

WORKERS' DAY – FEDUSA KEYNOTE ADDRESS

- **MTHATHA, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**
- **1 MAY 2024**

Leaders of FEDUSA...

Leaders of respective Affiliates present...

Stakeholders...

Ladies and Gentlemen...

Greetings to all!

It is a profound honour to stand before you today in Mthatha, Eastern Cape, on this significant occasion of May Day—a day that celebrates the tireless efforts and victories of workers worldwide. Today, we gather not just in celebration but also in solidarity, reaffirming our commitment to the ongoing struggle for workers' rights and dignity.

Our journey has been long and fraught with challenges. Workers in South Africa and here in the Eastern Cape have faced daunting adversities: low wages, precarious job security, and often, harsh working conditions. Yet, our resilience has turned struggles into steps towards progress. FEDUSA, standing with each worker, has been instrumental in navigating these challenges, advocating tirelessly for

better wages, safer work environments, and respect for workers' rights.

Throughout the years, FEDUSA has not only voiced concerns but has driven change. We've secured important wage agreements. **The national minimum wage increased steadily taking about 6 million workers out of poverty**, enhanced job security, and enforced labour laws that protect our workers. Our efforts have illuminated the path from the picket lines to the boardrooms, ensuring that workers' voices are not only heard but heeded.

Amidst mines retrenching thousands of workers, Post Office workers facing possibilities of retrenchments, and high interest rates attacking workers disposable income. We encourage workers to remain resilient.

We must note that it is alarming that EMS workers are threatened with their lives whilst performing their duties. This calls for urgent intervention. The health and safety of our members remain a priority.

Today, as we stand together, let us remember the power of solidarity. It is our unity that has brought us this far and it is our solidarity that will advance us into a future where labour is not just respected but

celebrated. Each victory we've achieved was won by our collective might and each future triumph will require even greater unity.

Our father of democracy, the late Nelson Mandela's words, that; "Only through collective action can we truly forge a fair world where every worker is valued," have never rung truer.

As we look forward, let us not grow complacent. The journey ahead is filled with opportunities disguised as challenges. Let us engage more vigorously in policymaking, embrace technological advancements for better working conditions, and strengthen our alliances. Each step forward will be a step toward a world where labour rights are universal and fiercely protected.

We note and acknowledge the work by Prasa, coming on board with passenger trains that will be rolled out in phases, making commuting cheaper for workers. However, we call on for the safety of commuters on those trains.

The Worker Share Ownership (ESOPs) will benefit 500,000 workers from shareholding in their companies. As a Federation, we are aiming to strengthen the role of workers in the economic fabric of South Africa, ensuring that they not only share in the wealth generated by their labour but also have a decisive voice in the management and governance of their workplaces.

We also call on government to fast-track fixing of the ports to ensure economic development, manufacturing, and job creation. We need increased economic growth urgently to address the high unemployment rate in the country.

In conclusion, let this May Day be not only a reflection of our past achievements but also a reaffirmation of our future goals. Let's envision a future where our work is not just a means to an end but a path to dignity and prosperity for all. Together, we are unstoppable; together, we will achieve more.

Thank you, and happy May Day to all our members and their families! Let us celebrate the spirit of hard work and the undying resilience that defines us.

AMANDLA!!!!!!!