



EFF STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY WITH STRIKING FORD WORKERS

Thursday, 04 July 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) stands in solidarity with the Ford South Africa workers, affiliated with the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA), who are striking today for their rightful bonuses. Despite reaping immense profits over the past four years, Ford has unjustly withheld profit-sharing from over 3,000 dedicated workers.

The decision by NUMSA members to down tools comes after exhaustive negotiations with Ford management, which has shown a complete disregard for the well-being and contributions of its workforce. These workers, who are the backbone of Ford's production capability, deserve to be compensated fairly for their labour and dedication, which allows the company to build up to 720 cars a day.

Ford, like many other multinational corporations operating in South Africa, represents the massive capitalist entities that continue to exploit workers. This exploitation is reminiscent of the historical and ongoing disregard for African labour. Despite the significant contributions of these workers, they are not valued appropriately, a practice deeply embedded in our history and perpetuated by contemporary capitalist structures.

While striking remains a fundamental right and a powerful tool for workers to employ when their demands for fair treatment and compensation are ignored, the instatement of the current government of national unity (GNU), involving the Democratic Alliance (DA), will undoubtedly lead to a surge in strikes and protest action.

Firstly, the DA has always maintained a strong stance against a minimum wage that matches the cost of living, representing white capital interests by prioritising profits

and the resultant exploitative labour practices. Secondly, with the announcement by DA Home Affairs Minister Leon Schriber to fast-track work visas that serves as a strategic move to bring in African labourers from neighbouring countries to work under exploitative work conditions and with little or no recourse.

Furthermore, with South Africa's unemployment rate among the highest worldwide, including among graduates, work visas must only be granted for scarce skills coupled with a plan for skills transfer. However, the DA's 'profit over people' policies that exploit Africans to feed its greedy funders illustrate its indifference to creating meaningful employment and well-paying jobs for South Africans. This highlights the DA's inability and lack of commitment to reducing unemployment in the country.


As the workers' party, the EFF will remain vigilant in parliamentary committees overseeing the Department of Labour and Home Affairs to ensure work visas are issued fairly and not used to exploit black labour. We will continue to advocate for the protection of all workers, and will work to prevent the adoption of the DA's unbridled anti-worker sentiments that serve white capitalist interests, and are completely unaligned with the necessary transformation South Africa needs.

The EFF calls on Ford South Africa to immediately meet the demands of its workers as they rightfully deserve the profit sharing bonuses. Additionally, the EFF will continue to stand with and fight for workers to earn a living wage, striving to end the longstanding exploitation of African labour that is deeply rooted in apartheid, and has yet to be fully uprooted.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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