

MEDIA STATEMENT-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday February 10, 2017

NEHAWU RESPONSE TO THE 2017 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

The National Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) notes the 2017 State of the Nation Address by President Jacob Zuma in Parliament on the 9th February 2017. NEHAWU joins the overwhelming majority of our people in condemning the chaos and disruption that has taken place during the SONA orchestrated by the anti-majoritarian alliance of EFF-DA.

These disgraceful scenes that once again unfolded in our democratic Parliament are not amusing or a laughing matter - they are serious distractions from the national focus and priorities as the EFF-DA alliance and other opposition parties seek to opportunistically use the public attention that goes with the SONA for their own 2019 regime change campaign. They shall not succeed! But unfortunately, this once again underscores NEHAWU's conclusion that the leadership of Comrade Jacob Zuma in government is untenable.

Nonetheless, NEHAWU supports the overall thrust of the SONA centered on a radical economic transformation program as presented by President Zuma. In this regard, we welcome the progress report with regard to the ANC government's clear Nine Point plan and further measures outlined for future implementation on the following areas;

- Industrialization;
- Mining and beneficiation;
- Agriculture and Agro-processing;
- Energy;
- SME's;
- Growing the oceans economy and tourism;
- With cross-cutting areas such as science and technology; Water and sanitation Infrastructure; Transport Infrastructure; and Broadband Rollout.

This programme can only be successfully implemented by a united and focused ANC government, which is an important prerequisite that is currently undermined by the raging factional battles in which President Zuma himself, with the so-called premier league, has increasingly become the main protagonist despite calls for discipline by the ANC.

Whilst noting the unfavorable global economic conditions, NEHAWU is convinced that economic transformation and expansion in South Africa is undermined by the stranglehold of white monopoly capital and the morally corrosive influence of the parasitic bourgeoisie on the state. The rent-seeking and primitive accumulation agendas of these twin enemies of radical economic transformation continue unchallenged amidst the deepening socio-economic crisis, scandalous revelations of corruption, lack of strategic oversight and leadership in government which have led to the declining hope and confidence amongst the masses of our people.

On the other hand, we welcome and congratulate the efforts by the ANC led government to accelerate the implementation of the National Health Insurance, the continued increase in the allocations to post-school education and training, and measures to find solutions to the funding of the so-called missing middle students in both Higher Education and TVET colleges. NEHAWU will continue to support these progressive efforts and we will await the outcomes of the FEES commission to engage in the context of the process created through the COSATU Section 77 Notice.

We further support and congratulate government and urge the democratic state to remain firm in implementing South Africa's progressive foreign policy, and condemn those who continue to side with imperialism and racist states in the world like the Democratic Alliance. Hence, we express our condemnation of the disgraceful readmission of Morocco into the African Union. This is a major setback to the struggle of the people of Western Sahara and their international solidarity allies.

Lastly, NEHAWU conveys its message of condolences to the families of the psychiatric patients who lost their loved ones in Gauteng.

Issued By NEHAWU Secretariat

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