



12 June 2019

### **NUMSA IS DISMAYED BY THE ATTITUDE OF AUTO EMPLOYERS For Immediate Release**

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) is dismayed by the attitude adopted by employers in the auto sector. We met over the last two days at Burgers Park Hotel in Pretoria to begin the process to negotiate the Bargaining Process Agreement, (BPA) which is a document which guides the negotiations process. The BPA is essential because it provides a framework for how we will engage. It stipulates the dates for talks, the facilitators and it confirms the principle of back pay in case wage talks go beyond the allocated time.

We brought a full delegation of workers and officials to negotiate with employers who represent seven OEM's in the auto sector. But unfortunately, the talks for the BPA collapsed. The reason is that the employers have undermined the process. We have not even begun to negotiate the terms of the BPA, and already, employers are saying that the principle of back pay must be placed as a demand, instead of it being an accepted standard of the BPA.

We are dismayed that employers would make such a demand, especially so early on in the process. For the last 25 years back pay is something which is standard and is automatically offered to employees, in case, the wage talks exceed beyond the required time. It means they are undermining, but also delaying the process unnecessarily. And we have to wonder if this is a deliberate attempt to frustrate the process. If the stubborn attitude of employers continues, it is likely that by the 30<sup>th</sup> of June, when the agreement lapses, we will have no agreement in place and this is great cause for concern, as it will bring instability to the industry. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, there will be nothing in place which governs wages and working conditions in the industry.

We've also noted that employers have been communicating directly with workers, on admin discussions which have taken place thus far. This is unorthodox, and it has never happened before. This creates confusion and division especially on issues which have not yet been agreed to by the parties. We demand that employers stop this communication immediately because it having a negative impact on the talks. They may only communicate once the formal process has begun, and not before, which is the standard practice.

We also urge employers to come back to the table and negotiate with us in good faith, so that we can officially begin to open wage talks in the sector. Failure to do so will have dire consequences for all 16-thousand workers in the sector and the industry as a whole.

Aluta continua!

The Struggle continues!

Issued by Irvin Jim

NUMSA General Secretary

For more information, please contact:

Phakamile Hlubi-Majola

NUMSA National Spokesperson

0833767725