



## PHAKAMANI SIYEPHAMBILI

TOWARDS AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION

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28 June 2018

Attention:

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### **EXTEND R20 AN HOUR THROUGHOUT THE FARMING SECTOR AND IMPLEMENT DECENT WORK IN AGRICULTURE**

The Sundays River Valley branch of *Phakamani Siyephambili* – a social movement of farm workers, farm dwellers and small-scale farmers based in the Eastern Cape – calls on the government to extend the proposed National Minimum Wage of R20 an

hour to farm workers across all sub-sectors of agriculture in South Africa with immediate effect.

*Phakamani Siyephambili* members, like farm workers and dwellers across the country, have endured years of suffering and hardships brought on by poverty wages. We live and labour under poor conditions, lacking in basic standards and necessities.

We understand that export sectors, such as citrus, are worth billions of Rands, but most citrus workers do not benefit from this income. Instead, like farm workers in other sub-sectors, we work under poor conditions, which we want to put an end to. We also know that our country, particularly the Eastern Cape, produces what is regarded to be the highest quality of wool and mohair in the world, most of which is exported. But workers in this sub-sector, that is the women workers who sort the wool and mohair, and the male workers who look after sheep and goats, benefit little from this trade. It is also known to us, that in 2017 the Eastern Cape was the second largest milk producer in the country, which means that workers in this sub-sector are responsible for the presence of dairy products on the supermarket shelves.

Farm workers, across the country, play a valuable role at many levels. It is through our labour that the nation is fed. It is also because of our labour that workers in upstream and downstream industries are able to get employment. South African farm workers not only contribute to national food supplies; we also supply global markets. For these reasons we demand that all farm workers are paid the National Minimum Wage that is to be accorded to other workers in the country. In addition, and given the contribution we make to food security, to the economy and the jobs that are created through our labour, we demand that steps be taken to:

- Eradicate the piece-rate system that results in sub-minimum wages for farm workers
- Introduce bargaining over wages and working conditions
- End abusive language and physical violence against farm workers by employers and supervisors
- Stop farmers from carrying guns in the workplace and threatening workers
- Prevent farmers from victimising and threatening workers with dismissals when we challenge transgressions of labour and tenure rights
- Stop the unlawful demands by male supervisors that women workers exchange sexual favours for employment, and unlawful demands by supervisors that men and women exchange other favours (i.e. bribes) for employment
- Provide adequate health and safety equipment and protection, including toilets, in the orchards at all times
- Provide safe transport for workers
- Investigate all Agri-BEE schemes to establish the outcomes for farm workers who allegedly own 'shares' in the schemes.

We further note that our living conditions are of extremely poor quality with many of us living under precarious tenure conditions without positive rights to land, dignified housing, proper services, or easy access to health-care facilities. We further demand:

- An end to evictions off farms and steps be taken to improve living conditions for all farm workers and dwellers
- Land ownership so that we can secure proper housing and tenure and access essential services, including proper clinics and schools
- Land for livelihoods, farming and vegetable gardens.

### **FORWARD WITH A LIVING WAGE FOR FARM WORKERS**

### **FORWARD WITH AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION**

Endorsed by:

*Phakamani Siyephambili*: Bedford, Adelaide and Fort Beaufort Branch

*Phakamani Siyephambili*: Carlisle Bridge Branch

*Phakamani Siyephambili*: Fort Brown, Douglas Heights, Committees Drift and Manly Flats Branch

*Phakamani Siyephambili*: Grootvlei, Nanaga and Zuney Branch

East Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP), Grahamstown

Ground Work, Friends of the Earth, South Africa

Janet K. C. Chisaka, Rhodes University

Professor Kirk Helliker, Rhodes University

Rural People's Movement

Unemployed People's Movement

Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU), Rhodes University

Women on Farms Project (WFP), Stellenbosch

Zingisa, King Williams Town

SACBC Justice and Peace, Pretoria

Support Centre for Land Change (SCLC), Graaff Reinet

Surplus People Project (SPP), Cape Town

Khanya College, Johannesburg

Louise du Plessis on behalf of the Land & Housing Programme, Lawyers for Human Rights.

Middelburg Advice Office

Cradock Advice Office

Farm Committees in the Sarah Baartman district (Dr. Beyers Naude local municipality) and Chris Hani district (Inxuba Yethemba local municipality).

Student Representative Council (SRC), Rhodes University  
PACSA, Pietermaritzburg