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Solidarity with SAAWU

and our people in Ciskei.

'An injury to one is an injury to all!'
The truth of these words is shown by the call of twelve organisations to support the people in the Ciskei bantustan.

The organisations are:

1. UDF (United Democratic Front)
2. Saawu (South African Allied Workers Union)
3. Cusa (Council of Unions of South Africa)
4. Fosatu (Federation of South African Trade Unions)
5. Ccawusa (Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union)
6. AFCWU (African, Food and Canning Workers Union)
7. Sacwu (SA Chemical Workers Union)
8. Gawu (General and Allied Workers Union)
9. Saldwu (SA Laundry and Drycleaning Workers Union)
10. Sasdu (South African Scooter Drivers Union)
11. OVGWU (Orange Vaal General Workers Union)
12. Descom (Detainees Support Committee)

These groups have come together in an ad hoc committee to condemn

Sebe's 'government' for banning Saawu and attacking the people in the Ciskei bantustan.

What is going on in Ciskei?

Two months ago, the ciskei Transport Corporation raised bus fares by 11% in Mdantsane, Ciskei.

But half the residents in Mdantsane are without jobs, they could not pay, so they began boycotting the buses. They used trains instead.

The Ciskei police are trying to force the people to use the buses. Police and soldiers sit on the trains. Road blocks stop cars and taxis. Vigilantes from Sebe's Ciskei National Independence Party pull people out and beat them.

One week into the boycott, police and soldiers used their guns. When the people at Fort Jackson station refused to use the buses, Sebe's boys opened fire.

Eye witnesses say 90 people were killed and several hundred injured.

Residents elected a Committee of Ten to co-ordinate the boycott. Sebe detained eight of the ten, but the boycott went on. The CTC is losing millions of rand.

**'An injury to one
is an injury to all!'**

The Present Crisis

The Ciskei regime is now doing all in its power to break the boycott.

●They have banned Saawu in Ciskei.

They fear Saawu's principle that 'only the working class, in alliance with other progressive minded sections of the community, can build a happy life for all South Africans, a life free from unemployment, insecurity and poverty, free from racial hatred and oppression ...'

●They have detained more than 800 people.

Their jails are so full that they are holding people in the Sisa Dukasa stadium. Widespread reports of torture, rape and assault have come from people kept there.

●They have detained more than 15 union leaders.

Among these held are:

SAAWU: Sisa Njikelana, Bonile Tulima, Eric Mntonga, Godfrey Shiba, Gardmer Mambushe, Boyce Melitafa, Yure Mdyogolo, Shepherd Mayekiso, Derick Smoko, Cameron Mzimane, Lulamile Qumane.

AFCWU: Bonisile Norushe, Dlaki Vani.

GWU: David Thandani.

TAWU: (Transport and Allied Workers Union): 3 organisers

●While the Saawu offices are being raided every couple of days by the South African security police their president Thozamile Gqweta went into hiding.

●Students in Mdantsane and Duncan

Village are boycotting classes in support of their parents and to call for the release of fellow students who have been detained.

●The Ciskei police are conducting house to house searches looking for Saawu T-shirts, membership cards, political books and newspapers. During these searches residents are detained and beaten.

●All attempts to force the people of Mdantsane to end the bus boycott have failed. The banning of Saawu and the detention of its leaders and members have not decreased the popularity of the organisation.

●Ciskei police are visiting families of breadwinners who are in detention to check whether they have paid the rent and harassing them generally.

'Machine guns and detentions are not the solution to the boycott. Our people are still not riding buses ... our principles and pride provide us with the determination we are displaying today.'

— Saawu president, Thozamile Gqweta.

The UDF, Saawu, Gawu, AFCWU, Fosatu, Cusa, Ccawusa, Sacwu, Saldwu, Josdu, OVGWU, Descom call on all workers to support the people of Mdantsane by:

●Telling fellow workers, friends and members of the community about the banning of Saawu and the harassment and detention of all union officials and membership in the Eastern Cape and the people of Mdantsane generally.

●Collecting money in their union or community organisations for the Detainees Support Committee in East London.

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