

## **WORKERS' DAY – FEDUSA KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

- **MAFIKENG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE**
- **1 MAY 2024**

**Leaders of FEDUSA...**

**Leaders of respective Affiliates present...**

**Stakeholders...**

**Ladies and Gentlemen...**

Good morning, Mahikeng! It is with immense pride and a profound sense of solidarity that I join you today in celebrating May Day—a day that symbolizes the triumphs and challenges of workers not just here in the North-West, but across South Africa and the world. As we gather here, let us honour our theme: "Worker's Resilience & Contributions: Celebrating Unity Through Diversity."

Mahikeng, the heart of the North West, is filled with the energy of a workforce as diverse as the landscape that surrounds us. From the educators and healthcare workers to the miners and the agricultural workers who till this fertile land, each of you contributes uniquely and

indispensably to the fabric of our economy. Yet, the challenges are stark. Recent reports by local news outlets, including the *North West Herald*, have brought to the surface, issues such as wage disparities and unsafe working conditions. Today, we recognise these struggles, but more importantly, we celebrate the resilience you demonstrated in facing them.

As your federation and your home, FEDUSA has been steadfast in its commitment to improve your working conditions and ensure your voices are heard. Our achievements are not just organisational successes—they are your victories:

- **Advocacy for Fair Wages:** We have championed fair compensation, securing wage increases across various sectors, ensuring that your hard work translates into better living standards. **Additionally, the national minimum wage increased steadily taking about 6 million workers out of poverty.**

**Improvement of Working Conditions:** Our ongoing negotiations have led to enhanced safety measures in workplaces, particularly in mining sectors where accidents had been a grave concern. **However,**

**it is alarming that EMS workers are threatened with their lives whilst performing their duties. This calls for urgent intervention and we need assurance on the safety of our members.**

- **Legislative Advances:** Our lobbying efforts have contributed to stronger labour laws that protect against unfair labour practices, giving you greater security and peace of mind.

Our strength lies in our diversity. Mahikeng, like South Africa, is a mosaic of cultures, languages, and histories. Each community and sector brings its own perspective, strengthening our collective resolve.

Today, we celebrate this diversity not as a barrier, but as a bridge—connecting us in our shared struggle for fairness and equality.

- **Cultural Competence in the Workplace:** We encourage policies that respect and celebrate cultural differences, promoting an inclusive environment where all workers feel valued.
- **Empowering Women and Youth:** We focus on breaking the barriers that hinder women and the youth from participating fully in the workforce, advocating for equal opportunities in all employment sectors.

Looking ahead, our mission continues. The landscape of work is changing rapidly, influenced by technological advancements and global economic shifts. FEDUSA is committed to navigating these changes with you:

- **Embracing Innovation:** We will facilitate training and development programs to ensure you are equipped for the jobs of tomorrow.
- **Sustainable Employment Practices:** We advocate for practices that not only create jobs but do so in a manner that is sustainable and environmentally conscious.
- **Continued Advocacy for Worker Rights:** We remain at the forefront of policy discussions to ensure that labour laws evolve in step with changing work environments.

**Another win for the workers is the Worker Share Ownership (ESOPs) that 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.**

As we stand together in Mahikeng, let us renew our commitment to each other and to the principles of justice, equity, and mutual respect. Let us move forward with a shared vision, one that embraces our differences and harnesses our collective strength.

**However, we 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.**

Thank you, Mahikeng. Thank you, workers of the North West. Your resilience inspires, your contributions matter, and your unity is our most powerful asset. Happy Workers' Day! Let's continue to build, to fight, and to achieve—together.

**AMANDLA!!!!!!!**