on the issues on the agenda of the union's extraordinary Special National Congress scheduled for 13 to 16 December at Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre on the East Rand, Ekurhuleni in Gauteng. A special NUMSA Central Committee (CC) meeting held on 11 August 2013 took a decision to convene a Special National Congress.

NUMSA held its ordinary National Congress in June 2012. The next ordinary National Congress is due in 2016. "The Central Committee decided to call for a Special National Congress after a sober analysis that led to a conclusion that a lot has happened since our last ordinary National congress in June 2012", says NUMSA's Deputy-General Secretary Karl Cloete. "As we met at our June 2012 National Congress we never imagined that a liberation movement like the ANC would adopt a neo-liberal document like the National Development Plan (NDP). We also did not know that a massacre of workers like it happened in Marikana could take place in a democratic South Africa.

We also could not imagine that our federation - COSATU - could be so paralysed and incapable of taking forward a single struggle or implementation of its 11th Congress resolutions, programs and campaigns. What we also did not anticipate was that the President of the RSA and who is President of the ANC would sign into law the privatization of public roads through e-tolling"

NUMSA goes into its Special National Congress in December with the following as agenda items:

1. Challenges facing the Alliance between the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and South African Communist Party (SACP)
2. Divisions within COSATU
3. NUMSA's approach to the 2014 national and provincial elections
4. How NUMSA can provide better and quality service to members and the adoption of a draft NUMSA Service Charter

5. Making NUMSA a shield and spear of struggling workers

6. A report on a NUMSA socio-economic strike planned for the first quarter of 2013.

Since the beginning of this week, workers from different NUMSA-organised workplaces held shopfloor meetings to discuss the issues on the agenda of the Special National Congress. To facilitate these workplace discussions, NUMSA produced a special Numsa News supplement. The union has also distributed a DVD outlining the reasons for convening the Special National Congress and an explanation of the agenda items of the gathering. "When the union leaders and spokespersons speak; it is sometimes implied or concluded that what these union representatives say are their own views. What we have here is a bottom-up approach, where we are asking our members what they think about the political and socio-economic developments around them", says Cloete.

On Saturday 19 October, shopstewards as workplace representatives will come together to consolidate what they heard from members. Each Local which is an industrial branch of NUMSA will feed its position to Regional Executive Committees (RECs) which are being held on Friday 25 - Sunday 27 October. Each of the NUMSA's nine regions will hold a Regional Congress on Saturday 23 November; so that regional delegations at the Special National Congress arrives at the meeting with a mandate.

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<http://www.numsa.org.za/article/numsa-to-convene-a-special-congress-in-december-2013-2013-10-15>
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