**ADDRESS BY FEDUSA PEC MEMBER CHANTEL SOOBRAMONEY**

**19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**PROGRAMME DIRECTOR**

**DITSELA FACILITATORS AND LEADERS**

**COMRADES AND FRIENDS**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN….**

**(PROTOCOL OBSERVED)**

GOOD MORNING COMRADES,

IT GIVE ME A GREAT PLEASURE TO STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY TO SHARE WITH YOU A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM FEDUSA AT THE ONSET OF THIS IMPORTANT TRAINING PROGRAMME.

WE CAN NEVER EMPHASISE STRONGLY ENOUGH THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION AMONG THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY. MORE SO, TRAINING AIMED AT ENRICHING OUR INTERACTIONS WITH OUR MEMBERS AND SOCIETY AT LARGE.

THE TIME HAS NEVER BEEN RIPER FOR A PROGRAMME THAT ADDRESSES THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REALITY OF OUR COUNTRY. WE ARE SURROUNDED BY MUCH STRIFE AND ANXIETY AS WE ARE CONFRONTED WITH THE EVER-INCREASING COST OF LIVING. ON TOP OF THIS REALITY, THE GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY REVEALED ITS INABILITY TO MEET ITS SET BUDGETARY DEMANDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

COMRADES, THIS MEANS THAT MATTERS THAT WE HOLD SO DEAR SUCH AS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY WILL TAKE A KNOCK AS EMPLOYERS TRY TO SAVE EVERY CENT AT THEIR DISPOSAL. IT IS FOR THIS VERY REASON THAT WE ARE BETTER OFF WITH TRAINING AND UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO EMPLOY THE STRATEGIES WE WILL LEARN HERE AT OUR RESPECTIVE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT.

THE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS THAT WE WILL LEARN HERE WILL HELP US ENTER INTO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS WITH MUCH CLARITY AND IMPETUS. WE HAVE SEEN IN RECENT YEARS THE UNABATED ATTACKS LEVELLED AGAINST COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, WHERE EMPLOYERS SIMPLY REFUSE TO ABIDE BY WAGE AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH WORKERS. WE CAN SIT AND COMPLAIN ABOUT IT, WHICH HAS BECOME THE DEFAULT SOUTH AFRICAN REACTION TO MANY INJUSTICES.

BUT THANKS TO DITSELA, WE WILL THIS WEEK BE ABLE TO BE ARMED WITH THE TOOLS NEEDED TO WALK INTO THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITH OUR HEADS HELD HIGH AND DRIVEN BY THE MANDATES OF OUR MEMBERS, WE WILL KNOW HOW TO MANOUVER DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS IN ORDER TO ADVOCATE FOR THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS.

OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE IS THE NEED TO BE EXCELLENT CASE MANAGERS AND ENFORCERS OF DISCIPLINE IN WORKPLACES. THIS WILL NOT ONLY BENEFIT MEMBERS BUT LEAD TO FRUITFUL AND PEACEFUL LABOUR RELATIONS GENERALLY. HOWEVER, WHAT WE WILL NEVER BE AS LABOUR, ARE GATEKEEPERS FOR THE EMPLOYER. WHERE MEMBERS FEEL HARD-DONE BY BOSSES, IT REMAINS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO RISE AND SUPPORT THEM.

WITH THESE FEW WORDS COMRADES, I WISH YOU ALL A PRODUCTIVE TRAINING PERIOD. MAY WE ALL MAKE USE OF THIS TIME AS CONDUCIVELY AS POSSIBLE.

AMANDLA!