

Socialist Party president Fred M'membe flanked by Cosmas Musumali, general secretary and first vice-president of the party, (right) and second vice-president Chris Mwikisa en route to the Mulungushi International Conference Centre to file election nominations



**The August elections give us a chance to change everything and build a more just and caring society**



FRED M'MEMBE, incoming president, offers #realchange with the Socialist Party's policies based on justice, equity and peace. Manifesto download details and info about how to join the party are on our back page

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This is the year the poor will vote for themselves

# We're on our way

THIS IS the year the poor will vote for themselves, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe said following his successful presidential nomination for August's election.

Dr M'membe was nominated alongside running mate Cosmas Musumali, party general secretary and first vice-president, at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka.

"The majority in Zambia are the poor," Dr M'membe said. "Those who rule are the rich, and these parties you vote for have owners. The owners are the rich."

"This year the poor, too, have their own party. The Socialist Party is a party for the poor. The poor have to vote for themselves."

"This year is the year to vote for one's own class, this year the rich will have to vote for themselves and we will see who will win. The stage is set."



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# Musumali tribute to young and women

## They are the most deprived under the capitalist system

Socialist staff reporter

COSMAS Musumali has saluted the revolutionary young people who have flocked to swell the ranks of the Socialist Party in the run-up to the August election.

The party's general secretary and first vice-president also paid tribute to the many women contributing to the cause.

"As the 2021 elections draw near, it is heartening and encouraging to see the ever-growing numbers of young people joining the ranks of the Socialist Party (SP)," he said. "Our party is becoming more and more youthful – and that's in addition to the already established dominance of women in our membership."

"SP has entered the 2021 elections with the most youthful, as well as highest proportion, of female candidates of any political party in Zambian history. To understand this development, you have to look at the misery of the masses of our people and the cruelty of the capitalist system that has caused it."

Dr Musumali said women and youths were most affected and deprived under the capitalist system.

### Drivers

"It is therefore not a coincidence that these two groups in society are at the forefront of a search for genuine, revolutionary change. This is the change they seek through their self-organisation in the Socialist Party. SP is their party – their vehicle for political, economic and cultural self-emancipation."

But he said Zambian young people would not be unique in serving as key drivers of a revolutionary process.

"Young people have been the pillars of transformative change throughout the history of humanity," he said. "They have been the energy behind the overthrowing and dismantling of many oppressive and exploitative systems."

"Frantz Fanon (a medical doctor, internationalist, and freedom fighter, from the Caribbean island of Martinique) stated, 'Every generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it.' It is this mission that the revolutionary youth of Zambia are today discovering and intend to fulfil through their active participation in the 2021 elections on the Socialist Party platform."

"African and Zambian history is therefore being rewritten."

"Prominent Guyanese historian, political activist, and academic,

Walter Rodney said, 'Most youth in Africa will have heard the axiom that each generation rewrites its own history. It does so not merely for giving different answers to the same questions, but by posing entirely different questions based on the stage of development that a particular society has reached.'"

Dr Musumali said Zambia's young people were "turning the political tables upside down", and posing questions that the current political establishment had been dodging, such as:

- What type of democracy is based on cash handouts from the rich in order to win votes?
- How representative is a democratic process that excludes young people to offer themselves as candidates in elections due to high cost, discrimination and fear of violence?
- How viable is a system that turns young people into criminal thugs to attack, harm and kill political opponents?
- What are the benefits for young people in a system that renders them jobless in millions, denying them access to decent education and quality healthcare?

"It has become clear to the youth of Zambia that the capitalist system has exhausted itself and is now no longer able to play any progressive role for them."

Dr Musumali said it is at this moment that Bob Marley would "rightly sing his famous revolutionary lyrics to our young people":

*Get up, stand up  
Stand up for your rights  
Get up, stand up  
Don't give up the fight!*

"I salute you all," he said.



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe at an exhibition of artworks by Cynthia Zukas at Lechwe Trust Gallery, Lusaka

## Dare to create, dare to join the struggle

DARE to struggle, dare to sing, dance, act, paint . . . those were the words Socialist Party president Fred M'membe used in praise of artists.

And he took time out from his busy political schedule recently to attend an exhibition of artworks by Cynthia Zukas at the Lechwe Trust Gallery, Rhodes Park, Lusaka.

Zukas, who married Zambian political exile Simon Zukas in England in 1954, turned 90 this year, and the exhibition opened the day after her birthday.

"Brilliant art pieces," was Dr M'membe's reaction as he walked around the gallery.

Reflecting on the number of artists joining the struggle led by the Socialist Party, Dr M'membe said earlier this year, "We have musicians, singers, dancers, actors and actresses, sculptors, painters and so on and so forth, being selected as local government and parliamentary candidates in various parts of our country to stand for the Socialist Party. This is very pleasing."

"In the world today, all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake,

art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Peasant and working class, poor people's literature and art are part of the whole struggle of the humble by the humble for the humble; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine."

Dr M'membe said revolutionary culture was a powerful revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people. "It prepares the ground ideologically before the revolution comes and is an important, indeed essential, fighting front in the general revolutionary front," he said.

### Weapons

"Our duty is to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the exploiters, and that they help the people fight the exploiters with one heart and one mind."

## No plan, vision or road map out of debt crisis

THE GOVERNMENT doesn't appear to have a plan, vision or road map out of the current debt crisis, Margaret Kangwa Pikiti, Socialist Party parliamentary candidate for Malole constituency, says.

"Really, it's painful to see the depths that Zambia has sunk to with the debt crisis," she said.

Pikiti says that although Zambia is rich in minerals, fertile land and water, it is the fourth hungriest country in Africa.

"This is deepening with the debt crisis. Essentials, which have doubled in price, are unaffordable to the masses. We are talking basics like cooking oil and sugar. The poor, who are the majority in Zambia, can no longer afford them."

"The average poverty level in rural Zambia is 76.7 percent. Every day you encounter people who can't afford to buy malaria drugs, which are unavailable at clinics, and cost 20 kwacha."

Pikiti says the poverty and unemployment situation in the country is "shocking".

"You come across a large number of youths in rural areas with very good grade 12 results who are peasant farmers because they can't go to college. They have no money," she said.

"The despair on their faces is heartbreaking. They can't see the current government moving them to the better life they aspired to and worked hard for. All they see is a downward spiral of worsening

prices and poor livelihood. Countless qualified professionals, such as teachers, are sitting at home as dependants."

Pikiti says that despite the debt crisis, the government is handing out "bicycles to headmen and money everywhere".

"Zambia has failed to pay its debts, so where is the money coming from? Where was it hiding? It is money that is not serving needs of the people as a whole. The debt crisis has deepened inequality. There's no explanation to the nation or any detailed action plan to move the country out of crisis. People therefore feel lost. They are sheep without a shepherd."

Pikiti says the debt crisis "can bring tears to your eyes".

"People are in the wilderness in rural Zambia. They need strong, unselfish leadership with focus, with the whole nation embraced for prosperity and equity, not a government that favours a select few. Only when the whole country is empowered will this debt crisis cease. Just growing cassava on a large scale, well supported, could change the face of rural areas. Currently, not even a quarter of global cassava demand is met."

Pikiti says there can be hope with the right leadership. "The debt can be managed and a way forward attained," she said.

"At present there is no sign of this happening. Zambia hopes August 12 will bring hope and a brighter future."

## Manifesto based on people's hopes and dreams

THE SOCIALIST Party's manifesto is based on "the aspirations, hopes and dreams" of ordinary Zambians, general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali told radio listeners.

Speaking on Hot FM's The Hot Seat programme on the subject "Socialist Vision", Dr Musumali told interviewer Peter Pzee Zulu Jr that the party had visited villages, towns and compounds asking "fundamental questions".

"So what is stated in the manifesto today represents the aspirations, hopes and dreams of Zambians. These are not ideas from Cosmas Musumali's, Fred M'membe's or maybe Chris Mwikisa's heads," he said. "No. These are aggregates, summarised opinions of what Zambians need. We summarised them under three headings: Zambians need more justice – there is an issue of justice, Zambians are seeking more equity – equity becomes the huge pillar in terms of our manifesto,

and Zambians want peace – they want a peaceful society."

Dr Musumali said the manifesto reflected that justice, equity and peace – JEP – were the pillars of Zambians' needs "in their lives, for their future, for the future of their grandchildren".

"We were the first political party in Zambia to launch a manifesto," Dr Musumali said.

"We shared it with the Zambian public. There was a special occasion when we launched it and it has been debated in a lot of places we have visited. We bring out our manifesto and subject it to discussions by the Zambian masses."

"Our manifesto is original, it is for the masses and is a product of the broader thinking of Zambians. It is a manifesto that goes beyond just the Socialist Party and its leadership."

Dr Musumali said the manifesto was a year old, adding there was no point in producing

one close to elections. "If you produce a manifesto a few months before elections, what is the intention in a country where people don't have a culture of reading? It means even your own party members will never understand it. It's making a joke of democracy by coming up with a manifesto at a late hour."

Zulu asked Dr Musumali if Zambia was ready for socialism. "Is Zambia ready for equity? The answer is yes," Dr Musumali replied. "That's what Zambians yearn for. Do Zambians want justice? Yes. Every human being wants a sense of justice. Do Zambians want peace? Yes. They are crying out for peace. Zambia is becoming a very violent country, we are destroying our country, we are destroying ourselves, if not physically, then mentally."

Dr Musumali said the needs of Zambians could not be met by capitalism. "Our understanding is that you can't have peace, justice,

or equity in the capitalist society we have today. Only a socialist-inspired society can guarantee those three basic tenets of democracy. When you talk about socialism, they are not abstract words. We are talking about more equity. That's it. What is so difficult about that?"

Zulu asked Dr Musumali how long it would take for the Socialist Party to transform Zambian society. He replied that, while there were short or medium-term plans, it was important to have a long-term vision.

Dr Musumali said Zambia's current capitalist institutions were weak and could not deliver equity but the Socialist Party knew what it had to do in the first instance once elected into government.

"We have said that when building socialism we will start with three areas in terms of building equity; we are looking at health, education and peasant agriculture."



# Now is the time to end the chaos by voting for real change with SP

## You have the chance for a new vision and purpose for Zambia

Socialist staff reporter

SOCIALIST Party president Fred M'membe says now is the time to "end the chaos, vote for real change".

"At this election you have the power to change our country for the better," he said. "You have the opportunity to take Zambia into a new decade with new vision, with new purpose, and with a new Socialist Party government.

"I make this promise to you my fellow Zambians, that if you vote the Socialist Party, you will be voting for yourselves to govern. Leaders lead, the people govern. You, the people, will govern.

"If you vote the Socialist Party, you yourselves, as the governors, will be able to deliver to yourselves a better deal and for the next generation – real investments in free and socialised education and health services.

"If you vote the Socialist Party, you can end the chaos in government by electing a strong, stable and united team focused on serving the people of Zambia.

"The choice for you, the choice for our country, is clear. It can be more of the same or a real change for the better. Division and drift – or unity and purpose. "This is the choice for every citizen of our great nation: five more years of inherently corrupt neoliberal capitalist policies offered and being pursued by our opponents, or a bolder, revolutionary, better and more fair, just, humane and peaceful future for Zambia under a new Socialist Party government.

### Urgent

"Today I present the case for real change, revolutionary change. Our country needs real change, because more of the same is simply not good enough for Zambians. And nowhere is this clearer or more urgent, than the economy. Our economy is not working in the interests of the poor, the working people. The economy isn't everything in life, we all know that, but a strong economy is central to the capacity of this nation to deliver the things that we all want."

Dr M'membe said that after three decades of neoliberal capitalist trickle-down economics "living standards are flat lining, none of this is by accident".

"And we all know in our bones what's coming next if the neoliberal capitalist parties – PF and UPND – are given another five years. Our two main opponents' neoliberal capitalist policies are certainly not the way forward for Zambia.

Do not vote for more of the same. Vote instead for real change, revolutionary change.

"And, of course, for us Socialists our vision always begins with education. The world and the re-

gion that we live in is changing more rapidly than at any time in human history. So much is different, so much is uncertain, but one truth is guaranteed.

"The best investment that we can make is in the potential of individuals, and the future of our economy is education. Only free and socialised education will liberate the talents of our people and uplift their horizons. And when you think about the importance of making education free and socialised, it is not only important, my word it's urgent.

"This is the compelling case for real change on August 12. If you want an education system that liberates the talents of every Zambian and uplifts our horizons, there is a very straightforward way you can make this happen: vote for the Socialist Party on August 12.

"I think it is fair to say that sometimes we can overcomplicate politics because in the end what matters most to the Zambian people is straightforward.

"If your family is OK and your health is OK, then everything else flows from that. But if that is in jeopardy, everything else is difficult. So, when you look at this election, one of the biggest differences and the sharpest contrasts is in our approach to healthcare, is in hospitals.

"Our opponents are speaking the very complicated language of insurance schemes and so forth, ours is simple: you will make health services free and socialised. Period.

"So today this is our case for real change, revolutionary change. We emphatically say to all Zambians: end the chaos."

*Vote Socialist Party,  
Vote for real change,  
revolutionary change.  
Vote for your family's interests,  
Vote for yourselves,  
Vote for your future,  
Vote Socialist Party.*



Socialist Party team Matero with parliamentary candidate Barbra Chekuda Maramwidze (centre)

## Women policy is a question of democracy

Mable Tubaaka

THE SOCIALIST Party's policy of involving not less than 50 percent women in politics "is not a question of filling numbers, it is a question of democracy", party president Fred M'membe told TV viewers recently.

Speaking on Diamond Live's Main Meal programme on the subject "the credibility of Zambian politicians", Dr M'membe said, "You cannot leave out such a huge segment of our population – actually the majority of our population.

"The majority of this country's population are women. The majority of our members are women. Not less than 70 percent of the members of the Socialist Party are women."

Dr M'membe asked interviewer Dingindaba Jonah Buyoya what kind of democracy would exist in the party if it did not field 50 percent or more women.

"It is majority rule . . . women are the most

important component of our membership and also the burden bearers of the problems of this society," he said. "If women don't participate, if women are not there, nothing will happen."

Dr M'membe said the party had a National Congress mandate to field not less than 50 percent women and asked why that should be so surprising.

"Are you telling me the quality of women is poor, that men are better quality than women? I have told you, the membership of our party is not less than 70 percent women. Are you telling me because 70 percent membership is women then the quality of our membership is poor?"

"Yes, women face many challenges that make it difficult for them to participate in politics, in leadership positions. They are burdened with family problems, and other obstacles are placed in their way to participate. It is not easy to get women to participate, it's not an easy thing," he said.

Dr M'membe also commented on a report by the Non-governmental Gender Organisations Coordinating Council that claimed political parties tended to adopt women in areas where they had only a slim chance of winning.

"That has not been an issue for us because the adoptions are not from the top, they are from the communities themselves," he said. "They decide who to adopt. The mandate is that in every area we should, as far as possible, adopt not less than 50 percent women. It's not from the top to decide that a constituency should be allocated a woman. No. People decide themselves.

"The first adoption we had was from Mongu Central. We had an adoption here in Lusaka, Matero, a woman. Wherever you look you will see the majority of our candidates are women," Dr M'membe said. "So there is no winnable constituency or unwinnable constituency for a woman or a man. That doesn't arise."

## M'membe: No struggle ever really comes to an end

THERE'S a lot that can be said about our freedom and the unending struggles for it, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe said in a statement to mark Africa Day, May 25.

Africa Day – formerly African Freedom Day – is the annual commemoration of the founda-

tion of the Organisation of African Unity on May 25, 1963.

Dr M'membe said, "No African will ever forget that our national liberations were won in struggles, persevering and inspired struggles, carried on from day to day; struggles in which we were undaunted by privation

or suffering and stunted neither strength nor blood. They were filled with tears, fire and blood.

"For all our challenges, or even failures, today we are all deeply proud of our struggles, because they were just and noble and indispensable in putting an end to the humiliating bondage forced upon us.

"But no struggle ever really comes to an end, and we all have the duty to keep the ideas, principles, and goals of our national liberation struggles alive.

"We have continually to reiterate our national liberation and demand respect for our people's achievements."

## ON THE FRONT LINE

### Living in captivity

ZAMBIANS in the Copperbelt have been oppressed for far too long. Jeff Chabala, Socialist Party parliamentary candidate for Roan constituency, says.

"We have lived in captivity in our own 'liberated' country," he said. "Our once flourishing province is slowly becoming desolate."

Chabala said "only a few selfish individuals manage to flash money around", building public institutions, which they named them after themselves.

"We don't understand how a reasonable person in this hard and fragile economy can build a police post in Roan and name it after himself. Where is he getting the money from when the masses

cannot afford decent meals?" he asked. "Material values should be accorded their proper place in relation to social, spiritual and moral values. Where this balance is missing – as it is in our economy today – injustice is the inevitable result." He added the Socialist Party would ensure the masses controlled the means of production.

Chabala said party president Fred M'membe was key to solutions that would see the province return to its former glory.

"We urge all reasonable Zambians to rally behind the Socialist Party and vote us into power. We assure you we will deliver.

"It is time for you to vote for yourselves and develop your province. If we won't do it, no one else will do it for us," he said.



Jeff Chabala  
Heartless and cruel

THE PATRIOTIC Front is heartless, cruel, and has no respect for people, and we can tell this by the way their members behave when someone defects to join them, Kepson Zimba, Socialist Party parliamentary candidate for Kabushi



Kepson Zimba

constituency, says. "It can be seen by how they celebrate when someone has defected to dine with them at their tables while the majority of our people can't even manage three meals a day," he said.

Zimba, who is also Copperbelt provincial chairperson, said the

PF's only focus was on winning elections instead of reducing the price of commodities.

"The cost of living in Zambia is very, very high. The cost of doing business is very, very high, and the poverty levels are worrying to the extent that the poor can't manage to buy medicines when they are given prescriptions.

"We put human beings first before material things because that is what our system of governance tells us to do. We have a system of adopting 'organic' leaders who are part of the suffering in their communities."

Zimba said the Socialist Party and president Fred M'membe would revolutionise politics in Zambia, "because we understand the political landscape of our country".



# Join our victory crusade



**Fred M'membe**  
Socialist Party president

OVER the last three years I have travelled the width and breadth of this country listening to our people, and that's what I'll be doing over the next few months as well.

Not listening to vested interests. Not listening to rich people trying to buy influence. Not listening to highly selective focus groups, but listening to ordinary people, poor people.

Listening to their concerns about education. Listening to their fears about health services. Listening to their disillusionment with politicians who break their promises and betray their trust – who nyunya them, gon'a them.

Politics of money have excluded millions in Zambia from their own elections. They want politicians to stand up and address the issues that matter to them. They want commitments that are clear and rational. They want leadership they can trust. And there are just a couple of months left to determine the direction we take, time to turn this into a campaign that sets Zambia on the right course for the years ahead. Time to turn this into a campaign that focuses on the long term.

We will turn this into a campaign about the issues that matter to people.

Any day now, I expect a barrage of lies and distortions from those who have deceived the people for many years, the like of which we have never seen before. After seven years in office, they've got very cosy with all that power –

and they're now more frightened than ever of losing their grip on it. And when they get frightened, they get negative, and they get nasty. Instead of engaging in honest debate, they will put up propaganda, distorting the truth. Instead of talking about their record, they will fight the most negative, most nasty campaign imaginable.

Well, we will not be cowed. The best antidote to negative campaigning is to fight positively on our socialist programme for Zambia. To make the campaign in these last months a campaign the Zambian people can be proud of. And our party has a duty to make that happen. To offer people a different choice. The investment to give our children the best possible education. Clear, rational commitments to protect and improve our health services and make them free and socialised.

## Rational

We have heard much about trust in this campaign. But politicians can't expect to be taken on trust. They've got to earn people's trust. Trust comes from being straight with people. It comes from being consistent in your principles and policies. Over the last seven years, those who today are seeking a third term have proved that they cannot be trusted. Over the last seven years, they have failed to prove that they are worthy of our trust.

What we the socialists have set out to do in this campaign is to earn people's trust. That's why we have stuck to our core values and consistent beliefs. That's why we produced a clear and rational manifesto, launched a year ago. And all across the country, we

**‘Travelling across the country has been a very rewarding experience. We learned so much about the serious challenges our people face every day, particularly in the rural areas, where we had to rely on motorcycles because of the bad roads – Fred M'membe**

have been straight with people. We have prioritised education because people know that education will be the key to our success in the years ahead. And everyone knows that in the real world, you don't get something for nothing. Others may be happy to say: “education, education, education”, but these are hollow words unless they are matched with “resources, resources, resources”. We will allocate not less than 25 per cent of the budget to education.

It's no good saying that you'll do something – this year, next year, sometime, never. Because you'll never do anything that way.

Our education system has been undervalued and underfunded for too long now. We need to start now. Putting right the damage of the 30 years of neoliberal capitalist policies. Guaranteeing the best possible start in life for every child, with high quality nursery education from the age of three.

Our perspective in this campaign comes from meeting poor people and listening to poor people. Over the last three years, we have won our people's respect on our approach to education and health services. Over the last three years, we have won our people's respect for our straight talking and honesty on agriculture. In this campaign, we have already won the arguments.

In the next months, it is time to

win the votes. It is time to go for victory.

Now, what do I mean by victory?

I mean that by sending a massive force of socialist councillors to council chambers, MPs to Manda Hill, and our presidential candidate in State House to fight for our schools, hospitals and agriculture, it becomes your victory.

- A victory for your children and grandchildren.
- A victory for your schools and hospitals.
- A victory for you.
- In these elections vote for yourselves.

Over the last three years, I've had a number of people disillusioned with both the governing party and the leading opposition, coming up to me, and saying:

“I like what you say. I love what you stand for. I want to vote for you, but I want to be sure that my vote will count.”

And my answer has been straightforward: There is only one way to make your vote count. And that is to vote for what you want. To vote for what you believe. To vote for yourselves.

And if you believe, like I do, that in the next government we've got to revolutionise our health service, and that, above all else, we've got to launch the biggest, most committed drive to improve education that we have ever seen,

then the vote that doesn't count, the vote that doesn't make the difference, the “wasted vote”, is the vote for today's ruling party and leading opposition.

If you want better schools, then the only way you will get them is by voting for the Socialist Party. And the vote that doesn't count, that won't make the difference, is the vote for today's ruling party and leading opposition, because they won't improve and make education truly free and socialised.

If you want more doctors and nurses in our hospitals, then the only way you will get them is by voting for the Socialist Party. And the vote that doesn't count, that won't make a difference, is the vote for today's ruling party and leading opposition, because they are both committed to neoliberal capitalist policies over health services.

## Direction

You see, when the fog clears, there's really very little to choose between today's ruling party and the leading opposition: the same neoliberal capitalist policies. To elect either of them at this election would be a triumph of hope over experience. Now it's time for something different. If you want a change of direction – real change, not just a change of government – then don't waste your vote. If you want new priorities in Zambia, not just politics as usual, then don't waste your vote.

Don't vote for more of the same. Don't be conned into voting from fear. Vote for the things you believe in.

I stated at the beginning that there were just a few campaigning months left. Well, I believe it

is time for more than a campaign. It is time for a crusade. What is the difference between the two, some might ask? Well, campaigns are short-term. They're about winning votes. They're political things, focused on council chambers, Manda Hill and State House.

Crusades are about beliefs. They're about the long term. They're about winning the arguments. They're about reaching out beyond politics, beyond council chambers, Manda Hill, State House.

- It is time for a crusade.
- A crusade for a new politics.
- A crusade for a more just, fair and humane Zambia.
- A crusade – to build a Zambia fit for our children and grandchildren.
- A crusade to give them the best free and socialised education possible.
- A crusade to give them free and socialised health services they can rely on.
- A crusade to give them justice, equity, peace and hope.

This election provides the Zambian people with a real choice.

Do they vote for those who see only the same old approaches? Do they vote for those who trumpet the same old soundbites? Do they vote for those who feel safest in the old policies of exploitation, oppression, humiliation and confrontation? Or, do they vote for themselves, for people who believe that they can make a real difference, real change?

If you, like me, believe in our crusade to build a country fit for our children and grandchildren, I say: come and join us. Join us on our crusade.

We have won the arguments in this campaign. Now we must win the votes.

Join us as we go for victory.





Socialist Party president Fred M'membe greets women on Mother's Day

## We want to build a thriving nation with pride in itself

DON'T underrate us, we are revolutionaries, we are socialists and we know how to struggle from very disadvantaged positions and win.

At the time of the August 12 elections, the Zambian voters will have had this Patriotic Front government of President Edgar Lungu in power for six years. They may hate them, but they know them. We now want them to know us – our values, our identity and our character as a revolutionary political party.

We want to win, not because the Patriotic Front and President Lungu are despised, but because we are better understood, supported and trusted. We should win and we can win.

For us, there's no choice between being principled and unelectable; and electable and unprincipled. We should win because of what we believe. We are not going to win despite our beliefs. We will only win because of them. We will win to fulfil our principles.

The task of revolutionary transformation of our nation is not one for the faint hearted, or the world of the weary, or the cynical. It is not a task for those afraid of hard choices, for those with complacent views, or those seeking a comfortable personal life.

We are confident that we can once again debate new ideas, new thinking – away from the neoliberal capitalist outlook – without fearing the taunt of betrayal. We say what we mean and mean what we say. Not just what we are against – capitalism – but what we are for – socialism.

We say what we mean, what we stand by, what we stand for. We have a clear, up-to-date manifesto of the objects and objectives of our party. Our manifesto was launched last year in June. It has been in the public domain for almost a year. It was open to wide and deep debate.

We are proud of our beliefs. And we have stated them in terms that people are able to understand and identify with in every workplace, every home, every family, and every community, in our country.

Our party's determination to bring real change, not just any change, is increasingly becoming the symbol of the trust the Zambian people can place in us to change the country. It is time to break out of the past and break through with a clear, radical and socialist vision for Zambia.

We want to build a nation with pride in itself, a thriving community, rich in economic prosperity, secure in social justice, equity and peace, confident in revolutionary change. And in fulfilment of our national anthem:

*Stand and sing of Zambia, proud and free,  
Land of work and join in unity,  
Victors in the struggle for our rights,  
We've won freedom's fight.  
All one, strong and free.  
Africa is our own motherland.  
Fashion'd with and blessed by God's good hand,  
Let us all her people join as one,  
Brothers under the sun,  
All one, strong and free.  
One land and one nation is our cry,  
Dignity and peace 'neath Zambia's sky,  
Like our noble eagle in its flight,  
Zambia, praise to thee.  
All one, strong and free . . .*

A land in which our children can bring up their children with a future to look forward to. This is our hope, not just to promise revolutionary change, but to achieve it.

## Only we know truly who we are, can judge ourselves

IN THE Socialist Party we have always had a leading group and a collective leadership. I do not make unipersonal decisions. We have a Politburo. I fulfill my duties as president of the Socialist Party within a group.

In our party, the important decisions, the fundamental decisions, are always analysed, discussed and adopted collectively. I don't have the authority to appoint anyone to any position. I can't even appoint the humblest official in this party. I have a certain degree of authority and prestige, yes, due to historical reasons, but I do

not give orders or decrees. Some people believe we are not what we seem. Only we know who we truly are, only we can judge ourselves. And I am very self-critical and severe with myself. One must keep a watchful eye over oneself. I like concrete work, I am not interested in glory. It took my comrades a year and four months to convince me to accept to lead the party and be the presidential candidate of our party in this coming August election.

In the course of years, influence and prestige, instead of gradually turning me into someone conceited, a vain person or something along those lines, has, I think made me less vain each day, less pretentious, less self-sufficient. It is a battle against one's instincts. I believe that only education, a sincere and tenacious education of the self, can change an animal into a human being. Given a bit of influence and prestige, people become vain and want to make use of it. I believe in people. I have never felt the sensation of ingratitude. And people don't like to recognise what they owe others. It is a universal law.

## We've climbed for too long

WE SEEK real change, not just any change; what we want is to find a real solution to our problem.

We must therefore choose a clear, intelligent, effective solution, not head towards Calvary.

I think we have been struggling uphill long enough. We have suffered not only the torment of Calvary but also that of Sisyphus, who had to keep pushing the boulder up a hill and every time he was about to reach the top, it would roll back down and he would have to start all over again. Our situation is worse than Calvary because Calvary was climbed quickly; we have been climbing our hill for a long time, and we keep on having to start over. Calvary is preferable to Sisyphus' torment, and we if we have had our Calvary, we should also have a resurrection.

Continuing on the capitalist path will not bring a better life to our people. We have a unique opportunity this year to chart a different path and establish a new economic, social and political order. And those who fail to see this will have to answer to history for it. I hope they will accept their responsibility.

## The noble goals of politics

IN THE present atmosphere of fierce competition and character assassination, we remind the nation of the noble goals of political activity.

Politics should aim at promoting the common good and not intolerance, violence and killings.

Political discourse should concentrate on programmes to improve the life of the nation rather than on intolerance, violence, and killings.

Politicians should look for the common good of all the people and enter into sincere dialogue with opponents, even in cases of political divergence.

Violence must be avoided because the electoral campaign should not be confused with a battlefield where the aim is destroy the other.

Real political victory lies on the ideals proposed, on the ethical values of candidates, on the respect for the freedom of choice of all citizens, and not on any form of moral pressure or intimidation of political opponents or voters.

## Let's use our vote wisely

ONCE every five years, the law puts the power to vote in our hands. Let's use it wisely and bravely. Our vote should help eliminate the unworthy and improve the quality of the new Zambian government, parliament, and local government. Our vote is a powerful weapon for unity, an instrument of liberty, justice and peace. On our voting, on the quality of it, the discernment behind it, depends the progress and peace of our country.

## There's no need for voodoo

THERE'S no need for guesswork, witchcraft or voodoo. Things are not good for our people. Poverty is not reducing, despair is growing, and hopelessness is on the rise. It's not a question of seeing black where there's white; it is seeing black where there's black and white where there's white.

# Free, responsible media 'essential for democracy'

## SP committed to freedom of expression

Socialist staff reporter

A FREE and responsible media is the foundation of any successful nation, and a precursor for social and economic progress and sustainable development, says Fred M'membe, president of the Socialist Party.

Dr M'membe made the comment in a statement on World Press Freedom Day on May 3, a UN calendar event observed to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Dr M'membe said the occasion recognised “the essential contribution of journalists and journalism to national and international efforts to achieve justice, equity peace, democracy and diversity”.

“Social and economic development, science and technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, all of these rely on the ideas and new ways of working brought to us by an independent media,” he said.

## Arbitrary

“Good governance and media freedom are not mutually exclusive principles, rather they are ‘mutually dependent’. Only when journalists are given the space to operate freely – to observe, ask questions and report, without fear of arbitrary reprisal – can a nation be confident that decision-makers will be held to the highest standards. And only then can we truly be on the path of building a more just, more fair and more humane society, world.”

Dr M'membe said that just as democratic institutions relied on the Third Sector, composed of charities and NGOs that defended the rights of the poor and weak groups, so too, they depended on a responsible, ethically-minded Fourth Estate, made up of well-trained, fair-minded and professional journalists.

“In times of conflict, unrest and

disaster, journalists are often the first to risk their lives to provide vital information and identify where humanitarian assistance is needed most,” he said.

“In times of peace, journalists act as messengers, educators and advocates, putting the people's concerns to the powerful and allowing voters to make informed decisions about who should represent them in office.

“The democratic and development dividend created by a free and responsible media is highest when we respect and value the contribution that journalists make.

“Today's attacks on news media's already tenuous freedom are proliferating. They often come in the form of violence against independent journalists. Those in power also attempt to assert control over media outlets, even if it means shutting them down.”

Dr M'membe said Zambia needed traditional, independent, media to hold the powerful to account.

“Where independent media is silenced, coerced, or captured, the public has few options for gaining any information beyond the narratives pushed by those in power and special interests. Social-media platforms can play a role, but their main strength – their democratic nature – also has a fatal flaw. They have proved ideal for spreading fake news, which taints public debate and erodes trust in both facts and institutions.

“Appetite for fake news is a threat to healthy independent media. While social-media platforms get a lot of attention for their speed and accessibility, a credible free press – one which does not simply parrot the official line of governments or special interests, but rather seeks the truth – remains essential to strengthening accountability in places where it can often be hard to find.”

Dr M'membe said chronic underfunding squeezed independent media further. “Journalists not only lack resources to support their work, they are often so poorly compensated that they become vulnerable to corruption themselves. “Brown envelope, transport refund journalism” – when reporters are paid by individuals or organisations to publish favour-

able stories – is becoming increasingly commonplace. If traditional independent media are going to fulfil their essential role, they need resources.

“Given the importance of a credible free press to both development and democracy, the Socialist Party in government will remove all constraints on press freedom, and create a more favourable financial, economic and political environment for the media to survive and prosper.

“The Socialist Party has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to freedom of the media, as a guarantor of freedom of expression.

“The Socialist Party will continue to work with and support various institutions to help them make good on their individual and collective commitments,” Dr M'membe said.

## Musumali pays tribute to press hero M'membe

I DON'T know of any journalist in Zambia or Africa who has received as many international awards as Fred M'Membe for his commitment to defending press freedom and promoting ethical journalism in Zambia and the world, says Cosmas Musumali, general secretary and first vice-president of the Socialist Party.

“Dr M'membe is a recipient of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) press freedom award, South African Union of Journalists' Pringle award, World Press Review Editor of the Year award, Percy Qoboza press freedom award from the National Association of Black Journalists – an organisation of African-American journalists – and the United Nations-affiliated International Press Institute's Press Freedom Hero award,” Dr Musumali said.

“But when former president Michael Sata wanted to give Fred a national honour on independence day in 2011, he refused to accept it.

“Fred's friendship with the Cuban Revolution has been recognised and honoured by president Raul Castro. He is a decorated, loyal friend of the Cuban Revolution,” Dr Musumali said.

## Third term power bid is 'imbecilic'

IT IS very clear that President Edgar Lungu and his disciples are trying to impose their will on all of us, says Socialist Party president Fred M'membe.

“They are trying to keep themselves in power at any cost. They have made it impossible for this country to have free and fair elections this year.

“President Lungu is not only trying to impose himself as a presidential candidate when the Constitution clearly doesn't allow a third term of office, but he has also made it impossible for his competitors to politically mobilise.

“But what Mr Lungu and his disciples do not seem to understand is that the social furniture of modern society is so complicated and fragile that it cannot support the jackboot. We cannot run the processes of modern society by attempting to impose our will upon others by all sorts of crooked, corrupt and repressive schemes. If they have not learned that, they have learned nothing. Whatever might be their motivation to seek a third term at any cost, there's no doubt about its imbecility.

“I beg President Lungu and his disciples to turn their backs on this most ugly way of seeking to perpetuate their hold on power and realise that if they are to live in this country and be regarded as decent people deserving the respect of others, they have to act up to different standards than the one they have been following.

“We have been taught that ‘the man who abides by unjust laws and permits any man to trample and mistreat the country in which he was born, is not an honourable man ... In the world there must be a certain degree of honour just as there must be a certain amount of light. When there are many men without honour, there are always others who bear in themselves the honour of many men. These are the men who rebel with great force against those who steal human honour itself. In those men thousands more are contained, an entire people is contained, human dignity is contained’.

“It is understandable that honest people should be victimised, repressed and humiliated in a republic where a criminal, cruel, intolerant and tyrannical gang is in power.”





Nomination day: Socialist Party president Fred M'membe submits his presidential election papers alongside his running mate Cosmas Musumali, general secretary and first vice-president of the party

# You write the script, you play the central part – the story is yours

**Fred M'membe** reminds voters that elections are in their hands, and that this is a unique opportunity to vote for the Socialist Party and revolutionary change, the chance to make a real difference

ELECTIONS in Zambia – like everywhere – are a very special tradition because they are driven by you. They're an opportunity to change your future, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe said.

In a statement released in the run-up to his successful presidential nomination, Dr M'membe reminded voters that elections are in their hands.

"If you think about it, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) doesn't do much. It publishes the election timetable, sets up polling stations, and prints the ballot papers. Everything else is done by you. The ECZ might set the stage, but it is you who writes the script and plays the central part. The story is yours."

Dr M'membe said every person could make a difference in an election. "A vote for the Socialist Party is a vote for those who want to engage in an honest conversation about the way the country is headed and are prepared to stand-up and be counted for doing the right thing."

"A vote for the Socialist Party is a vote for a Zambia where the next generation can make a difference in their own lives and the lives of those they care about, not be fodder for politicians and their schemes of deception, manipulation and abuse. I say to you, the Socialist Party is your voice of a generation."

"A vote for the Socialist Party is a vote for those small business own-

ers who know more about the real economy than any economist, to be able to create a product customers want to buy at a price they can afford, and jobs along the way. I say to you, the Socialist Party is your voice too."

"And yes, a vote for the Socialist Party is a vote for a genuine chance to jump-start the economy."

"We can create a government that is efficient, effective and orderly, as well delivering the essential services that people depend upon – free and socialised education and health services, water and sanitation, and so on and so forth."

Dr M'membe said PF and UPND had both recently released their manifestos and nobody could tell the difference.

"They want a rendition of the same old show of 2015 and 2016. PF versus UPND. But if their policies are the same there will be no policy debate about the future of our country. Don't let them get away with it," he said.

## Courage

"I say to you that it can be different. But it can only change if we show the courage of our convictions and choose to change – real change, revolutionary change. So yes, the opportunity is for the Socialist Party at this election. The Socialist Party can win this election for the poor, for Zambia."

Dr M'membe said it took "real courage" to make "real changes."

"Young people are coming to the Socialist Party because they see a party that truly listens to them and has more of them to stand as councillors and members of parliament than any other party – a party that is prepared to break the mould. And a party that is committed to ensuring that there's real change, revolutionary change, not just any change. You can really change your future."

"So now the stage is set and the election campaign begins in earnest. What you do now really matters. I will travel the length and breadth of this country to make and remake

the case. But ultimately, this is your story. Every friend you tell about us, every message you forward on, on our behalf, all count.

"Let us be your choice, to change your future in a real way."

## PROFILES

### Nkhumbwizya Banda

NKHUMBWIZYA Banda, parliamentary candidate for the Sinda constituency in Eastern Province, is a farmer and knows first hand the agricultural difficulties Zambia faces.

"Agriculture is the biggest challenge because of expensive farming inputs, especially fertiliser and seed," she said.

But she says that is not the only reason she is standing for parliament. "I joined politics because I have seen how the people in our villages are suffering in terms of covering long distances to clinics to access medical care, how bad the roads are, and how few schools there are with no desks and few teachers," she said. "Because of this, I feel that given a chance on August 12 by the people in my constituency, we can work together to solve these problems."

Banda was educated at Olympia Basic, Katete Boma Primary, and Katete Day High, schools. She holds a diploma in secondary teaching from Zambia College of Open Learning and worked as a supervisor at Dunavant Cotton Company in Katete, and as a weighbridge operator at Nwk Cotton in Lundazi, before dedicating herself to farming.

### Constance Bwalya

THE SOCIALIST Party is the only one that can meet people's needs and bring peace to Zambia, Constance Bwalya, parliamentary can-

didate for Kantanshi constituency in Copperbelt Province, says.

Bwalya went back to school in 2012, studying grade nine at Mufulira Central Primary School and then completing her late education at Kantanshi Secondary School. "It wasn't easy learning with children my daughter's age, but I had to do it," she said. She is now a qualified secondary teacher.

"People should vote for me because I'm compassionate, kind, and only the Socialist Party can change our country into the Zambia we all dream of," she said.

Bwalya said injustices, inequities, health, shelter, water, and sanitation, were high on her list of priorities.

"In a socialist nation, it's all about collective decision-making, so the people under the humble leadership of Fred M'membe will come up with ideas and solutions on how to wipe out these issues because it's the people themselves who will govern, we leaders will lead in order to achieve this purpose."

She said her fellow women shouldn't let their rights be suppressed but rather come out and make their voices heard.

"The heart of a woman is full of compassion, love and care," she said. "If women rise up and take part in decision-making and running the affairs of this nation, then we can have a Zambia we can all be proud of."

### Caeser Chilema

CAESAR Chilema is the parliamentary candidate for Bweengwa constituency in the Monze district of Southern Province.

"I am a visionary who sees this as an opportunity to transform the current socioeconomic situation in my constituency for the better through this revolution," she said.

Chilema said she understood why people had become cynical about politics, but that it was important for them to become involved and support the Socialist Party to bring about real change.

"To all those who restrain from politics, I know it is tough to keep voting and never seeing any change that is good for you," she said. "Today, however, is different. I come bearing a message of hope, a chance for your voices to be heard because we will listen. We will power through all our troubles together because that is what socialism is all about."

Chilema said the high level of unemployment was a major concern in Bweengwa but could be addressed with the aid of carefully planned empowerment programmes. Education facilities were also a problem, but could be "tackled by creating a taskforce in each ward that will focus on the maintenance and building of school infrastructure". Poor healthcare could be addressed by building more rural health centres and ensuring the number of healthcare practitioners met demand.

"This is the change you have been waiting for," she said. "You can seize this chance by casting your ballot in favour of the Socialist Party."

Chilema was educated at Luyaba and Chikuni primary, Hakunkula basic, and Monze boarding high, schools. She studied early childhood education at Southward College of Education in Monze, where she graduated with a merit.

### Goma Dydas

GOMA Dydas, parliamentary candidate for Chama South constituency in Muchinga Province, says he joined the Socialist Party because of its commitment to the poor and humble.

He says he will work together with the party and people of Chama South to solve the area's pressing problems, which include poor roads, poor network connection, and a lack of clean water and sanitation.

"My message is, come August 12 vote for me, our councillors, chairman and our incoming president, Dr Fred M'membe," he said.

Dydas was educated at Chama primary, junior secondary and secondary schools, and at Ellensmere Private School.

### Lubasi Liuma

LUBASI Liuma, parliamentary candidate for Sesheke constituency in Western Province, says Zambians "need to work together as one family so we can come out of slavery. We really don't deserve this kind of life".

"I joined the revolutionary movement because it is the only party that can save Zambia from what it is going through," he said. "Most Zambian people are jobless."

Liuma, an agent for telecommunication company MTN, says that although he completed his grade 12 in 2009, he didn't go to college because of finances.

He says the issues his constituency needs to address include water, education and roads. "Sesheke constituency is blessed with a lot of water as we are near the Zambezi River, but you find that [domestic] water can be out for a week," he said. "Again, although most timber comes from Sesheke, pupils have no desks in their schools. As for the roads, the Sesheke to Livingstone road is totally nothing compared with others." He said the issues could only be solved once the Socialist Party was voted into power.

"So let's vote for Fred M'membe," he said. "Zambia will not be the same with him. This is





Judith Ng'onga



Willie Michelo



Roydah Mulenga



Goma Dydas



Nkhumbwizya Banda



Learnmore Lungu



Constance Bwalya



Lubasi Liuma



Benedict Malupande



Teinson Munsanje



Ireen Musela



Sharon Muyupa



Margaret Moono



Caesar Chilema

our prayer and God will surely answer it on August 12.”

**Learnmore Lungu**

LEARNMORE Lungu, the parliamentary candidate for Nyimba constituency in Eastern Province, joined the Socialist Party in 2018 attracted by its principles and values.

Hailing from Ndake village, he was educated at Mambo primary and Nyimba secondary schools, and also attended Chalimbana University to study for a teaching qualification. “I graduated in 2018, but I’ve not been able to get my diploma because I couldn’t manage to pay the fees,” he said.

Lungu says the main issues in his constituency are agriculture, education and unemployment.

“We will address the issue of agriculture by training people how to make organic fertiliser for themselves,” he said. Education would see the introduction of community schools, and jobs would be created by opening a trading centre.

“We already have the area for this project. Orphans, youths and people with disabilities will be able to make a living by making baskets, chairs and mats.”

Lungu said his message to people was to cooperate and work together in the pursuit of justice and equity. “By doing so we will change our country for the better,” he said. “I am encouraging my community and the country at large to be leaders of true change. Let’s vote for Dr Fred M’membe, let’s vote for the Socialist Party for a better Zambia.”

**Benedict Malupande**

BENEDICT Malupande, parliamentary candidate for the Chongwe constituency in Lusaka Province, says he was inspired to join the revolutionary movement by freedom fighter Alexander Grey Zulu.

“I grew up in the political dwelling,” he said. “One man who inspired me and who practised socialism and talked about cooperatives was political veteran Alexander Grey Zulu.”

Malupande said he was driven to learn more about socialism and studied in Czechoslovakia. “I interacted with socialist youth movements while there. The political scene ignited my dreams for a socialist government in Zambia. The values of our Socialist Party sum

up a complete governance system,” he said.

After schooling in Chongwe, Ndola and Masala, and attending the University of Zambia, Malupande was given a government bursary to study at Czech Technical University in Prague, where he gained a master’s degree in telecommunications. He later surveyed, commissioned, operated and maintained Zamtel networks, rising through the ranks to become a manager. He is currently a farmer in Chongwe.

“I decided to join this political journey because of the irregularities going on in governance; corruption, undemocratic tendencies, tribalism and high unemployment, among other things.”

Malupande says the most critical issues in his constituency are bad roads, inadequate clean water and sanitation, few schools, and livestock diseases. He says he intends to work with the people of Chongwe collectively.

“I cannot manage alone, but I will lobby the relevant institutions and the government to upgrade the road network, lobby for more schools, and make sure we find a permanent solution to the water problems. I will also lobby for animal vaccines and for agro and mineral processing industries to be set up so we create employment for our youth.”

**Willie Michelo**

THIS is the year of change and everyone should vote for the Socialist Party because it is the only one that will bring about development, the only one that supports the poor masses, says Willie Michelo, parliamentary candidate for Moomba constituency, Southern Province.

“I joined the revolutionary movement to address the challenges of the humble, poor masses,” he said. “The Socialist Party manifesto speaks to the difficulties we face and spells out how the socialist government will address the challenges of the poor. The manifesto is easy to understand. I was able to connect the issues raised in the manifesto to the daily challenges in my constituency.”

Michelo says Moomba constituency has many problems, including a poor road network, high levels of unemployment, and a lack of quality health services.

“We need to work together to solve these challenges. The Social-

ist Party has a heart for the people,” he said.

Michelo was educated at Kasaka basic and Mazabuka secondary schools. He worked as an area coordinator for the Simalelo Peer Education Programme for HIV prevention in Monze and Mazabuka for 10 years, and is currently a farmer.

**Margaret Moono**

MOTHER-of-seven Margaret Moono is a farmer, businesswoman, mature student of early childhood education . . . and the Socialist Party’s parliamentary candidate for Monze Central constituency in Southern Province.

“I am a self-motivated woman who aspires to make other people’s lives better, especially the vulnerable in society, such as young women, children and the elderly,” she said.

Moono joined the Socialist Party because its caring principles are in line with her own. “I believe in equality and justice, especially for the underprivileged and highly marginalised groups,” she said. “This is what has prompted me to join the revolutionary movement because my desire is in line with its ideology.”

Moono says constituency issues that most concern her are the poor road network linking its 11 wards, poor water supply and sanitation, and a lack of empowerment for marginalised groups, especially young people and women.

“It’s about time women took a centre stage in issues that affect us directly, and politics is an ideal way to sort out the issues that we struggle with, both as women and as a nation,” she said.

Moono was born in Macha, Choma district, and studied at Lupata primary, St Francis Davison, and Pemba secondary, schools. She is currently pursuing a degree in early childhood and primary education at the Information and Communication University in Lusaka.

**Roydah Mulenga**

ROYDAH Mulenga, 22, the parliamentary candidate for Kaputa constituency in Northern Province, knows what hardship is, having dropped in and out of school because of a lack of support until the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) came to her rescue.

Although she attended Kaputa Primary School, Mulenga dropped

out for two years before picking up her education at Chipote primary, where she overcame her problems and was made head girl.

“Because of lack of support from my parents I went to the head teacher at Kaputa Boarding Secondary School to complain about my situation, who added me on the list of CAMFED,” she said. “I was vice head girl at Kaputa and completed my Grade Twelve in 2018.”

Mulenga supported herself selling cassava and tomatoes before applying to be a youth ambassador with the Natwampane Programme, a campaign that works with local authorities, traditional and religious leaders, service providers, children and young people to prevent sexual and gender-based violence. She has also worked as a DJ at Radio Lubuto in Kaputa.

“I joined the Socialist Party because its ideology matches with my poor family background,” she said. “People should vote for me because I look forward to serving my community as a member of parliament and interacting with local society all the time.”

Mulenga says issues in her constituency include illiteracy and youths “languishing in poverty”. “Most of them have no jobs and I intend to introduce self-sustaining youth projects to bring sanity to their lives,” she said.

**Teinson Munsanje**

TEINSON Munsanje, parliamentary candidate for Kalomo Central constituency in Southern Province, says he “can’t imagine how bad the future could be if left in the hands of capitalists”.

“I chose to join the revolution for the liberation of generations to come,” he said. “There is no better time to fight for human rights than in the socialist way.”

Musanje says Kalomo needs to address the issues of healthcare, farming input, youth unemployment, and the road network, which can cost lives.

“We had a case where a woman almost died while in labour due to the fact that the ambulance couldn’t reach her home,” he said. “Instead, she was forced to walk to a point where they were told it was parked. A woman is a mother of the nation. No woman should die while giving birth.”

Munsanje says it is time to fight poverty, the effects of which he knows only too well. “I come from

a broken home because our financial issues couldn’t sustain holding my parents together,” he said.

“Jesus was a social worker despite being a spiritual being. Why then shouldn’t we live in a civilised and socialised society? It is only the Socialist Party that can deliver us to the promised land.”

Munsanje was educated at Namatama basic, Greenacres basic, and Mwata day secondary schools. He went on to David Livingstone College of Education, where he qualified as a business studies teacher in 2018.

**Ireen Musela**

IREEN Natasha Musela, the parliamentary candidate for Mufulira central constituency, Copperbelt Province, says she joined the Socialist Party because she finds the manifesto and leadership inspiring, and will encourage her community “to become drivers as opposed to spectators of their own destiny”.

Musela, who holds a primary school teaching diploma from Kitwe College of Education, says that if elected she will work towards improving the lives of the voiceless victims of poverty in her community, especially the many orphans who head households.

She says HIV/AIDS has left Zambia with one of the highest rates of orphans in the region. Since extended families often fail to support them they are forced to spend time trying to make money, doing household chores and caring for other family members, rather than going to school.

“Many are forced into prostitution, theft and other problematic activities because they have little or no skills to trade,” she said. “I will try to provide the opportunity for these young people to go back to school or learn practical skills, such as catering, bricklaying, plumbing, fish farming and so on.” She says her constituency also faces the challenges of a lack of clean drinking water and poor sanitation.

Musela says everyone should involve themselves in politics, “because it dictates our living conditions, including workers’ rights, the national debt, water quality, education system, tax system, distribution of wealth, and healthcare”.

**Sharon Muyupa**

PEOPLE should take part in the affairs of the country by voting be-

cause it’s only through their vote that things can be changed for the better, says Sharon Muyupa, parliamentary candidate for Kankoyo constituency, Copperbelt Province.

“I decided to join the revolutionary movement because it is everyone’s duty and this is the only platform that I can be a part of,” she said. “Women are the majority in the country and are the most affected so they should be involved in political activities so they can choose their future.”

Muyupa says that in addition to the empowerment of women, other issues she wants to focus on include youth unemployment and the lack of good health centres.

Muyupa, who works for Mopani Copper Mines as a security officer, was educated at Twapene primary and Buntondo secondary schools.

**Judith Ng'onga**

WOMEN are the mothers of Zambia and can change things for the better by working together, says Judith Ng’onga, parliamentary candidate for Chimbamilonga constituency in Northern Province.

“Politics is not made for men or elderly people,” she said. “Even young women can stand to fight and work together in the community. We have the power to change the president. If men can do it, we can do it better.”

Ng’onga said she joined politics because of poverty and the challenges her constituency was facing, and learned how unfair Zambian society was at an early age. “I’m the only who finished school,” she said. “The others failed because of poverty.” She was educated at Mporokoso High School and went on to qualify as a professional psychosocial counsellor.

Ng’onga said conditions were so bad in Chimbamilonga that the animals fared better than the people. “We only have electricity in the park for animals, but there is no power where people live,” she said. Other issues included poor roads and a lack of safe drinking water.

“The best way to address the challenges is by telling the people that by voting for me, it’s same as voting for themselves. They will be the ones going to work when we receive the contracts in our community,” she said. “Let’s fight together by choosing the right, humble leader, Dr Fred M’membe, on August 12.”



# New COVID deaths report reveals policies disaster

## ‘Excess mortality’ toll is twice as high as officially reported

Bryan Dyne

THE NUMBER of global COVID-19 deaths is twice as high as officially reported – 6.93 million globally, 905,000 in the United States alone – according to a new study by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME).

These figures were reported in May in an analysis of “excess mortality” by the IHME. Importantly, the study includes only under-reported deaths from COVID-19, and excludes deaths from other causes related to the pandemic, including delayed medical care and “deaths of despair”, such as suicides or overdoses, related to the social crisis triggered by the pandemic.

The research presents a disastrous picture of the toll of the pandemic and is an indictment of the capitalist order that has allowed death on this scale to occur. If, in the words of the British medical journal BMJ, nearly 3.3 million deaths are “social murder,” what does the doubling of this death toll signify?

By any measure, this is the largest public health disaster ever in the United States. 905,000 deaths are greater than all the combat and non-combat deaths in the American Civil War, the nation’s bloodiest conflict. 905,000 deaths represent one in every 367 men, women, and children in the US. 905,000 deaths are more than double the combined combat fatalities of all US wars fought since the Spanish-American War in 1898, including World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

Almost equally astounding is that the new estimates have gone essentially unreported in the media. The IHME has been used as the semi-official coronavirus case and death count prediction team for more than a year, referred to multiple times by the New York Times, Washington Post, and numerous others.

But no matter the efforts by the media to bury this report, such a colossal loss of life has the most far-reaching implications. It is a brutal indictment of the American ruling elite and the capitalist governments of the entire world.

Such mass death was not an accident, but the product of deliberate policy. The world’s ruling elite was well aware of the threat posed by the virus, but refused to raise the alarm. While then-US President Donald Trump sought to “play down” the virus, despite being aware of “this is deadly stuff”, Congress and the media received numerous briefings and interviews about the scale of the looming disaster.

Yet no alarms were raised either by the White House or the media until March. Instead, plans were developed to protect the world’s markets, not human lives. In the United States and Europe, trillions of dollars and euros were pumped into financial markets, while vir-



A family member mourns next to the bodies of COVID-19 victims at a crematorium near Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu, Nepal

tually nothing was being devoted towards minimising the impact of the pandemic, which at that point had already claimed tens of thousands of lives.

Instead of suppressing the pandemic, the ruling classes promoted the policy of “herd immunity” – the claim it would be better for society to just let the disease spread uncontrolled.

This policy was voiced publicly in Britain on March 14, when the government’s chief scientific advisor Sir Patrick Vallance stood next to Prime Minister Boris Johnson and declared that it “isn’t desirable” to “stop everyone getting” the coronavirus.

### Bailouts

The policy was made even more explicit over the summer, when Trump administration advisor Paul Elias Alexander said on July 4 that, “infants, kids, teens, young people, young adults, middle aged with no conditions etc. have zero to little risk ... so we use them to develop herd ... we want them infected.”

The policy of herd immunity was further developed specifically in relationship to children in Sweden by state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell, who in an email also on March 14 stated that, “one point might speak for keeping schools open in order to reach herd immunity more quickly”.

Once the various bailouts were secured, there was a definite shift in the tone of world governments to immediately end lockdowns,

particularly those of March and April 2020 that were triggered by numerous wildcat strikes against unsafe working conditions. Chief among the reopening calls were from the Trump administration, asserting that “the cure can’t be worse than the disease”.

Outcries from workers and medical experts against this homicidal policy were met with contempt. Brazil’s president, Jair Bolsonaro, declared on April 8, “It’s raining. We’re going to get wet. And some are going to drown in the rain.” German parliament president Wolfgang Schäuble said similarly on April 26, “But when I hear that everything must take second place to the protection of life, then I must say: that is not right in such an absolute sense.”

This outlook was epitomised by the recently reported outburst by Boris Johnson, which occurred on October 30 when he demanded, “No more f\*\*\*ing lockdowns, let the bodies pile high in their thousands.”

More than a year later, the human tragedy caused by the “malign neglect” of the world’s governments toward the working class is clear in a figure that is worth repeating: an estimated 6.93 million men, women and children dead in little more than year to a deadly but preventable disease.

Now, under Joe Biden, schools are reopening across the country, threatening a major resurgence of the disease nationally. Biden himself declared on January 22, 2021, that, “There’s nothing we can do to

change the trajectory of the pandemic in the next several months,” categorically ruling out lockdowns while sending students, teachers and staff back into disease-infested buildings. The result was a predictable rise in cases in Michigan, Florida, Pennsylvania, Illinois and elsewhere.

Now, mask mandates and social distancing measures are being wholly abandoned throughout the United States. Workers in the US are being told what the French working class was told by French President Emanuel Macron on February 2: “We are going to live with the virus.”

### Oligarchy

The dangers of such an outlook cannot be overstated. Already, the pandemic has entered a new stage, of rampaging through the equatorial regions and global south.

The disaster in India is the worst of numerous emerging surges of the pandemic, where the IHME estimates more than 654,000 dead, compared to the official count of 238,000, and predicts a further 1 million dead by September.

In a nationally televised address delivered on April 21 this year, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made clear that future lockdowns to prevent such a colossal scale of death are out of the question. He declared, “In today’s situation, we have to save the country from lockdown.” In other words, the economic interests of the financial oligarchy must be “saved” no

matter how many lives are lost.

Such callous disregard for human life does not merely threaten every worker in India, it threatens the working class the world over. As has been shown by the emergence of new variants in the past six months, the coronavirus is extremely capable of mutating into new and more infectious forms, as demonstrated by the variants first detected in Brazil, Britain, and India, which are suspected to be the drivers of the recent surges in cases and deaths in the respective countries.

Moreover, even if the virus is stopped in the United States, for example, the variants spreading in India or Brazil or elsewhere could absolutely wrap around and re-infect the US, including with mutations that allow the virus to evade immunity. By its very nature, a pandemic is a global phenomenon and can only be resolved with a genuinely international response.

Such a response, however, will not come from the existing ruling classes. Trump, Johnson, Bolsonaro, Macron, Modi, Biden, and their ilk are all responsible for “social murder” on a scale not seen since the world wars and they will not change course.

It will only be the working class itself, mobilised in a political struggle against the capitalist profit motive which all these figures defend, that will hold these criminals to account for the mass death and suffering they have inflicted on the world’s population.

wsws.org

## WHO endorses Sinopharm vaccine for COVAX use

THE WORLD Health Organisation has validated the COVID-19 vaccine developed by China’s Sinopharm for emergency use in the global COVAX relief programme, a move widely welcomed by officials and experts worldwide. “Sinopharm is a blessing because of its easy storage requirements, which will make it a desirable vaccine for low-income economies of third world countries,” said Musarrat Amin, a Pakistani strategic security analyst.

COVAX is an initiative led by international partnerships and agencies, including the WHO, to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are distributed equitably.

The WHO’s emergency approval of the Sinopharm vaccine “is a step in the right direction” and “a great attempt to help beat coronavirus in developing countries”, Abbas Zaki, a member of the Fatah Central Committee and Fatah’s Commissioner General for Arab and Chinese Affairs, said.

Mushtuq Hossain, an advisor to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research under Bangladesh’s Health Ministry, said the WHO decision to include the Chinese-made vaccine in the Emergency Use Listing came as “a big blessing for the whole world in the fight against the deadly disease”.

A report published recently in the British journal *Nature* noted that certification by the WHO could help “address the current

shortfall in vaccines available through COVAX”, and potentially open the door to “wide distribution in lower-income nations through the COVAX initiative”.

China has been fulfilling its commitment to making its COVID-19 vaccine a global public good “at a time when the vaccine shots are not available in many places or are being nationalised,” Musarrat Amin said.

Xinhua

## CHINA WATCH

INTEREST in China is growing, yet most news and analysis outside the country is produced by mainstream media from the global north. To provide access to Chinese perspectives, the *Dongsheng Collective* – researchers from various countries – offers a China digest of news. This is an edited selection.

### Senegal vax support

SENEGALISE President Macky Sall has said he appreciates China’s gesture of solidarity by providing vaccine support for his country in the fight against COVID-19. Through his social media, the Senegalese president welcomed the “important donation” of Sinopharm vaccine.

Xinhua

### USA keeps patents

US pharmaceutical firms have opposed overriding patents for mRNA vaccines, fearing Russia and China may develop new treatments. Under national and international pressure, the White House considered a temporary waiver of IP rights – backed by 60 countries – but Big Pharma warned that Russia and China could develop other vaccines and cancer and heart treatments.

Financial Times

### Population up 5.38%

THE population reached 1.412 billion in 2020 (up 5.38% from 2010) in the seventh census, the slowest growth since 1953. The last decade saw the gender gap at birth improve (118.1-111.3 male to female), elderly population grow (5.44 percentage points) and working population decline (6.79 percentage points) with a lower fertility rate (1.3 children per woman).

South China Morning Post

### Trust in govt grows

CHINESE citizens’ trust in their national government increased to 98% post-pandemic, a study published in *Washington Post* shows. A York University-led survey of 19,816 people shows increased trust in national, provincial (95%) and township (91%) level governments over pandemic response. Confidence increased in 49% of respondents and decreased in 3%.

Washington Post

### Hybrid rice success

A NEW super hybrid rice has exceeded expectations, reaching 15 tonnes per hectare yield in Hainan Province. Led by “father of hybrid rice” Yuan Longping’s team, the Chaoyouqianhao strain aims for 45 tonnes per hectare yield over two seasons.

Global Times

### Investment increases

FOREIGN direct investment in China (US\$46.38 billion) surged 39.9% year-on-year in Q1, with 10,263 new enterprises. Investment grew in the less developed Western Region (+91%), services (+51.5%) and high tech (+32.1%). ASEAN is the largest investor (+60%).

China Briefing

### Insurance reform

THE government has announced medical insurance reform, covering more than 300 million urban workers, to better protect elderly and vulnerable groups. Two percent of workers’ salaries will remain in personal funds, while employers’ contributions (4-10% of salary) will go to community funds for healthcare demands.

Sixth Tone



# Fred M'membe: we should win because of what we believe in

## SP manifesto pledges to reverse privatisation and de-industrialisation

Vijay Prashad

IN AUGUST the people of Zambia will vote to elect a new president who will be the seventh person elected to the office since Zambia won its independence from the United Kingdom in 1964 if the incumbent loses.

The incumbent, President Edgar Lungu, is facing a strong challenge from Fred M'membe, the presidential candidate of the Socialist Party Zambia.

Dr M'membe knows the importance of a challenge. As the editor of *The Post* since its creation in 1991, Dr M'membe has long faced malicious harassment and political persecution. The voice of Dr M'membe's *The Post* sizzled with truth-telling. It was silenced in 2016.

In 2009, an editorial in *The Post* described how, despite decades of independence, Zambia remained in the claws of an unjust world system. "Economically speaking, Zambia is the tip of the tail of the global dog," wrote *The Post*. "When the dog is happy, we find ourselves merrily flicking from side to side; when the dog is miserable, we find ourselves coiled up in a dark and smelly place."

No wonder that every government from Frederick Chiluba (1991-2002) to sitting President Edgar Lungu has tried to muzzle the paper and its editor, who cast a spotlight on the awful surrender of the Zambian political elite to multinational corporations and foreign bondholders. Now the former editor of *The Post* is a presidential candidate.

Fred M'membe is a humble man who demurs about his presidential run through a warm smile. "Ours is a collective leadership," he tells me of the Socialist Party, which was launched in March 2018.

The manifesto of the party pledges to reverse Zambia's slide into privatisation and de-industrialisation, social processes that have damaged social life in the country and created a sense of despondency among the masses. A reading of that manifesto in these COVID-19 times is chilling: "Due to the poor state of water and sanitation, urban areas are prone to water-borne diseases that break out almost every year", with water scarce and half the population without connection to sanitation systems.

The neoliberal policies pushed since the end of the government of Zambia's first president, Kenneth Kaunda (1964-1991), have been catastrophic for Zambians. These policies, Dr M'membe told me, "are creating an enormous time bomb in our country. We shouldn't resign ourselves to hunger, unemployment, squalor, disease, ignorance, hopelessness, and despair. Struggling for a better Zambia means, in part, to build a better Zambia".

Zambia is a rich country with a poor population. Zambia's poverty rate is estimated between 40 percent and 60 percent (the country only has statistics up to 2015).



Left to right: Vijay Prashad, Fred M'membe, Diego Sequera, and Erika Farias, in Caracas, 2019

A World Bank household survey conducted in early June 2020 found that half of the families who relied on agriculture saw a substantial loss of income, and 82 percent of families that earned income from non-farm businesses saw their livelihoods shrink. The World Bank found that remittance flows into Zambia also precipitously declined.

Because of the drop in income, households reduced their consumption of goods, especially food. In 2019, before the pandemic, the Global Hunger Index found the hunger situation in Zambia to be "alarming".

### Austerity

But there is no reliable data on the growth of hunger caused by the pandemic, which prevented the Index from properly assessing the situation. Instead, it assessed the situation as "serious". "Zambia," Dr M'membe told me, "stands at the brink of a major catastrophe."

In November 2020, Zambia defaulted on a \$42.5 million payment towards a Eurobond. President Lungu's government has been

**Every child in Zambia should be able to read and should be able to go to sleep without hunger pangs. This is a belief that should be shared by every human being**

talking to the IMF ever since, hoping to get a bailout without stringent austerity measures. Such austerity measures – including cuts in public services that the country can ill afford during the pandemic – would jeopardise Lungu's chances in the August elections. In early March, the IMF's staff concluded that "significant progress" had been made toward an "appropriate policy package", but no details or timetable have been released.

A month before the IMF team met with Zambian officials, the country's minister of mines Richard Musukwa announced that the country's copper production had reached 882,061 tonnes. This was an increase by 10.8 percent from 2019 figures, a "historical high" according to Musukwa. Given the move to electric cars and to more high-tech appliances, copper wiring is certain to be in high demand, which is why Zambia hopes to produce more than one million

tonnes a year in the next few years. Copper prices are inching upwards (\$4 per pound) toward the highs of 2011 (\$4.54 per pound). There is plenty of money to be made from copper, particularly for the Zambian people.

Four companies dominate Zambian copper: Barrick Lumwana of Canada's Barrick Gold, FQM Kansanshi of Canada's First Quantum, Mopani of Switzerland's Glencore, and Konkola Copper Mines of the UK's Vedanta. These are major mining companies that leech Zambia of its resources through creative means, such as transfer mispricing and bribery.

In 2019, Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research spoke to Gyekye Tanoh, head of the Political Economy Unit at the Third World Network-Africa based in Accra (Ghana), about the situation of "resource sovereignty". His comments on Zambia merit re-reading. Because Zambia is now utterly reliant on copper exports, the international

copper price movements have a preponderant and distorting effect on the exchange rate of the kwacha. This distortion and limited revenue from copper exports impacts the competitiveness and viability of other, non-copper exports as a result of the fluctuations of the kwacha. The fluctuations also impact the social sector.

A study carried out in 2018 showed that changes in the exchange rates oscillated between -11.1 percent to +13.4 percent in the period between 1997 and 2008. The loss of funds from donors to the Ministry of Health in Zambia amounted to US\$13.4 million or \$1.1 million per year.

### Colonial

Because of the collapse of the kwacha between 2015 and 2016, per capita health expenditure in Zambia fell from \$44 (2015) to \$23 (2016).

Dr M'membe told me that poverty levels in the Copperbelt Province, the heart of Zambia's wealth, are very high. It is striking that 60 percent of the children in this copper-rich area cannot read. "Foreign

multinational corporations have been the major beneficiaries," he explained. A cozy relationship with the Zambian elites enables these firms to pay low taxes and take their profits out of the country, as well as to use techniques such as outsourcing and subcontracting to skirt Zambia's labour laws. This industry, Dr M'membe said, "still operates along colonial lines". Indeed, in Phyllis Deane's *Colonial Social Accounting* (1953), she shows that in Northern Rhodesia – Zambia's name during colonial rule – two-thirds of the profits were taken out of the territory to pay foreign shareholders, while two-thirds of the remainder went to the European workers and the minuscule leftovers went to the vast majority, the African miners.

"Reliance on non-renewable resources like minerals for growth is, by definition, unsustainable," Dr M'membe said. Any government in Zambia will have to rely on copper – only a third of it has been mined to date – until the country's economy and society are properly diversified. The Socialist Party has proposed a range of policies to harness the copper resources, from cutting better deals with the current owners, to full-scale nationalisation (a policy that is currently being imposed on Zambia, as First Quantum and Glencore have cut back on their investments, forcing the government to step in). Dr M'membe laid out seven points for a just mining policy for the immediate period:

- The socialist government will declare minerals as strategic metals and provide a protective legal environment for their extraction. The export of concentrates will be outlawed, and the marketing of minerals will be coordinated by the state.
- Zambian labour will have its power strengthened by laws and by political will.
- Mining firms will have to source at least 30 percent of their industrial inputs from Zambia, which would encourage manufacturing.
- Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines Limited-Investment Holdings (ZCCM-IH), a state-owned corporation, will take a controlling interest in all new mines.
- Resource rent or variable income tax will be introduced to secure additional mineral rents.
- All proceeds from mineral sales will first be credited in Bank of Zambia accounts – an essential aspect of currency and balance of payments management and financial stability.
- Mines will have to adhere to state-of-the-art environmental technologies, practices, and standards.

Beyond this, the socialist government will encourage the creation of miners' cooperatives, particularly for manganese, which is cheaper to mine.

There is seriousness of purpose in the Socialist Party's agenda for Zambia. Dr M'membe travels the length and breadth of his country speaking about this agenda. "We should win because of what we believe in," he tells me. He believes that every child in Zambia should be able to read and should be able to go to sleep without hunger pangs. This is a belief that should be shared by every human being.

Tricontinental



Any government in Zambia will have to rely on copper until the country's economy and society are properly diversified, Prashad says





Clockwise from top left: marchers in Lisbon, Portugal; a rally in Durban, South Africa; Cuban soldiers parade; Hong Kong migrant workers; clashes in Strasbourg, France; a stand-off in Jakarta, Indonesia

# Workers of the world unite

Brianna Griffith

COVID-19 has changed the shape of political organising and gatherings of all sorts. But the class struggle continues, and workers' organisations have adapted to meet the challenges. Here is a snapshot of how the world celebrated this year's International Workers' Day, also known as May Day or Labour Day.

In Cuba, more than 80 trade union representatives from around the world, as well as political and social organisations of various progressive movements, held an online rally on April 30. Under the slogan "United We Make Cuba", the Workers' Central Union (CTC) paid tribute to healthcare workers, expressed their support for trade unions globally fighting neoliberalism, and demanded an end to the devastating US blockade that has sought to destroy their country's economy.

CTC Secretary Ulises Guiltarte sent greetings to the workers remotely: "From this historic square of the revolution and in front of the image of our national hero José Martí, on the occasion of the celebration of May Day today, the World Proletariat Day, we send congratulations and congratulations to all the workers of our country."

## Virtual

Youth from across the country participated in a "virtual parade" to celebrate their participation in youth organisations and their home May Day celebrations. This was organised by the Union of Young Communists.

In Bolivia, where the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) party recently reversed a right-wing coup, the government commemorated the day by launching new measures and a 2 percent basic salary increase.

The Venezuelan government has

similarly responded with action in favour of workers, increasing the minimum wage by 178 percent as it battles the crisis brought about by the economic war waged by the United States.

China celebrated May Day with a five-day holiday. The country was expecting to see 265 million total passenger trips across the country, about 53 million per day, and almost twice the daily average.

China dealt with the pandemic swiftly and decisively, which has allowed the country to avoid either large-scale lockdowns of the entire country or the mass deaths that have afflicted many capitalist countries. Thousands of citizens and visitors to Wuhan, now almost completely virus-free, enjoyed the

first day of the Wuhan Strawberry Music Festival. Because China took decisive action to prioritise public health over private profit, hundreds of millions of Chinese workers are now able to take domestic vacations within the country and enjoy nearly a full week of leisure time.

In countries with governments loyal to the interests of the capitalists over the workers, May Day activities were as important as ever, but frequently experienced violent repression. Capitalist countries around the world faced massive protests against austerity in late 2019. In 2020, a massive uprising against police brutality shook the world centre of capitalism – the United States – to its core. The

struggle continues. In France, thousands of people took to the streets in over 300 planned May Day protests. The French interior ministry estimated that 17,000 had protested in Paris and 106,000 protested nationwide, but the real numbers are likely far higher. Workers are protesting against the government's attempts to "reform" the unemployment system. Protesters were met with thousands of police.

Colombia had already been experiencing protests before May Day, as thousands of people took to the streets to denounce government austerity measures. Many have been killed in the brutal crackdowns by far-right president Ivan Duque, and hundreds injured.

Chilean workers engaged in

a May Day general strike called by the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores to reject the government of right wing Sebastián Piñera.

More than 200 protesters were arrested in Istanbul for breaching coronavirus restrictions. While quarantine procedures and restrictions on public gatherings can play a vital public health role, right-wing governments have often held a double standard to impose a de facto ban on progressive and pro-labour gatherings while not enforcing these laws against reactionary or anti-labour ones. Police in the Philippines intervened to prevent hundreds of workers from gathering in Manila under the same pretence.

In Indonesia, about 50,000

workers from 3,000 workplaces took part in May Day marches across 200 cities. Most of these maintained strict health protocols, according to Said Iqbal, the president of the Confederation of Indonesian Trade Unions.

These are just a handful of actions around the world. Capitalist countries are facing cascading political, social and economic crises, which are now exacerbated further by a year of botched COVID-19 responses.

While resistance to these injustices took many different forms on this year's May Day, what remains consistent is the spirit of international solidarity among workers of the world.

*Liberation*

## This is a day to respect all those who have fallen

**SOCIALIST Party president Fred M'membe paid tribute in a statement on May Day to all those who have sacrificed themselves and paid the price of exploitation throughout the years, fighting for hard-fought freedoms.**

"May Day is not simply a time of celebration for our party and those who toil," he said. "May Day is also a solemn occasion, a time when we bow our heads in respect for those who have fallen."

"On May Day, we remember that the flag of those who toil is not red simply by accident or for artistic reasons. As the traditional labour song goes, 'Our life's blood has dyed its every fold.'"

"We are revolutionary optimists. Those who toil have won many victories, and they have a great future. In fact, it is only those who toil who are capable of wiping out all the misery and suffering in this world brought about by centuries of exploitation and oppression. But, while we understand why the future of those who toil is bright, we are also sober, thoroughgoing revolutionaries. We know that the road ahead is tortuous, full of twists and turns."

Dr M'membe said May Day was "a time for casting away illusions and preparing for the struggle for a more just, fair and humane society".

"It is a time for those who toil to heighten their vigilance



against their enemies. It is a time to unite real friends to defeat real enemies. Not all those who wave the red flag or claim to speak for those who toil actually do so.

"Even at the time of the origins of May Day and the eight-hour movement, there were two lines in the labour movement."

"On the one hand, there were those like Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons, who died on the gallows for the cause of labour. These revolutionaries insisted that the demand for

the eight-hour day was only the opening shot in a long war, a war that would only end with the complete emancipation of those who toil and the total defeat of capitalism."

"On the other hand, there were those like Samuel Gompers, who also claimed to support May Day. They argued that the eight-hour day, an improvement in wages, and trade union organisation would solve all the workers' problems. Rather than overthrowing the capitalism, they argued that labour should

try to win friends among the capitalist politicians and support one faction against another.

"Who was right and who was wrong? The revolutionaries like Parsons and Eugene Debs? Or the reformist traitors like Gompers? We can answer these questions by looking at our conditions today. Over 100 years have passed and we are still fighting to defend – and attain – the eight-hour day."

"On one hand, we have millions of those who toil who are being driven to the point of

exhaustion with forced overtime, moonlighting or speedup. On the other hand, we have millions more who have a zero-hour day, workers thrown out into the streets without jobs, workers who make up the vast army of the unemployed."

Dr M'membe said workers had made some gains in this century of struggle.

"There have been times when the capitalists and their agents were on the run. Faced with the alternative of massive rebellion, the capitalists made a considerable number of concessions to the workers and the oppressed peoples. But what are these gains, really?"

"To a certain extent, the gains won in struggle served to strengthen the unity and fighting capacity of those who toil. But when you consider the wealth that those who toil have produced, when you consider the power and potential for abundance of the productive forces that those who toil have themselves created, then these reforms are shown up for what they really are."

"They are nothing but crumbs, scraps left over on the table after the capitalists have had their feast."

"It is socialism, and only socialism, that can help us eliminate exploitation, oppression, abuse and humiliation of those who toil – build it now!"



# Challenge is to innovate, change without renouncing principles

Miguel Díaz-Canel replaced Raúl Castro as first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party's central committee as its Eighth Congress reflected on the country's adversaries, the economy, and the COVID-19 pandemic. **W.T.Whitney Jr** reports

THE CUBAN Communist Party's Eighth Congress took place in Havana in April, five years after the previous one. President Miguel Díaz-Canel, who had just replaced former President Raúl Castro as first secretary of the party's central committee, delivered the closing remarks. Castro is retiring from public life.

Focusing on the congress's theme of continuity, Díaz-Canel's speech was impassioned, far-reaching, and clear. He called upon the new party leadership to respond to an increasingly restrictive US economic blockade, speed up the implementation of economic reforms, and deal with the economic fallout from the pandemic.

The Eighth Congress took place 60 years after both Fidel Castro's declaration of the socialist nature of the Cuban Revolution and the country's victory over counter-revolutionaries at the Bay of Pigs. That timing may add significance to Díaz-Canel's speech; the longer US hostilities last, the sooner they will end.

Maybe Cuba will have soon a free hand, or maybe not. Either way, a speech at a watershed moment that documents plans, aspirations, and problem-solving proposals, will be of interest to historians.

What follows are excerpts from the president's speech chosen because of relevance and significance.

## Milestone

Honouring former President Raúl Castro, Díaz-Canel expressed "gratitude for his patient labours of many years, which we declare to be a milestone in our political history: This is the Congress of Continuity ... Comrade Raúl has prepared, directed, and led this process of generational continuity".

Raúl Castro's central report to the congress told the truth, Díaz-Canel said. "It exposed specific challenges that confront our country, in particular those associated with attempts at domination, the hegemony of US imperialism, and the brutal blockade whose extra-territorial impact strikes at us on almost all fronts.

"In the last four years, it escalated to qualitatively more aggressive levels. That barrier constitutes the principal obstacle for the development of our country and for moving ahead in the search for prosperity and wellbeing.

"In asserting this truth, there is no intent to hide the deficiencies of



Cuban Communist Party first secretary Miguel Díaz-Canel with Raúl Castro. Below: Cuba's "white coat army" fighting COVID-19 globally

our own reality, which have been repeatedly discussed. In the last three decades, the economic, commercial, and financial blockade [has been] intensified opportunistically and with evil intent in periods of great crisis so that hunger and misery might provoke a social explosion that undermines the legitimacy of the revolution."

He said Cuba's economy faced difficulties. "This Congress's five-year appraisal does not show good economic results. Inefficiency and ineffectiveness influenced the performance of a significant part of the entrepreneurial and budgeted sectors. Structural problems shape outcomes. We've been unable to avoid extra expenses that turned out to be unnecessary for this period. We've seen inadequate control of material and financial resources as well as avoidable obstacles and bureaucracy.

"Cuba has provided a magnificent lesson on how a complex problem like the pandemic can be confronted through political will, the humanistic vocation of the revolution, governmental operations, public policies centering on the human being, and dialogue among decision makers and scientists and with the Cuban people.

"We must resolve the challenge of producing the food we need and must use and take advantage of renewable sources of energy. We must create sustainable and high-quality tourist facilities, achieve efficiency in investment processes, orient national production to satisfy internal market demands, and raise the quality of all services offered to the population. We must also bury the importation mentality. We must do all this in the least amount of time, through our own efforts, on

the island, with as little foreign dependency as possible."

Díaz-Canel said the revolution was strengthened by its achievements. "Despite the blockade, our country has been successful in sustaining its principal services, cared for all infected people and anyone suspected of infection, mobilised a score of molecular biology laboratories in record time, designed and created national prototypes of pulmonary ventilators and diagnostic kits, and developed five candidate vaccines. We've arranged to produce doses enough for immunising the entire population and contributing to other nations.

"All of this is much more than light at the end of the tunnel. It's proof that we are on the right side of history, that revolutionary and socialist endeavours have so much potential and reach. When men and women in white coats, members of a Henry Reeve Brigade, come down

the gangway, raising on high the flag with the solitary star, the lies and infamies against Cuba begin to dissolve like ice in warm water."

He said the revolution wouldn't survive without unity and overcoming divisions created by US machinations. "In the face of the unjust international order imposed by broken and discredited neoliberalism, Cuba maintains a line of action that inspires admiration. But this posture provokes frustration, desperation, and impotence in our northern neighbour and its acolytes, the sell-outs and annexationists, those who are submissive and unworthy, and who give in to the designs of the empire.

"Our sworn enemies go about thinking up the most perverse plans to attack the revolution, create distrust, and break up unity. The Cuban Revolution won't be betrayed or given over to those who toy with the fate of the homeland."

Díaz-Canel said the party was Cuba's defence against disunity and corruption. "Its history can be summarised in two words: people and unity. That is so because Cuba's Communist Party has never been an electoral party; it wasn't born out of any break-up [or split]. It was born out of the unity of all political forces whose deeply humanistic ideals came about from the struggle to change an unjust country with great inequality. Our country was dependent on foreign power and under the yoke of a bloody military tyranny.

"The militancy of the party serves to mobilise the energies of the country toward objectives of development, particularly food security and sovereignty, industrial development, dealing with the energy problem. But always, and at the top of the list, it prepares for defence, strengthening institutional order, and the socialist rule of law.



## Your wisdom, honesty and courage give us confidence

**SOCIALIST** Party president Fred M'membe sent a message of solidarity with the Communist Party of Cuba as Raúl Castro announced at the Eighth Congress he was stepping down as party leader. His successor, Miguel Díaz-Canel, was voted in on April 19.

Dr M'membe said: "We send you our revolutionary greetings as you continue to struggle 'without pause and improvisation' to find solutions to the challenges facing the Cuban Revolution and humanity in general. "Comrades, your maturity, seriousness,

wisdom, honesty, and courage give us inspiration and feelings of security and great confidence in the future as we prepare for our elections coming up in four months on August 12.

"You have to cope with the objective problems of the international situation, the increasing number of economic and political measures the imperialists are taking against the revolution.

"Whereas there are men and women and political parties and governments that have sold out to imperialism, been hired by impe-

rialism, or surrendered to imperialism, you have for 62 years stood steadfast. You have confronted every difficult pressure, and economic, political and all other kinds of attacks.

"We have all the confidence that the new leadership of the Cuban Revolution will follow the example of those who created that revolution and opened a new path for humanity, and will adhere to their ideas loyally, and no force on earth can deter the PCC from its revolutionary course.

We wish you all the best dear comrades!

"The main premise is never to lie or violate ethical principles. The solid authority of the party rests on those values. Our obligation is that of standard-bearer in the struggle against corruption, dishonest ways, abuse of power, favouritism, and double standards.

"Themes of urgent attention in our party schools include party discipline, collective leadership, theoretical studies, and an insistence upon the viability of socialism, Marxist-Leninist ideas, and the traditions of Cuban thought, particularly those of Martí and Fidel. To function as a true vanguard, our leadership must be capable of projecting itself as truly concerned about the functioning of society and powerful enough to proclaim and mobilise against whatever plan enemies of the Cuban nation conceive of to provoke a social explosion."

He said the future of the Cuban Revolution depended on young people.

"Generational continuity is part of [our] unity. It's appropriate to speak and share what's happening with our young people as the most important people they are, to distinguish them as protagonists of transformations on the way. They have the force, disposition, decisiveness, and sincerity, required for whatever project or revolutionary contribution the situation demands. They have shown courage and responsibility as we look to the end of the pandemic."

Díaz-Canel said social media was a tool for revolutionary advocacy, but warned it was also a tool "used by our enemies".

"We need to look for the most agile, brief, and novel ways to communicate our training efforts. In the era of the internet that now permits millions of Cubans to gain a fixed perception of the world through a cell phone, our messages to our militants can no longer go out on the old print-media route.

## Manipulate

"But there are sociopaths with digital technology available and ready for open war on reason and feelings. They attack not only our political system but also manipulate people's real and immediate needs with which we are connected as a species. Powerful groups – mostly in highly developed countries – can convert universal ideas, wants, emotions, and ideological currents, into a dominating force, often out of context. For these communication magicians, truth is negotiable but even worse – disposable."

Díaz-Canel asked, "what about revolution?"

"I say it without complaint. In a true revolution, victory is about having to learn. Our route is an untested one. Our challenge is to innovate constantly, changing everything that has to be changed, without renouncing our firmest principles, without ever departing from the concept of revolution that the undefeated leader of this venture [Fidel Castro] left to us. We must be free of rigid thinking and conscious of possible mistakes that go along with making a road to walk on."

People's World





# **DR FRED M'MEMBE**

## **INCOMING PRESIDENT**

**Uwesu  
Wetu  
Witu  
Kiwaluna**



**Yo Wetu  
Wathu  
Wathu  
Nguwesu**

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