**FEDUSA MESSAGE OF SUPPORT**

**HOSPERSA NATIONAL CONGRESS**

**ASHLEY BENJAMIN** **- FEDUSA DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY**

**“65 YEARS & BEYOND: PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS AGAINST INJUSTICES IN HEALTH AND OTHER SECTORS.”**

**28 NOVEMBER 2023**

**HOSPERSA PRESIDENT**

**HOSPERSA GENERAL SECRETARY – WAHEED HOOSEN AND ALL LEADERS PRESENT**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ESTEEMED DELEGATES AND COMRADES.**

**ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED**

**VERY WARM GREETINGS TO ALL.**

**I STAND BEFORE YOU AS THE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE FEDERATION OF UNIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA (FEDUSA), HUMBLED AND HONOURED TO ADDRESS THIS AUGUST GATHERING. THE HOSPERSA NATIONAL CONGRESS IS A TESTAMENT TO THE ENDURING SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION, DEDICATION, AND INNOVATION THAT WE, AS A FEDERATION CHERISH.**

**AS WE GATHER HERE TODAY AT THE HOSPERSA NATIONAL CONGRESS, I AM HONOURED TO ADDRESS YOU WITH THE SPIRIT AND RESILIENCE THAT DEFINE YOUR GREAT UNION AND THE FEDERATION. THE THEME OF THIS CONGRESS, "65 YEARS & BEYOND PROTECTING WORKERS' RIGHTS AGAINST INJUSTICES IN HEALTH AND OTHER SECTORS," RESONATES DEEPLY WITH THE STRUGGLES AND TRIUMPHS WE HAVE FACED AS A UNITED WORKFORCE.**

**WE ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF THE PREVAILING CHALLENGES THAT OUR COUNTRY FACES. THE ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE IS MARRED BY HIGH INFLATION, SURGING UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, AND AN ALARMING RISE IN INEQUALITY. THESE TRIBULATIONS CAST A DARK SHADOW OVER THE LIVELIHOODS OF OUR HARDWORKING MEMBERS AND CITIZENS, RESULTING IN A DECLINE IN LIVING STANDARDS THAT IS FELT ACROSS THE NATION. TAXATION AND INFLATION WEIGH HEAVILY ON THE SHOULDERS OF OUR WORKERS, AND IT IS OUR DUTY TO SHIELD THEM FROM THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THESE ECONOMIC BURDENS.**

**IN THIS TIME OF UNCERTAINTY, FEDUSA AND HOSPERSA STANDS AS A BEACON OF HOPE AND STRENGTH. THE STRUGGLE FOR FAIR WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS IS MORE PRESSING THAN EVER, AND THE CALL TO ENSURE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES REVERBERATES THROUGH THE HEART OF OUR COLLECTIVE MISSION.**

**AS WE STAND ON THE PRECIPICE OF A HISTORIC MOMENT WITH THE IMMINENT PASSAGE OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE (NHI) BILL INTO LAW, OUR MANDATE BECOMES CLEAR. WE MUST AMPLIFY OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE POTENTIAL REPERCUSSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NHI.**

**THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THE DIFFERENT SECTORS WHERE HOSPERSA ORGANISES, ESPECIALLY IN HEALTH, ARE EMBLEMATIC OF A SYSTEM STRAINED BY DYSFUNCTION, MISMANAGEMENT, UNDER-INVESTMENT, AND MISAPPROPRIATION OF FUNDS. THE NATIONAL RECENT CHOLERA OUTBREAK SERVES AS A STARK REMINDER OF THE URGENT NEED TO RECTIFY THESE ISSUES. IN THE FACE OF THESE ADVERSITIES, HOSPERSA HAS STOOD UNWAVERINGLY FOR MORE THAN 65 YEARS AS A DEFENCE OF ACTIVISM. IT HAS BEEN A FORCE THAT FACILITATES AND ENSURES THE RECOGNITION AND RESPECT OF WORKERS' RIGHTS IN HEALTH AND OTHER SECTORS, RECOGNIZING THEM AS THE INDISPENSABLE HORSEPOWER OF OUR NATION'S LABOUR FORCE.**

**AS WE REFLECT ON OUR JOURNEY OF 65 YEARS AND BEYOND, LET US DRAW STRENGTH FROM OUR HISTORY AND COMMIT OURSELVES TO THE NOBLE CAUSE OF SAFEGUARDING THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS AGAINST INJUSTICES. THE LEGACY OF HOSPERSA IS INTERWOVEN WITH THE FABRIC OF OUR NATION'S PROGRESS, AND OUR DUTY IS TO CONTINUE THIS LEGACY WITH UNWAVERING DETERMINATION.**

**IN CLOSING, LET THIS CONGRESS BE A TESTAMENT TO OUR COLLECTIVE RESOLVE. TOGETHER, WE SHALL FORGE AHEAD, TRANSCENDING THE CHALLENGES OF THE PRESENT AND BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS ARE NOT JUST PROTECTED BUT CELEBRATED. AS WE NAVIGATE THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES, LET THE SPIRIT OF UNITY AND SOLIDARITY GUIDE US TOWARD A BRIGHTER, MORE EQUITABLE TOMORROW.**

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