

**FAWU BULLETIN**  
Newsletter For Members and Staff  
19 June 2009  
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## **COSATU North West statement on attempted murder cases in Madibeng (Brits) Magistrates Court**

The Congress of South African Trade Union in NW Province is very disappointed at the manner in which Madibeng (Brits) magistrates' court is dealing with cases of racist attempt murder of farm workers and their families.

In 1999-2000 racist farmers, led by the so-called Mapogo a Mathamaga vigilante group, killed two farm workers in the same farm area. Those accused of this crime were released on bail on Sunday.

Now Davie Swart, who allegedly shot four boys in the same area on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009, was arrested and released on bail on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009 between 16h30 and 17h00, which in our view was illegal as it was after hours at that time.

We call the magistrate of Madibeng and police to take responsibility for the safety of three of the young boys who were released from the hospital, and their families. We call on the magistrate to stop defending and protecting racist farmers who continue to use their money to kill our poor farm workers and their families, and stop threatening COSATU leaders.

Their threats will not stop exposing them to the public. We will fight this exploitation and racism until the last day of the world. We call the national

government to act now. Enough is enough! We cannot take it anymore. Our poor workers and farm dwellers are killed on a daily basis and nothing is said by government.

COSATU is mobilising its members, civil society and other structures as part of a build-up of mass action against racism in the farms. This will take place in the next two weeks before the appearance of Davie Swart on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

We will demand a full detailed report of the 1999-2000 murder case and the report which alleged that the same Davie Swart shot a boy in 2007-2008 and that the case was dropped by the same Madibeng Magistrate Court.

## **FAWU Condemns Madibeng Shootings**

The Food and Allied Workers' Union [FAWU] fully supports Cosatu North West in condemning the shooting of four boys by a farmer in Madibeng on Sunday, 14 June 2009.

The farmer, Davie Swart, allegedly shot the boys suspecting them to be stealing oranges on his farm.

FAWU, together with COSATU is disgusted by the attacks on farm workers and their families, particularly in this province. We call on government to act speedily and put in place stricter measures to deal with farmers who continue to shoot people left and right. If government does not deal with this issue swiftly, farmers will continue to get away with special treatment, minimum fines and the slaughtering of farm workers and their families.

Over the next few weeks, we will draw up a programme of action against racist farmers who thinks it is okay to use farm workers as shooting targets.

We will march to Agri- North West and the Justice department on 3 July 2009 to demand action against these hooligans.

## **FAWU Member Compensated R 27 000 For Unfair Dismissal**

Three workers from Rainbow Chickens farm in Worcester were dismissed on 7 and 8 October last year after they were charged with theft and unauthorized company property while the third worker, Danfred Van Zyl was charged with dishonesty as well.

**During arbitration on the 13 March and 30 April 2009, the union argued that the three comrades were not guilty of the charges and that the dismissal was substantively unfair. The company maintained that the three workers were guilty of unauthorized possession of company property and that the dismissal was fair.**

Both the union and company consented to the fact that procedural fairness was not in dispute.

A supervisor employed by an external security company testified that he, on 8 August 2008, the day of the incident, went to the back gate and saw the four men among which the three accused sitting outside the canteen. No bags were with them. He returned after a

few minutes and saw four backpacks outside the company's perimeter fencing. Only Van Zyl was in the same place. The security guard questioned Van Zyl about the bags and called the manager afterwards. When the manager arrived, they took the bags and Van Zyl to the office.

The commissioner stated that none of the employees were found guilty of theft because there was no evidence to support such a charge. All of them were found guilty of unauthorized possession and Van Zyl guilty of dishonesty as well. The commissioner also found that although Van Zyl was sitting near the bags did not link him to it directly. The other two workers names were on the bags found with meat in it. Based on the lack of evidence the commissioner ruled that the dismissal of the other two workers was substantively fair but in the case of Danfred Van Zyl's was substantively unfair.

The company was ordered to reinstate Van Zyl to the same position and terms and conditions that were in force prior to his dismissal. His reinstatement was effective from 9 October 2008 and Van Zyl had to report to duty on 25 May 2009. In addition, the company was ordered to pay Van Zyl an amount of R 27 681.45 for the seven and a half months he was unemployed as a result of his unfair dismissal.

## **Extracts of the Budget Vote by Minister of Agriculture , Forestry, and Fisheries**

Last month, the economist Mike Schussler remarked that it might be the first time since the 1800's that the agricultural sector is bigger than the mining sectors. It is now being argued that it is more than likely that the agriculture sector will create more jobs out of every R million rand of investment than any other sector.

Other sectors have already suffered huge job losses. It is now becoming the task of agriculture, forestry and fisheries to create jobs, and contribute to poverty alleviation.

As much as agriculture is seemingly better off in the global economic crises, it is by no means shielded by from its effects. For the first time in five years, agricultural imports have exceeded exports. This is not only unacceptable but further vindicates our resolve to support local food production in communities, by communities for communities.

The task of all of us in governments to translate these policy statements into practical programmes that are written up in measurable business plans. That is why we are proud to announce the programme that will give strategic expression to this , namely the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CDRP).

The vision of the CDRP is about enabling rural people to play a meaningful role in an inclusive economy, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through productive use and management of natural resources at their disposal. To do this, we adopted a three-pronged strategy of Agrarian Transformation, Rural Development and Land Reform.

Our department will lead the Agrarian Transformation Programme of the CDRP, which will be driven by the Provincial Departments of Agriculture and local authorities will manage projects. We have already started to introduce pilot projects in Giyani in Limpopo and Riemvasmaak in the Northern Cape, which have been selected on the basis of the levels of poverty, state of readiness and the level of participation by communities.

We will also be addressing food production at household level by providing training to household members to establish vegetable tunnels for household food production. More importantly we will be aggressively providing market linkages for the emerging farmer and further provide marketing infrastructure and agro-processing facilities for these rural communities. The Agricultural Research Council and other state owned enterprises will provide technical assistance to the pilot projects. It will also initiate research projects aimed at adapting technologies to rural areas to promote sustainability and profitability of existing enterprises.

We will encourage investors and Development Finance Institution like the National Development Agency, the Industrial Development Corporation, the Independent Development Trust, the Development of SA and the Land Bank to fund some of these initiatives.

- Partnerships with organised agriculture, and those components that still need to be exercised, including subsistence and new farmers as well as cooperative in agriculture, forestry and fisheries will be strengthened and broadened.

- **Existing food security programmes will be reviewed to take into account other interventions based on social development and welfare, education and health;**
- **Young people will be exposed to hands-on experience in the field of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries through the envisaged National Youth Service for Agriculture. 22 Million rand will be availed for this programme that will include mentorships and bursary schemes;**

- Poverty will be eradicated through the Forestry Livelihoods Programme and human resources will be developed through the Forestry Sector skills development initiatives. The forestation targets will be pursued through the implementation of the Forest Enterprise Programme.
- Now that fisheries are included in the department's mandate, declining fishing stock, increased competition over access to stock and rapidly rising costs are major challenges that need to be managed. The department will continue to promote the conservation and sustainable utilisation of our natural resources. The department will work with all stakeholders, especially coastal communities to ensure more equitable dispensation in which the traditions, skills and cultures of fisher communities are retained for posterity.

***Note: The above are just an indication of some of the highlights in the budget speech of Minister Tina Joemat- Peterson. The complete speech can be found at [www.info.gov.za/speeches](http://www.info.gov.za/speeches).***

