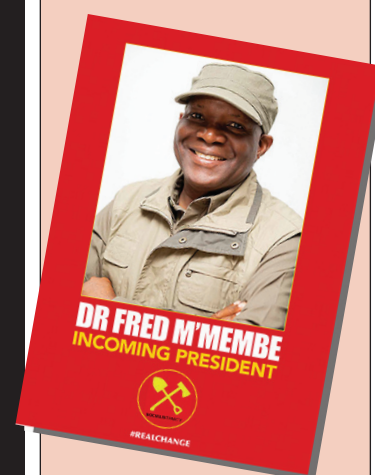


- Vote for **Fred M'membe** as our **president**
- Vote for policies of justice, equity and peace
- Vote for the **Socialist Party** and real change
- Vote to end capitalism's corrupt, greedy past

# Vote to build a new future on August 12

**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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**Campaign permit denial 'a mockery of Zambian democracy'**  
**– Page 3**

## Socialist staff reporter

ON AUGUST 12, Zambians will face a stark choice: a choice between the future and the past, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"Today the case I put before the Zambian people is that if we are to secure the future for our children, for our communities and for our nation, the government of Zambia must now change in a real and revolutionary sense," he said.

"The neoliberal, capitalist policies being pursued and advanced by our opponents belong to the past. Socialism is the future and we must build it now.

## Challenges

"After a decade in power, the PF has lost touch with the poor and working people. It no longer understands what fairness, justice, equity and peace actually mean. It simply doesn't understand the new challenges we face, now, and in the future."

In a statement ahead of the party's official campaign launch, Dr M'membe spelled out some of the challenges Zambia was facing.

"One challenge is to revolutionise our hospitals and make health services free and socialised. And above all, there is the challenge to transform our education system and make it free and socialised," he said.

"The PF has no plans for the future because it is not going to be there to deal with the challenges of the future. It is being sent to the wire on August 12.

"The way forward for Zambia is to elect a revolutionary party and president with progressive ideas to meet the challenges of the future, a new president and government that understand and respect the values upon which our independence struggle was fought."

Dr M'membe said those values included honesty, equity, humility and solidarity.

"We need to build a Zambia anchored on justice, equity and peace. We need a nation where there's decency, fairness and respect. You

• Turn to Page 3



**The campaign launch – Page 6**

Socialist Party president Fred M'membe and general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali arrive at Kasama in Northern Province for the launch of the party's election campaign





The Fred M'membe literacy and agroecology campaign coordinated by the MST Samora Machel Internationalist Brigade and carried out in three provinces

# MST and SP join forces on literacy and agroecology

THE FRED M'membe literacy and agroecology campaign, coordinated by Brazil's MST Samora Machel Internationalist Brigade and the Socialist Party, kicked off in Zambia in May.

Based on the "Read, Speak and Write the Words of the World" method, the campaign is being carried out in three provinces: Lusaka, Eastern and Western. The aim is to make rural and urban workers literate in the country's official language, English.

The importance of the campaign lies in the fact that more than 50 percent of the Zambian population cannot speak, read or write English. Zambia is a country with more than 72 languages derived from the Bantu migrations that gave rise to the diversity of peoples that exist in the country today. However,

literacy in English is necessary for the population to access basic health, education, citizenship and other services and rights.

The emphasis on agroecology is part of the Socialist Party's effort to promote an improvement in the lives of the poorest people through healthy food and income generation. To this end, it has the support of the MST's Internationalist Brigade, which, together with the party's comrades, carries out workshops and training in agroecological practices in conjunction with the literacy classes.

In this first stage, which will last three months, the campaign aims to teach literacy to 2,000 people in the respective regions where it is being developed. Paxcina Mundia Imikendu, local coordinator of the campaign in Western Province and a resident of a region of the Lozi people, where the Silozi language is spoken, says that the number of illiterates in English in her region is

**The campaign is also important because as people become literate, they become multipliers of agroecology . . . train one person (in agroecological practices) so they can train other people in the region**

very high and that this initiative will enable 600 people, divided into 30 on-site classes, to become literate.

"The campaign has a great acceptance in the region, in the sense that people understand that they will be able to write, read and speak English, as this initiative will reduce the number of illiterates in our region," Imikendu said.

For her, the campaign is also

important because as people become literate, they become multipliers of agroecology. In her words, "train one person (in agroecological practices) so they can train other people in the region".

In the district of Malambo, Eastern Province, whose population is Cunda and speaks the language of the same name, local coordinator Emmanuel N'mbanda commented on the importance of agroecology for the local population.

N'mbanda said there were already agroecology experiments in Malumbo, but the campaign, "will help more people get their hands dirty, while raising awareness about not using chemicals that destroy the land".

One of the most important issues that arose early in the planning of the campaign was that of protective and sanitary measures to prevent COVID infection. Since last year, the Samora Machel Brigade has been working

on raising awareness, manufacturing and distributing masks and hygienic material, including hand sanitisers.

Before the start of the campaign, all members of the MST Brigade were advised to get vaccinated through the Covax consortium, which has donated AstraZeneca doses to several African countries. The same guidance was conveyed to members of the Socialist Party of Zambia, who are directly involved in the campaign.

With the start of the campaign, coronavirus protection kits were distributed along with educational materials. The classes have a limited number of people within the safety parameters set by the country, but especially by MST and the Socialist Party.

The campaign continues apace sharing hope with the Zambian population, but without neglecting health to better serve the people.

*MST, Samora Machel Brigade*



## Tribute to KK, man of peace and justice

SOCIALIST Party president Fred M'membe issued a statement following the death of Zambia's first president, Kenneth Kaunda, at the age of 97, describing him as a man of peace and justice.

Dr M'membe wrote: "I am helpless. I do not know what to say or how to say it. No one is too old to die."

"For now I can only urge you my fellow citizens to take a solemn pledge to work for unity, fraternity and peace as the best tribute we can all pay to KK's memory. "KK was a man of peace and justice. The first thing for all of us to remember now is that none of us dare engage in violence for whatever reason."

"We must hold together, and all our petty troubles and differences and conflicts must be ended in the face of this great disaster. "We have to behave in a disciplined manner and face all the perils that surround us, determined to carry out the mandate that our great leader has given us, remembering always that if his spirit looks upon us and sees us, nothing would displease his soul so much as to see that we have indulged in any small behaviour or any violence."

"We must hold together, and all our petty troubles and differences and conflicts must be ended in the face of this great disaster."

"Pray for KK's soul to rest in eternal peace. And while we pray, the greatest prayer that we can offer is to take a pledge to dedicate ourselves to peace, justice and equity, and to the cause for which this great countryman of ours lived."

"That is the best prayer that we can offer him and his memory. That is the best prayer we can offer to Zambia and ourselves."

Dr M'membe later wrote: "On June 17th, a man died who through out his life was an example of courage, coherence, and dedication. With his death one of the last giants of a certain generation disappeared, a generation which sacrificed itself to its very end for the cause of the liberation of the African continent."

"KK, comrade dearest, you have left us a formidable legacy. KK has left the world with a grand legacy of words and deeds. His personal example and his teachings, his faith and firmness, his sincerity and cordiality will linger, always bringing benefit to all who learn from his life."

"You have passed the torch to us. Rest assured that we will not allow the flame to be extinguished. We will hold it high. You will always remain a symbol of commitment and dedication to the struggle to free our people from poverty, ignorance, disease, degradation and humiliation."

"KK was a true human being for our country. A challenge to be humane. With him, one cherished to be human."

"The African liberation struggle has given rise to a galaxy of wonderful personalities. KK should be singled out as one of them."

"I feel honoured and proud to have been close to, and to have shared a friendship with, this extraordinary man."

"KK, we say farewell to you. We will always remember you with pride and affection. Rest in eternal peace. You did what you could. What more could one person expect out of one life?"

● I broke down – Reflections, Page 5

## Illiterates tend to be the poorest, most disadvantaged

IT IS no coincidence that Zambia's distribution of illiteracy follows its patterns of poverty, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"Underdevelopment is, among other things, lack of learning and lack of the possibility to learn," he said.

"It is not only how many cannot read and write. It is also how many cannot read or write, or pass on to higher levels of education, due to the lack of teachers, schools and the minimum conditions beyond those most elementary for subsistence."

"That is why our dramatic educational and cultural problems cannot be isolated from our overall socio-economic situation."

"A characteristic of illiteracy is that it is greater in our rural than in urban

areas, and among women than among men."

"It is not by chance, however, that the geographic and social distribution of illiteracy is almost the same as that of poverty. Illiterates are, as a rule, also the poorest, the most poorly fed, the least healthy, the most disadvantaged and exploited."

"The illiteracy figures reveal the frustrated development of human capacities and potential, the limitations on the individual as a human being and as part of a community, exploitation and ignorance as to a better future, the dramatic social effects of underdevelopment; loss of national identity, social and economic backwardness."

"Many of our children today lack schools or the means and possibilities to attend school."

"The rationale behind this reality and its cause is the situation of poverty that forces them to drop out of school, the distances that have to be covered to get to school and the deplorable material conditions of many of the schools."

"Another factor to be borne in mind is the insufficient training of teaching staff and the lack of ways and means to remedy this insufficiency, which has its effect on the limited and poor quality teaching provided."

"To add to an already gloomy situation, there is the number of university graduates who are lost every year due to the brain drain of the major capitalist powers."

"It is imperative to stress another aspect that hampers our efforts in the pursuit of education and cultural development."

"Imperialist mass media are continuously, sometimes subtly and sometimes openly, carrying out a process of ideological and cultural penetration aimed at eroding our cultural identities, creating habits and patterns of conduct foreign to the needs of our people, belittling and deforming our people's cultures in their own eyes."

"This, of course, has no bearing on the flow of ideas or on the legitimate exchange of the products of their cultures among peoples. These very mass media are working to create a consumerist image devoid of all rationality and are trying to impose mesmerising illusions on our people as absolute truths."

"An enormous percentage of the television programmes broadcast today in our country come from developed capitalist countries."



# August 12 is our chance to build a new, caring future

● From Page 1

can't have a plan for Zambia's future if you have lost sight of such basic values. For us socialists, these values are in our DNA."

Dr M'membe said Zambia needed a new leadership with fresh ideas for the future. "With barely three months to go of this election campaign, the PF government has put forward no real new ideas for the future. It has run out ideas. It has clearly run out of energy. And it has run out of time."

"The Socialist Party is offering new leadership with a plan for the

future, and however many words and however much money the PF may yet throw at these longstanding challenges over the next 11 weeks, it is just not going to be real. The truth is, it's all just too late to be believable."

Dr M'membe said nation-building required vision. "And the cornerstone of our vision for Zambia's future is an education revolution. We believe passionately in the power of education," he said.

"We believe education is the engine room of equity and the engine room of the economy. I would not be standing as a presidential can-

didate today were it not for the encouragement and instruction provided to me by the teachers who shaped my life. They made it possible for a child like me from Lubemba and Bulozzi to finish school, go to university and be here today seeking to lead our nation into the future."

"I know the difference a great education can make. Our vision for Zambia is to build a very good education system so we produce an innovative, skilled and well-trained workforce."

Dr M'membe said the economies competing against Zambia

were making huge investments in education. "They know that knowledge-intensive economies will be the wealthiest economies of the future. We must take decisive action now. We need nothing less than an education revolution now to improve radically the performance of the education system. Universities are critical to the education revolution that Zambia so urgently needs. Undoing the damage this government has done to our universities will not be easy. But this challenge begins today," he said.

"Zambia cannot be put on the path of a knowledge economy if

we do not help our universities attract and retain our best scientists, innovators and researchers into the future."

Dr M'membe said he was approaching the election "with a passionate commitment to Zambia's future".

"The values I bring to leadership are the values instilled in me by my strong Bemba royal upbringing," he said. "They are also the values that are intrinsic to this revolutionary party. I understand that life is sometimes harsh, but I believe that as a people we have a responsibility that when one of us falls down

we must help to lift them back up. That's what decency and fairness is all about."

"Another thing I have learnt is the absolute value of hard work, of not being wasteful, and the importance of planning for the future. For me, these are enduring values."

"And these are the values that, as president, I would bring to our nation's challenges."

"The nation now needs new leadership for the future. The nation now wants new leadership for the future. And today, I am ready to deliver that new leadership for Zambia's future."

# Musumali: ruling party making a mockery of democracy in Zambia

## Comments follow denial of permit to hold launch of campaign in Kasama

Socialist staff reporter

THE GOVERNMENT is making a mockery of Zambian democracy, Socialist Party general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali told a TV, radio and online audience after the party was denied a permit for its campaign launch in Kasama.

The party's campaign launch was held in a private house in Kasama without a live audience following the permit decision.

"We were supposed to have a meeting in a hall. We got all the required documentation. We got the permits. At the end we were told not to proceed," Dr Musumali said.

"There was no reason given behind it. The police were saying, the tent that you are using, close it. The health authorities were telling us, you can't close it because the situation does not allow that. These are two organs of the state contradicting each other."

mission to hold meetings in the area but had always been denied.

"Over the past two years we have tried more than seven times to hold a meeting – and I'm not saying a rally, to hold a meeting – in Kasama. The answer has always been a 'no'," he said.

"Today we saw that the emperor was naked. The truth is coming out. It has nothing to do with COVID. It has to do with a government that is not sure of itself. It has to do with a government being rejected by the masses of the people of Zambia."

"The only way they can survive is to ensure the Socialist Party [and] Fred M'membe are not given any political voice."

In August last year Dr Musumali and 29 party members were arrested during a meeting in Copperbelt Province. They were spuriously charged with "conduct likely to cause the breach of peace" and released later in the afternoon of the same day.



Party president Fred M'membe and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali on their way to the election campaign launch in Kasama

Following the arrest, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe said the charges, "don't make sense legally or otherwise".

With parliamentary by-elections set to begin in less than a month at the time, Dr M'membe drew attention to the unequal playground on

which the opposition was contesting against the ruling party.

"Those in the ruling party are all over holding meetings without regard for any restrictions and with total impunity," he said.

"And they are even boasting and mocking the opposition about

them being the only ones mobilising." The ruling party – the Patriotic Front – he said, was "going into a boxing ring with the opponent's hands tied behind his back. Can you really claim true victory in such an unfair and unequal contest?"

Dr M'membe cautioned President Edgar Lungu that such abuse of power would have consequences. "Governments come and go. Even this President, no matter what he does, he will not be president forever," he warned.

● Spirit of Cha Cha Cha – Page 6

## Followed

Dr Musumali said the decision had nothing to do with the reasons given. "The truth is it had nothing to do with a tent, it had nothing to do with the 100 people we had invited and documented and spaced according to the WHO guidelines," he said. "The truth behind it is that the government – the ruling party – would not allow us to hold even a meeting in a hall or in a tent. They denied us that option."

"We are now at a home. But even here we have been followed. We don't have an audience here, but still more, they are not happy with this arrangement. They are not giving us any chance. They are making a mockery of the campaign."

"They are making a mockery of Zambian democracy and it is unacceptable. We are shareholders in this country we call Zambia. They are the ruling party, they are controlling government, they have government resources. What is the fear? What is their desperation?"

Dr Musumali told his radio, TV and online audience that the party had tried many times to gain per-

## The poor and vulnerable will suffer if we delay environmental action

**SPEAKING on World Environment Day – June 5 – Socialist Party president Fred M'membe described it as a day of celebration, "a day upon which, for more than 40 years, people the world over have advocated and acted for a healthy environment".**

First held in 1974, World Environment Day has been a platform for raising awareness on environmental issues such as marine pollution, human overpopulation, global warming, sustainable consumption, and wildlife crime. It is a global platform for public outreach, with participation from more than 143 countries annually.

But Dr M'membe said that unlike previous years, the day was being marked under COVID-19 restrictions and things could no longer be done the usual way. "And this in itself tells us that something is terribly wrong with our stewardship of the Earth," he said. "This virus is not bad luck, or a one-off event that nobody could see coming. It is an entirely predictable result of humanity's destruction of nature, which will cause far greater suffering if left unchecked."

"COVID-19, which was transmitted from animals to humans, is a direct warning that nature can take no more. COVID-19 is zoonotic, a type of disease that transmits between animals and humans. We are facing it in large part because humanity's expansion into wild spaces and exploitation of species brings people into closer contact with wildlife."

"COVID-19 may be one of the worst, but it is

not the first, 75 per cent of all emerging infectious diseases are of zoonotic origin. Ebola, SARS, the Zika virus and bird flu all spread from animals to people, often due to human encroachment on nature."

"But zoonotic illnesses are not the only warning sign that the degradation of nature is threatening health, peace and prosperity. As ecosystems and biodiversity fall to cities, agriculture, infrastructure, climate change and pollution, nature's ability to provide food, oxygen, clean water and climate regulation plummets. This directly impacts human health and wealth."

"We face going out of the COVID-19 frying pan into the climate fire. Now is not the time to set aside environmental laws and norms. We need to strengthen environmental protection. We need to keep our wild spaces wild, stop deforestation and restore degraded land to protect biodiversity, boost food production and store carbon."

Dr M'membe said COVID-19 had "hammered home" that addressing inequality was one of humanity's biggest pieces of unfinished business.

"The World Bank estimates that COVID-19 is likely to cause the first increase in global poverty since 1998. We cannot afford to delay environmental action, as it is the poorest and most vulnerable who will suffer the most. This is why we say it's time for nature."

● Time to restore ecosystem – Global View, Page 11

## Diversity and pluralism are fundamental values

SOCIALIST Party president Fred M'membe says Zambia "will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless it's a good place for all of us to live in."

He said in a statement that the current election campaigns should not be confused with a battlefield where the aim is to destroy the other.

"This is simply a competition to serve, and not the annihilation of one another. To have peaceful, free and fair elections, certain conditions have to prevail in our country and in our hearts. There ought to be a conducive atmosphere. Contestants have to conduct themselves in a manner that does not put others at unfair disadvantage."

"In the light of this, I make a special appeal to the government and to the ruling party to realise that they have a serious responsibility. As facilitators of the elections, they should ensure that the concerns of all key players are adequately addressed. We all need to

be open and constructive in participating in the electoral process and addressing the challenges we face."

"Everyone's life in this country is inevitably mixed with every other life and, no matter what constitution or laws we come up with, no matter what precautions we take, unless the people we meet are kindly and decent and human, we going nowhere. Decency, integrity and love come from human beings, rather than from constitutions, laws and institutions."

"In any true democracy, more is needed than just laws and institutions. We must hold on to some values and norms, some expectations and aspirations. This is the environment – the atmosphere – that makes democracy work."

"The fundamental value we must have is a respect for diversity and acceptance of pluralism. Gone are the days when everyone was supposed to think the same way, belong to the same political party, and support the same programme."



# We don't see the value of LAZ's 'accord' on political violence

## Association should 'call a spade a spade' over crimes, Musumali says

Socialist staff reporter

THE SOCIALIST Party "does not see the value" of the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) peace accord designed to get political parties to abstain from election violence, general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali has said.

Dr Musumali said LAZ should instead be demanding the arrest and prosecution of anyone carrying out acts of violence, whether political or not.

In a statement of the party's central committee, Dr Musumali said, "We don't see the value of the LAZ peace accord. What LAZ should have been advocating for is the rule of law, the fair and impartial administration of our country's criminal justice system.

"Political violence is simply violence, a criminal offence in our penal code. And those who commit crimes must without fear or favour be arrested and prosecuted. Violence is violence and it doesn't matter whether it is being committed in the name of politics, religion or otherwise.

"LAZ has clearly failed to directly denounce political violence, call a spade a spade and demand the arrest and prosecution of per-

petrators of political violence. Why? Our simple and only explanation is because it is not able and willing to take on the main, and politically powerful, perpetrators of this political violence."

Dr Musumali says Socialist Party members do not involve themselves in any form of political violence. "Without being pacifist, our party members have not responded to political violence with violence," he said.

"We teach our members to be peaceful. We have a documented commitment to peace, justice and equity in our party constitution and manifesto. Our members have on many occasions been attacked by Patriotic Front members in Eastern Province. We have reported the attacks to police but no arrests and prosecutions have to date been made.

"To us, this LAZ peace accord is nothing but a scheme to try to apportion blame or responsibility for

political violence to all the political parties when the main culprits are well known.

"We refuse to be part of this LAZ scheme to divert attention from the well-known main perpetrators of political violence, and make us look as if we have also been involved in political violence.

"Let those who have been attacking or fighting each other sign the LAZ peace accord – a ceasefire agreement – and refrain from political violence," he said.

## BEYOND THE HEADLINES

# We're competing with Siamese twins, M'membe says on Hot FM

THE PATRIOTIC Front and United Party for National Development are Siamese twins feeding from the same umbilical cord, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe told a radio audience recently.

He was being interviewed by presenter Kwangu Liwewe for Hot FM's Beyond the Headlines programme.

"The president of PF today, Mr Edgar Lungu, the vice-president of PF today, Mrs Inonge Wina, where did they come from? They came from UPND," he said.

"Mr Lungu was a member of UPND. Mrs Wina was a member of parliament for Nalolo under UPND. The vice-president, the former vice-president of UPND Mr Richard Kapita who served under Mr Hakainde for many years as vice-president was his trusted man, where is he today? He's in PF. He was provincial minister in PF.

### Expelled

"Dr Canicius Banda who was vice-president of UPND, where is he today? My relative Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba who was vice-president of UPND and running mate in 2016 for Mr Hakainde, where is he today? He's in PF. And where did he come from before he joined UPND? He came from PF. He was minister of defence in PF. He was a key leader in PF. But today he's back in PF. He's the deputy national mobilisation leader for PF.

"UPND is in an alliance with Mr Felix Mutati and Mr Kelvin Fube Bwalya or Bwalya Fube, where did those two come from? Mr Mutati was minister of finance under PF not very long ago. Fube was seeking to become president of PF, presidential candidate until they expelled him and he failed to get what he wanted. They're coming from PF.

"Do you see why I'm saying they're Siamese twins? Do you see why I'm saying they're feeding from the same umbilical cord? And it doesn't end there, let's look at their manifestos.

"I've got a master's degree in economic policy management. Part of that training is to analyse economic policies, so I have the expertise that is needed to analyse the manifestos of UPND and PF. They're the same. There's no difference. That's why it's so easy for key leaders of PF and key leaders of UPND to crisscross. Today they're in UPND, tomorrow they're in PF. Today they're in PF, tomorrow they're in UPND. It's not possible with us. There is no key leader of UPND who is in the Socialist Party today. There's no key leader coming from PF who is in SP today. None, because we are different. When you look at these parties, PF and UPND they're the same. That's why people are just moving; today they're this, tomorrow they're that. The policies are the same, the programmes are the same; it's just the personalities and the ambitions that they have."

Liwewe asked Dr M'membe if a Socialist Party billboard referring to "five losses too many" constituted "taking a swipe" at "fellow opposition" party UPND. He replied that it wasn't "a swipe" but "reality", and there was no "fellow opposition".

"Is five losses a small thing? Five losses, consecutive losses, not intermittent but consecutive, is it a small thing? A party to lose elections five times consecutively, it's a small thing that should be ignored? It's not a swipe, it's a reality. Is it a lie? Is it a lie?"

"Do you know of anyone else who has lost elections consecutively for five years? Tell me. Tell me if any of the key players have lost elections for five years consecutively, five times consecutively. Did PF lose elections five times? Did MMD lose elections



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe being interviewed by Hot FM's Kwangu Liwewe for Beyond the Headlines

## SP is on an equal footing with others

HOT FM presenter Kwangu Liwewe asked Dr M'membe about the size of SP and its strength and ability to contest the August election as a relatively new party.

Dr M'membe replied that SP had "a big membership that cuts across the whole country".

"That's why we went and tried to field candidates in all the constituencies of the country. And we are competing in these elections on an equal footing with everybody else. The result will show," he said.

"If longevity was the measure, UPND would be in government today, not PF. How many times has UPND lost to PF, a newer party? They lost in 2006 to PF, they came number three. PF came number two. They lost to PF in 2008, PF came number

two, UPND came number three. They lost to PF in 2011, PF came number one, MMD came number two, they came number three. The only time they came number two was in 2015 and 2016 because after the MMD lost power, the MMD more or less disintegrated.

"A good part of MMD went to PF and another part went to UPND, so we had two parties contesting. If you have two parties definitely you will have one and two. That's when UPND came to number two. Before that it was number three, number three, number three, number three.

"This year we'll not have two parties, we'll have at least three parties contesting in a stronger way. At least three, if not more. So, the chances are there for everybody."

five times? Did NDC lose elections five times consecutively? It's not a small factor that they should ignore. Yes, it may not be a favourable message for them. We're competing with them in these elections, we're competing with PF in these elections. There are still more billboards coming, anyway. We haven't finished.

Dr M'membe rejected Liwewe's suggestion that UPND was "fellow opposition".

"There's no fellow opposition, we're not in an alliance with UPND. We're not in an alliance with any political party. We are competing in these elections with everybody who has put themselves on the ballot paper. We are not in an alliance.

"They are in an alliance with Mr Mutati's MDC. They're in an alliance with a faction of NAREP, they're in an alliance with a faction of NDC, they're in an alliance with Mr Milupi's ADD. They're not in an alliance with us. We're competing with them. Do they understand what multiparty politics

is? A multiparty political dispensation means just that. When we put our names on the ballot papers, we are competing with everybody else. We're not just competing with those in government, no."

And Dr M'membe responded to Liwewe's comment that there seemed to be "no love lost" between himself and UPND's Hakainde Hichilema. "It's not about love, it's about multiparty politics," Dr M'membe said.

### Different

"In a multiparty dispensation, being in a different party does not mean hatred for other people. They're stuck to the one-party mentality – it's either, you are with us or you are our enemies. No, we're not enemies. We simply hold different positions; we simply hold different policies. It's not hatred. What is the value of hating Hakainde? For what? Why should I hate him? For what? So, to love Hakainde I should join his pact? To love Mr Lungu I should join

PF? If I'm not in the UPND alliance, then I'm with PF? If I'm not in the PF alliance, then I'm with UPND?"

Dr M'membe said SP was an independent political party with a manifesto that was clearly different from that of UPND and PF, which were similar.

"There's no hatred. If being in a different political party from the other and opposing the policies of another political party means hatred, then let's move away from multiparty political dispensation.

"And it's not about personal relationships. I don't need to have a personal relationship with Mr Lungu, I don't need to have a personal relationship with Mr Hakainde to participate in the politics of this country. They've got their friends. Mr Hakainde has his friends. Mr Lungu has his friends. I have got my friends."

Liwewe questioned SP's position on political alliances given that its ideologies were so different from other parties.

"Alliance over what? Alliance

over what?" Dr M'membe asked. "There are many alliances that are formed in life. You can form an alliance with other people to fight the public order act. You can form an alliance with other people to fight for this or that. The alliances you're talking about, they're happenstance alliances to win an election. Those are the alliances that they're forming. We're not looking for happenstance alliances. We're looking for strategic alliances. We have allies also, strategic allies. I'll give you a strategic ally we have. We have the Catholic Church as a strategic ally.

"We never sat with the Catholic leadership to say we are allies, let's sign. No. Strategic alliances are not created that way. Happenstance alliances are created that way. We have a strategic alliance because of the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

"If you read our manifesto, you'll find that it coincides a lot with the social teachings of the Catholic Church. So, in that sense we are seeking the same things.

"What we are seeking are the same things Christ was seeking. Christ was against the degradation of human beings. That's what we are fighting, we socialists. Christ was against humiliation of human beings. Christ was against the hunger of a human being. Christ was against the illness of a human being. He never watched these things, He never took them as a given; die you will go to heaven, my Father will receive you there while I'm still here. No. Christ treated the ill, Christ fed the hungry, Christ dealt with the afflicted in all sorts of ways. Christ came here for the poor."



Socialist Party president Fred M'membe: Jesus models for us that sorrow is something that needs to be felt



## KK was my comrade, brother and friend, and I was his

I BROKE down being interviewed by the media after signing the book of condolences. I couldn't help it. I tried very hard to resist it but it happened. KK was truly my comrade, brother and friend, and I was his.

In regard to crying, breaking down when mourning dear ones Fidel Castro said, "When an energetic and forceful people cry, injustice trembles". And even Jesus wept over the death of his friend Lazarus. Who am I? I am just human like every other human being.

"Jesus wept". These are just two little words, but they have an extraordinary meaning for us.

I think when we read the gospels, we tend to forget the human side of Jesus – that He had human relationships throughout His life. It can be easy to slip into reading Jesus as a higher being, which of course He was, He's God!, who was so set apart from those around Him – that his relationships were strictly of a leader-follower dynamic.

Of course, the gospel writers definitely highlighted his ministry in that dynamic to reveal his teachings and miracles as the prophesied Messiah, but under all that, He had friends. He had deep relationships with the people around Him, whom He spent and lived with for three-plus years.

Think about your friendships – from the moment when you first met to now (how many years since you've known each other). You've shared countless inside jokes, similar interests, hobbies, you've shared secrets, vulnerabilities, heart-breaks, joys, etc.

Jesus experienced all that as both man and God.

We are able to see his personal relationships on full display with the death of his friend Lazarus, and what this means for us, as friends of Jesus, who also experience the reality of death.

Jesus was moved with profound sorrow at the death of his friend and at the grief that his other friends had suffered. In addition, this sorrow was intermixed with anger at the evil of death.

Not only was Jesus deeply moved, but John says He was deeply moved in his spirit when He witnessed the palpable grief around Him.

This grief is a human reality – felt by His human spirit – but life and resurrection are divine realities, the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' human spirit reveals that heartfelt mourning in the face of death is not an indication of a lack of faith – of doubt – but it is honest grief at the reality of death and suffering.

Death is a devastating reality of humanity. It happens to us all – our own mortality – and to those around us, yet with its unwavering commonality, it does not make it any easier to experience. It's especially hard to swallow when death comes unexpectedly.

Therefore, the importance of "Jesus wept" is recorded in the Gospel of John. Jesus models for us that sorrow is something that needs to be felt. Grief is a part of life. Even though He knew that, in mere moments, Lazarus would be raised to life by Him, and that He would, one day, defeat death, the final enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 21:4), Jesus still cried over the loss of his friend.

## Pope Francis: teachings a source of daily inspiration

I LOVE this Pope – Francis. He is a great source of daily inspiration in my revolutionary work, and especially in these election campaigns. I closely follow his teachings.

Meeting a group of French priests pursuing higher ecclesiastical studies in Rome recently, Pope Francis recalled a favourite image of a pastor, urging that priests be "shepherds with the 'smell of the sheep', grounded in the situation of their flock.

"The studies you undertake in the various Roman universities prepare you for your future tasks as pastors and enable you to better appreciate the reality in which you are called to proclaim the gospel of joy," he told some 19 priests of the "national church of the French" in the Italian capital. He said they should not go into the field to apply theories without considering the environment in which they will be working or the people entrusted to their care. "I wish you to be shepherds with 'the

smell of the sheep," the Pope said, repeating once again the analogy he used in his homily at the Chrism Mass on March 28, 2013, a fortnight after his election.

He said pastors should be "people capable of living, of laughing and crying with your people, in a word, of communicating with them". He expressed concern that sometimes reflections and thoughts on priesthood are laboratory sample: this priest, that priest and so on. He said the priesthood isolated from the people of God, is neither a Catholic priesthood nor a Christian one.

"Strip yourselves of your pre-constituted ideas, your dreams of greatness, your self-assertion, in order to put God and people at the centre of your daily concerns," the Pope said, stressing that a pastor is one who puts God's holy faithful people at the centre. For those priests who would like to be an intellectual, not a pastor, the Pope said, it is better for them to be lay persons. A priest has to be a pastor in the midst of God's people because God has chosen him for that.

Pope Francis also advised the French priests regarding their community life, saying individualism, self-assertion, and indifference are some of the challenges of living together. He warned them against "the temptation to create small closed groups, to isolate oneself, to criticise and speak ill of others, to believe oneself superior, more intelligent".

The Pope said that gossip was a habit of closed groups, of "bachelor" priests who talked and maligned others, undermining all. We need to let go of this habit and look at and think about God's mercy". The Pope wished that they always welcomed one another as a gift. "In a fraternity lived in truth, in the sincerity of relationships and in a life of prayer, we can form a community in which we can breathe the air of joy and tenderness," he said.

The Holy Father encouraged a community life of sharing and prayer with joy. He said, "The priest is a man who, in the light of the Gospel, spreads the taste of God around him and transmits hope to restless hearts." To those visiting their community, they can communicate the Gospel values of a "diverse and supportive fraternity", and make them feel the fidelity of God's love and His closeness.

In this regard, the Pope offered to them the model of St. Joseph, inviting them to "rediscover the face of this man of faith, this tender father, model of fidelity and trusting abandonment to God's plan". St. Joseph, he said, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that He can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses.

Our frailties are a "theological place of encounter with the Lord", the Pope said, adding, a "fragile priest", who knows his weaknesses and talks about them with the Lord, will do well. Instead, "superman" priests end up badly. "With Joseph," the Pope said, "We are called to return to the experience of the simple acts of acceptance, tenderness, and the Joy and sense of humour."

The Pope also urged the young French priests to build a Church that is entirely at the service of a world that is more fraternal and in solidarity. They should not be afraid to dare, to risk and to go forward, assured that with Christ they can be apostles of joy and be grateful for serving their brothers and sisters and the Church.

This joy should be accompanied by a sense of humour, the Pope pointed out, adding, a priest who does not have a sense of humour is not liked, something is wrong. "Imitate those great priests who laugh at others, at themselves and even at their own shadow," he said, adding, "A sense of humour is one of the characteristics of holiness," as he pointed out in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete et Exultate*.

Recalling their priestly ordination, he reminded them that they had been anointed with the oil of joy and were to anoint others with the oil of joy. He said only by remaining rooted in Christ could they experience a joy that moved them to win hearts. "Priestly joy is the source of your action as missionaries of your time," he said.

Another virtue the Holy Father encouraged the young priests to cultivate was gratitude to God for what they were to one another. "With your limitations, your frailties, your tribulations," Pope Francis reminded them, "There is always a loving gaze resting on you and giving you confidence."

Gratitude "is always 'a powerful weapon'", he said, which "allows us to keep the flame of hope burning in moments of discouragement, loneliness and trials".

# Lies and hypocrisy the way of political crooks, scoundrels

## It is difficult to believe a word they say

Socialist staff reporter

IT IS becoming increasingly difficult to trust and believe any word coming out of Zambian politicians' mouths, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"Lies, hypocrisy, saying things they don't mean, seems to be the political culture of our politicians," he said. "Today they criticise, repudiate, denounce or insult this and that, tomorrow they are in bed with the same thing or that.

"Today they resign or are expelled from this or that political party and start their own, or join another, and start insulting, denouncing, and accusing their former colleagues of all sorts of crimes and evils. A few months later they are apologising, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation.

"They are taken back, but we don't know if they are really forgiven, and then they start denouncing and insulting those who, a few months ago, had welcomed them when they were in political limbo," Dr M'membe said.

"It's sickening. It's making politics unattractive and seeming to be for scoundrels, liars, crooks and hypocrites. How can one work with such politicians, enter into alliances or pacts with them? This is certainly not a recipe for winning people's trust.

"The credibility of our politicians is in continuous decline. Credibility is very difficult to find in our politicians today. But credibility is supposed to be the cornerstone of our people's political life and of our multiparty political dispensation."

Dr M'membe asked whether "we still even know what credibility means".

"Who is credible and why? What are the roots and forms of political credibility? How does it circulate within society? What risks is it subject to and what pathologies does it derive from?

What can be called upon to restore credibility to our politics?

"We need clear, concise and compendious answers to these questions. We need to find credible ways to overcome the current crisis of credibility, which some even consider irreversible.

"I will pull the string a little bit and go back to Aristotle's Rhetoric, in which he claims that we believe more easily in honest people, adding that this is even more so regarding questions that do not involve certainty, but doubt – recall how, both for the philosopher and in the common feeling, credibility appears as a personal quality. In reality one is not credible in general and in the abstract, but for someone. It can be a few people or millions of people, but always someone and not in the abstract. Credibility is therefore a relationship, a risky bet, which leads us to ask ourselves what is credible and what are the characteristics and virtues that are preferably associated with a political entity perceived as credible.

## Expert

"There's a difference between credibility of the role and credibility in the role; someone is believed because he knows and for what he knows. This is typically the credibility of the expert, that is one who has a well-founded knowledge of the facts and problems, which means that he can speak with good reason or with knowledge of the facts."

Dr M'membe said that in politics it was crucial both to know how to act and be able to act.

"It is even more more necessary to know how to communicate well the decisions taken. In this necessary fiduciary relationship between those who claim to be credible and those who are considered as such, in which personal values can be summarised in the concepts of 'virtue' or 'integrity' and include honesty, seriousness, self-control, ability to assume responsibility and to respect commitments,

politics must be understood as a service.

"To govern means to serve, because 'in the house of the just', as St. Augustine observes, 'those who command are at the service of those who seem the commanded. Indeed, it is not out of passion for domination that they command, but out of desire to give oneself; not out of pride in being leaders, but out of concern to provide for everyone'.

"Credibility therefore no longer concerns only political competence or discursive ability, but the totality of the personal characteristics of the politician, in creating an affective/emotional relationship between leaders and citizens: why should I vote for him? The old Hegelian principle, which says that nobody is a great man for his waiter, returns, so that political leaders, accepting and often seeking the challenge of politics, must be aware of being at the mercy of millions of waiters, the electors.

"Political credibility is possible but in a community of shared values, standards and common aims. Political credibility is not just an analysis of credibility in politics. After almost three decades of personal political parties and those formed around a leader, there has been a break-up and rapid consumption of intermittent leadership, which may last only one morning. These are leaderships gained, more and more frequently, on social networks, with an eternal return to oscillating and cyclical dynamics. In the age of permanent election campaigns, that format is intertwined with the processes of personalisation – for which the strong man is also a brand, and of mediatisation.

"Mutual recognition assumes a fundamental importance where it is seen as the ability to guide and govern others by assuming all the responsibilities and risks that this entails, while encouraging and promoting real processes of listening, participation and active involvement of citizens at all the levels and in all phases of democratic political life."

## Slander, libel, malice 'won't do'

THERE are just too many lies and there is too much malice and calumny in our political, economic, and social discourse, Socialist Party president Fred M'membe says.

"And this is growing in intensity and magnitude as we approach the August 12 elections," he said. "Social media is awash with lies, innuendo and insults, and one wonders of what value all of this is. This is certainly not the most beneficial or good way of conducting public discourse on any issues.

"The most unfortunate thing is that it has permeated all echelons of our society. People occupying the highest positions in our politics, religion and civic life are not left out of this, they are trying very hard to take a lead in this Olympics of lies, malice, slander or libel. Indeed, there are, in our body politic, economic and social, many and grave evils, and there is an urgent necessity for the sternest war against them.

"There should be relentless exposure of and attack upon every evil person whether politician or businessperson, every evil practice, whether in politics, in business, or in social life," Dr M'membe said.

"I hail as a benefactor everyone who with merciless severity makes such attack, provided always that he or she in his or her turn remembers that the attack is of

use only if it is absolutely truthful. The liar is no whit better than the thief, and if his or her mendacity takes the form of slander or libel, he or she may be worse than most thieves.

"It puts a premium upon knavery, untruthfully to attack an honest person, or even with hysterical exaggeration to assail a bad person with untruth. An epidemic of indiscriminate assault upon character does no good, but very great harm. The soul of every scoundrel is gladdened whenever an honest person is assailed, or even when a scoundrel is untruthfully assailed.

"My plea is not for immunity to but for the most unsparing exposure of the politician who betrays his or her trust, of the businessperson who makes or spends his or her fortune in illegitimate or corrupt ways. There should be a resolute effort to hunt every such person out of the position he or she has disgraced.

"Expose the crime, and hunt down the criminal; but remember that even in the case of crime, if it is attacked in a sensational, lurid, and untruthful fashion, the attack may do more damage to the public mind than the crime itself.

"There should be no rest in the endless war against the forces of evil, but this war must be conducted with sanity as well as with resolution. Lies, slander or libel, malice, insults, calumny won't do."





SP campaign launch in Kasama: dancers provide atmosphere after president Fred M'membe and general secretary and first vice-president Cosmas Musumali address a radio, TV and online audience

# This is the spirit of Cha Cha Cha and it's time for the poor to rule

The ruling party is scared and that's why it tried to stop SP holding its campaign launch in Kasama. But the time has come for it to go, no matter what it does now, **Fred M'membe** told his radio, TV and online audience

SOCIALIST Party president Fred M'membe launched the party's election campaign in Kasama, pledging to build on the spirit of the Cha Cha Cha uprising that contributed to Zambia's independence.

The launch took place in a private residence following the party being denied a permit to hold it in a tent.

Speaking in Bemba throughout the launch, Dr M'membe said the ruling party was scared, hence its attempts to stop SP from campaigning. But he said the time had come for it to go, no matter what it did.

"Baletina, umwenso nawingila. But tabafike nangu kumo uno mwaka, ifyabo nafipwa; ilyashi nalipwa kuno. Abena Zambia nabeluka. (They are scared. They're filled with fear. But they will not reach anywhere this year, their time is up, it is finished for them. Zambians have woken up)," he said.

"Uno mwaka abapina baleteka, uno mwaka abapina baleiteka. Uno mwaka abapina baleivotela. Mwabepwa pafula; mwacula pafula. Iivoteleni uno mwaka naimwe mutekeko. (This year the poor will govern. This year the poor will govern themselves. This year the poor will vote for themselves. You have been deceived a lot, you have suffered a lot. Vote for yourselves this year so that you can also govern)."

Dr M'membe said the disastrous state of the country's economy was the result of poor leadership and that as long as PF remained in power the price of commodities would continue to rise.

"Nga twakonkanya ukwikalefi takuli uko tuleya. Ilyo baishile mu buteko mu 2011 ubunga mwaleshita K33. Lelo muleshito bunga K140, 25 kg. (If we continue living like this we will not go anywhere. When PF came into government in 2011 you were buying mealie-meal at 33 kwacha. Today you are buying mealie-meal at 140 kwacha for a 25 kg bag)," Dr M'membe said.

"Bread mwaleshita K8, lelo muleshita bread pa K16. Inkoko iyo mwaleshita pali K20 lelo muleshita pali K90. Sugar iyo mwaleshita pali K15, 2kg lelo muleshita pali K46. (You used to buy bread at 8 kwacha, today you are buying it at 16 kwacha. You were buying a chicken for 20 kwacha, today you are buying it for 90 kwacha. You were buying a 2kg of sugar for 15 kwacha, today you are buying it for 46 kwacha)."

Dr M'membe said the Socialist Party was contesting the election because real change was needed and there was a vital need to save the nation from poverty, which was affecting more than 70 percent of the population.

## PROFILES

### Dominic Banda

DOMINIC Banda is parliamentary candidate for Vubwi constituency in Eastern Province and says he joined revolutionary politics because of the Socialist Party's manifesto.

"The manifesto is the best one for the poor masses," he said. "It is the only party that will bring justice, equity and peace to the people of Zambia."

As a farmer, Banda is only too aware of the difficulties caused by a lack of agricultural inputs, and says a poor road network and lack of medicines are also major chal-

lenges. "I will make sure I work together with the people in my constituency to end these issues," he said.

"My message to the people in my constituency and Zambia at large is: let's vote for the Socialist Party on August 12 because it is the only one that will end our problems."

### Lasten Banda

LASTEN Banda, parliamentary candidate for the Chawama constituency in Lusaka Province, says he is looking forward to helping enact laws as an MP that will alleviate poverty.

Banda has lived in Chawama since 1992 and says he has experienced the many problems his constituency comrades face.

He says the main challenges are: a lack of universal healthcare, lack of access to quality education, poor water supply and sanitation, inadequate drainage system and garbage management, and high levels of poverty.

Banda, who is a trained teacher and has worked in a number of primary and basic schools, including stints as deputy head and head teacher, says he is in a good position to help with education issues.

"I have been privileged to work with the people on matters of education (in government, private and community schools) and am capable of engaging the Ministry of Education on how community schools can be strengthened to increase classroom space as a short-term measure in solving the problem of accessibility of education," he said.

Banda was educated at Kawa Lower Primary School in the Chipata district of Eastern Province, Chiparamba upper primary, Nansenga primary, Lilayi primary, Matero secondary and Chipata day secondary. He worked for Kafue Textiles of Zambia for seven years before training as a primary teacher at Solwezi Teachers' Training College.

### Gertrude Chikampa

WE ARE "all equal before the Lord" is the message Gertrude Chikampa, parliamentary candidate for Sinazongwe constituency in Southern Province, sends to the women of Zambia.

"My fellow female voters: let us stand up and be counted. We are all equal before the Lord with men. We have the right to vote for who we want, please let us choose the right leaders, like president Fred M'membe," she said.

Chikampa says she entered politics so she can help address her constituency's problems that include insufficient health facilities, clinics and medicine, not enough schools, a poor road network, and agricultural issues, with fertiliser and seeds increasingly expensive.

"These issues can be addressed by working together with the community, councillors, the ministries of health, agriculture and education, and also our president, Fred M'membe," she said.

"My message to the people of our constituency and Zambia at large is that the time has come again to vote, and your vote is very important and necessary. Please kindly vote for the right leader, Fred M'membe."

Chikampa was educated at St Michael's primary, and St Joseph's secondary schools, both in Monze. She holds a primary school certificate and diploma from David Livingstone TT College, and a craft certificate in cutting and tailoring from Livingstone Trades' Institution.

### Clara Chomba

ONE of the youngest parliamentary candidates, 21-year-old Clara Chomba is hoping to represent Mansa constituency, Luapula Province, in government.

She says she joined the Socialist Party because she wants change and better living conditions for the people and the country.

Chomba says her constituency

is facing early marriages because of a lack of education and support for youth, and high prices of mealie meal because the government gives fertiliser to people who don't have farms and who are then selling it on to farmers.

"We are not benefiting from our own minerals because we allowed the bourgeoisie to rule us," she said. "We will address the challenges by working together and focusing on our goals."

She says women are at the forefront of the fight. "A woman can change the world, a woman is a stronghold," she said. "Let's stand and make this one thing. It's one Zambia, one nation."

Chomba studied for grades one to seven at Chakopo Primary School in Mansa, grade eight at Chitamba, grade nine at Kombaniya, and grades ten to 12 at Mansa School for Continuing Education. She also studied general agriculture at Mansa Trades Training Institute, and holds a certificate in secretarial and office management from the same college.

### Misozi Kaleya

MISOZI Kaleya, parliamentary candidate for Chasefu constituency in Eastern Province, says "it is time for the poor to lead the rich, time to stand by the truth and not lies".

"Let's work together; the people, councillors, MPs, and incoming president Dr Fred M'membe. Please vote wisely and choose our leader. He will lead you in a good direction," she said.

"The reason I joined the revolutionary movement is because of the challenges we face. We have a lot of difficulties in Chasefu constituency, the three most pressing issues being a poor road network, no medicines in the clinics and poor agriculture, especially shortages of fertiliser."

Kaleya was born in Chitukula village, Chief Kambombo in Chama district. She was educated at Emusa Primary School and Lundazi Boarding Secondary School, later gaining a diploma in early

childhood education from Pagrory College of Education.

### Felistina Kalunda

FELISTINA Kalunda is just 22 years old but has already established a poultry farming business and salon in Sesheke district.

The parliamentary candidate for Mangango constituency, Western Province, is an example of female empowerment, and says she wants to help others to also be able to achieve with the help of the Socialist Party.

"I joined revolutionary politics because of its commitment to young people and women's leadership because youth are the future and when you empower a woman you are empowering the whole nation," she said.

Kalunda, who was educated at Mangango primary and secondary schools, says her constituency faces the usual hardships, including poor roads, a lack of agricultural development, and water and sanitation problems.

"Vote for the Socialist Party because it is the only party that puts poor people at the forefront," she said.

### Kevin Kanyama

THE FUTURE isn't built in the future it is built today, and this is the right time to prepare for it, Kevin Kanyama, parliamentary candidate for Manyinga constituency in North-Western Province, says.

"I believe in socialism, working for people and uplifting the lower classes," he said.

Kanyama, who was educated at Kabompo Secondary School, is an electrical technologist with qualifications from Northern Technical College in Ndola, and Darmerlin College in Johannesburg. He is studying online with Australian University for a BSC degree in electrical engineering.

He says the main challenges his constituency faces include a high





Kevin Kanyama



Dorothy Mushoba



Lasten Banda



Philimon Mooya



Dominic Banda



Gertrude Chikampa



Fridah Mbewe



Terry Sangambo



Clara Chomba



Felistina Kalunda



Jimmy Simoonga



Grace Namunyola



Lovemore Mvula



Purity N'gambi



Milton Musukwa



Fitzwell Moomba



Agness Mwila



Misozi Kaleya

rate of youth unemployment, the need for new boma site infrastructure developments, and equity in education, especially for young females.

Fridah Mbewe

FRIDAH Mbewe, the parliamentary candidate for Malambo constituency in Eastern Province, says that come August 12, people should vote for themselves.

“Don’t vote for me, but vote for yourselves because when we win we need to work together as one, poor and rich,” she said.

“My fellow women: let’s vote for ourselves, because every woman will get justice, equal jobs with men. Rather than getting married at the wrong time, we have skills to express and a better way of living in the future.”

Mbewe says the many issues her constituency face include overcrowded schools with too many desks, a lack of hospitals and a shortage of boreholes.

“There is poor networking, not enough employment in our area for educated youths, and fertiliser is expensive,” she said. “All the above problems can be solved by the people when they vote for me as MP and Fred M’membe as president.”

She says the Socialist Party manifesto spells out how to tackle the issues, and stresses it is important for people to work together to solve them.

Mbewe, who born in Chikalaba village, was educated at Chiutika Primary School and Matula Day Secondary School.

Fitzwell Moomba

FITZWELL Moomba, parliamentary candidate for Chikankata constituency in Southern Province, says he joined the Socialist Party because he wants to live in a country that respects all its people.

He says he wants to live in a society where all children can have access to quality healthcare and education, “because they are human rights”.

“This can only happen by changing the political system from one that is designed to favour a tiny elite to one that focuses on human dignity,” he said.

“I am calling on the people of my constituency and Zambia at large to rise to the challenge of liberating our country from a self-defeating political system and voting for one that puts the welfare of all Zambians at its core.”

Moomba, a former magazine

master at Munali mine and a holder of an all-mining operations licence, says he will focus on improving health services, agricultural policies and poor road networks, if elected.

Philimon Mooya

PHILIMON Mooya was so concerned about the lack of educational opportunities for the poor that he opened his own college in Kabwe, PM College of Health Sciences, offering free tuition.

The parliamentary candidate for Chisamba constituency, Central Province, had been a head boy at all three schools he attended; Lukoshi, Mulugushi agro basic and Danford Chirwa secondary, and went on to Paglory University, where he gained a bachelor’s degree in science with education. He is now studying for a master’s in inorganic chemistry.

“I have been a leader and head boy in all three schools, and coming from a poor background I wondered how I could help my fellow youths to attend tertiary education. That is how I opened PM College of Health Sciences,” he said. “This institution, which is still operating, is for poor people who cannot manage to pay for tuition. They just pay their exam fee and registration to keep it running.”

Mooya says he joined the Socialist Party because its manifesto addresses the masses’ problems, “which is in my blood”. “There is a need to invest in people by providing them with trade skills and literacy so they can find a place in the dot-com era and among the employment poverty we have,” he said, adding that the road network and boreholes for drinking water were among his constituency priorities.

Dorothy Mushoba

EVICTIONS and harassment of the poor led to the parliamentary candidate for Kabwe Central, Central Province, Dorothy Mwashigwele Mushoba, joining the Socialist Party.

“The invasion of third party claimants towards houses that we have been sitting tenants in from the closure of ZCCM prompted me to join the revolutionary movement as the advocacy to own the houses yielded no results,” she said.

“Constant evictions and harassment are the order of the day from interested parties who are the elite, depriving the majority of their rights to properties. The Socialist Party’s ideology focuses on the needs of the majority – all are equal and none should be deprived

of their basic needs.” She says that the poor road network, high level of youth unemployment and gender-based violence are all areas of major concern in her constituency.

Mushoba, who holds a certificate from the Chartered Institute of Marketing, says the plight of youngsters and women must be a priority.

“Women are the majority after the youths and hence their participation in politics is vital to make a democratic change, and our youths have turned into drunkards and hard-core criminals, and this has no return on investment,” she said.

Milton Musukwa

THE SOCIALIST Party’s values of equity, honesty, humility, and solidarity, align with those of Christianity, Milton Musukwa, parliamentary candidate for Mafinga constituency, Muchinga Province, says.

“Not only that, but the party’s manifesto is easy to understand and speaks about solutions to our anxieties,” he said. “We strongly believe that the only solution is the Socialist Party under the leadership of Dr Fred M’membe. Zambians are ready for change. They are no longer interested in capitalist policy.”

He says the bad state of the area’s roads, access to education, and youth unemployment, are major issues in Mafinga.

Musukwa was educated at Mudzabwela primary and Chingola secondary schools and studied journalism at the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication in Lusaka. He has worked both as a teacher and manager of a radio station, and has been chairman of a number of enterprises, including Mukutu ward development committee, Kapembe Co-operative, and Hope Savings and Credit Co-operative. He was also secretary of Isoka District Rice Association.

Lovemore Mvula

THE CURRENT political system doesn’t serve the majority of the Zambian people, thriving instead on deepening absolute poverty, says Lovemore Mvula, parliamentary candidate for Kaumbwe constituency in Petauke district, Eastern Province.

“This is a trend known to destroy societies by increasing criminality, social unrest, domestic violence, child abuse and other antisocial behaviours,” he said.

Mvula says he joined the Socialist Party because of its people-oriented philosophy under the leadership of Fred M’membe, “as opposed to the

current egoistical political system inherently designed to keep the majority poor”.

If elected, Mvula says he will work towards improving the road network and quality of education in his constituency. He also plans to stop the corrupt practice of contracting firms annually that construct substandard bridges which are then washed away by heavy rains.

He says his message to the people in his constituency and Zambia at large is one of “ubuntu” and unity.

Mvula was born in Jojo village in Mwanjawanthu chiefdom, and holds a secondary school teaching diploma from Zambia College of Open Learning.

Agness Mwila

AGNESS Mwila is the parliamentary candidate for Mfuwe constituency and says she joined the revolutionary movement because she wants to make a difference.

Mwila says Zambians should support the Socialist Party because of its emphasis on justice, equity and peace and opportunities for all, especially women and young people.

“My message to my fellow females is that they should support each other in politics and work together to achieve developmental goals in the country.”

Mwila says the main challenges in Mfuwe are a poor road network, shortage of medicine in clinics, and early marriages due to a lack of education.

Mwila completed her grade 12 at Samfya Secondary School in 2010 and is now a businesswoman.

“People should vote for me because I have it in my heart to work with them together with our good leader, Dr Fred M’membe. Together we can achieve our goals,” she said.

Grace Namunyola

GRACE Natasha Namunyola, parliamentary candidate for Kwacha constituency, Copperbelt Province, joined the Socialist Party after covering its activities as a journalist.

“Listening to the speeches of its key leadership and reading its literature, it didn’t take me long to be fully convinced of the correctness of the cause and I joined the movement without reservation,” she said.

Namunyola, 27, says Kwacha faces many serious challenges, including youth unemployment, poor schools, and inadequate healthcare.

“Over the years we have seen our mothers and sisters give birth to their children in homes or on the

roads as they face the challenge of trying to get to hospitals far from their homes,” she said.

“Today I see our children walk long distances in the cold and rain, crossing tree branches that are put up as bridges despite being dangerous, just so they can get to schools far from their homes. Youths experience major levels of unemployment which leads them into all kinds of unacceptable activities, including violence.”

Namunyola says the people of Kwacha have suffered for far too long and that the time has come to say “enough is enough”.

“Let’s rise up, take a stand and usher in the Socialist Party for a better life and future,” she said.

Purity Ng’ambi

ONE OF the youngest parliamentary candidates, 22-year-old Purity N’gambi, who represents Chama North in Muchinga Province, is a businesswoman and peasant farmer.

“The reason why the people of Chama North should vote for me is simply because I am one of the residents who is familiar with the problems we are going through,” she said. Those problems include poor roads, dilapidated bridges and agricultural issues.

“I joined the revolutionary movement because, as young as I am, I needed to change things by acting instead staying dormant,” she said. “I will address the issues by working together with the party as well as residents. Not only that, but also lobbying various donors. The only party with the vision to change Zambia for the better is the Socialist Party with its leader Dr Fred M’membe.”

Ng’ambi says the Socialist Party is the only one that supports women. “Almost all the time we are excluded from the governance of the nation, so let’s vote for our fellow women and the party that supports us.”

Terry Sangambo

IT’S TIME for real and lasting change and to say goodbye to the old, capitalist way of governing affairs of the state, says Terry Kahilu Sangambo, parliamentary candidate for Zambezi West, North Western Province.

Sangambo says he is participating in active politics “so that together with visionary leaders I can help bring change to the way things are done, although it may not happen overnight”.

“The Socialist Party works for

and with the people so they can take control of their own projects to foster development and a better living standard for all,” he said.

Education, health, agriculture, and roads and bridges, are all areas that Sangambo says need urgent attention.

“There is a high level of illiteracy due to a lack of quality schools and scarcity of teachers, the clinics and health posts in my constituency are managed mainly by community health workers, few people have access to farming inputs because they find it hard to transport them, and my constituency has neither gravel nor tarmac roads from east to west or north to south,” he said.

Sangambo attended Chinyingi basic and Zambezi boarding schools and went on to study philosophy at St Augustine’s Major Seminary in Kabwe, and theology at St Dominic’s Major Seminary, Lusaka.

Jimmy Simoonga

I AM not a politician. I am not looking for a job, but to serve the people of Kanyama constituency and Zambia at large, parliamentary candidate Jimmy Simoonga says.

“I joined the revolutionary movement due to the many challenges that have not been attended to since independence,” he said. “Kanyama constituency has about 400,000 inhabitants, is one of the oldest constituencies, but is not developed. The people of Kanyama contribute to the growth of the country by paying taxes, yet they don’t benefit.”

Simoonga, who runs both a school in Makeni Villa and a water project for about 600 households, says drainage, the road network, transportation and unemployment are the main challenges Kanyama is facing.

He says youths and vulnerable people will benefit from cooperative programmes. “Those who are specialised will be deployed in their respective fields, with all materials supplied by the local people of Kanyama constituency.

“The people of Kanyama have an opportunity to vote for the Socialist Party if they want to see development. The Socialist Party believes in equity, peace and justice and no one will be left behind in terms of development.”

Simoonga was educated at Chona Primary School in Monze, St Edmund’s Secondary School in Mazabuka, and studied for a diploma in law at City College of Management Studies in Lusaka.



# Victory for Peru's left as Castillo wins vote

## Teacher, union leader and son of peasant farmers set to be new president

Kimberly Barzola

IN A MAJOR breakthrough for the Peruvian left and working class, socialist public school teacher and union leader Pedro Castillo has made history, winning election as the country's next president.

Castillo is a member of the political party Peru Libre (Free Peru), which cites the ideas of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and José Carlos Mariátegui as the foundation for its programme.

His opponent, Keiko Fujimori, daughter of imprisoned former dictator Alberto Fujimori who herself is currently facing criminal charges for corruption, waged a vicious campaign relying on Peru's corporate media.

These powerful interests spread a message of fear by attempting to link Castillo to "terrorism", a common trope levied against left politicians looking to challenge the political status quo.

They also arrogantly denigrated Castillo for his working-class personal background. Despite grossly outspending Castillo, Fujimori's smear campaign – an attempt to distract the public from her own political record as the founder of the right wing Fuerza Popular (Popular Force) party mired in scandal – was not enough to win the presidential seat.

### Shock

Castillo, son of peasant farmers in the Chota province located in the Northern Andean region of Cajamarca, is most notable for his militant leadership in the 2017 national teachers' strike. The strike demanded higher wages, the payment of social debts and an increase in funding for the education sector nationally.

His first place finish in the initial round of the presidential election in April stunned political analysts after failing to make the list of the top six candidates based on polls conducted in March, which registered his support at just three percent. His success came as a shock to many and represents the longstanding inability of the mainstream political class to reach the deep rural, working-class communities, which are Castillo's base.

Rather than appeal to Lima's political elite, Castillo ran a campaign rooted in a working-class perspective and put forth proposals that would drastically challenge the current neoliberal capitalist economy, which originate from

Alberto Fujimori's time in office. With the neoliberal model first being implemented in the region in neighbouring Chile by the mid 1990s, Fujimori's policies, known as the "Fujishock", resulted in the privatisation of state-owned companies, removal of price controls and state subsidies for agriculture, and the major reduction of the role of the state in virtually every aspect of the economy. This was all to the benefit of Peru's business class and foreign companies looking to siphon profits out of the country.

The impact of this right-wing shift was immediate and triggered massive inflation as high as 7,480 percent in 1990, leaving at least half-a-million workers unemployed and left to fend for themselves amid soaring costs for food and basic necessities. The effects of this model continue to be felt strongly today through the current constitution, which was amended during Fujimori's presidency, and the ongoing disinvestment in public services that continue to fail working class and rural peasant communities. This failure was on full display as the COVID-19 pandemic devastated the country's economy and healthcare infrastructure.

The elections occurred during a period of preventable tragedy. A recent review of the official death toll from the COVID-19 virus nearly tripled what was previously reported by Peruvian government officials, making Peru's per capita mortality rate the highest in the world. Thousands have been turned away from hospitals, unable to keep up with the number of severe COVID cases exacerbated by a shortage of oxygen. Just over four percent of the population was fully vaccinated as of early June.

Peru's economy experienced one of the region's worst economic declines. The economic fallout was particularly devastating in part due to Peru's large informal economy, which was virtually shut down overnight because of strict lockdowns that have pushed an additional 10 percent of the population into deep poverty.

With millions now unemployed and facing homelessness, many have been forced to resort to desperate measures, including building makeshift homes on the outskirts of major cities like Lima. In a chilling example of the level of suffering currently faced by many, a forceful mass eviction of an encampment that housed hundreds of families in the Villa El Salvador district of Lima was carried out by more than 2,600 police officers in April.



Clockwise from top: Pedro Castillo gestures to crowds from the balcony of his party's headquarters in Lima, Free Peru supporters rally to the cause, defeated right-wing candidate Keiko Fujimori

The impact of the pandemic on Peru's working class and indigenous and peasant populations has only intensified the political tensions leading up to the election. Peru has cycled through four presidents in the past five years amid widespread corruption scandals and mass protests.

With an oversized pencil in hand at each campaign rally, Castillo's key proposal to rewrite the constitution through a popular constituent assembly process, mirroring a process currently underway in Chile, echoes calls from the record breaking mobilisations in November 2020. These huge protests successfully pressured former President Manuel Merino to step down after a mere five days in office. They also called into question the deep structural crises that continue to generate poverty in a country rich with natural resources such as copper, of which Peru is the number two producer in the world. A major theme of Castillo's campaign has been reclaiming Peru's natural wealth

for the benefit of the people instead of multinational corporations.

Regionally, Peru's leftward shift follows a growing tide of resistance to US imperialism. This includes the 2020 election of Luis Arce of the Movement Towards Socialism party as president of Bolivia, undoing the US-backed fascist coup led by now-imprisoned, former dictator Jeanine Añez; protests against the repressive and anti-working class policies of the far right government of Ivan Duque in Colombia, a key US ally; and the election of a left-wing majority in Chile's constitutional convention, members tasked with rewriting a constitution imposed in 1980 by CIA-installed dictator Augusto Pinochet.

Castillo is seeking to carry out in his first 100 days in office a series of steps to end Peru's historic role as an outpost for US interests in the region. This includes the expulsion of the United States Agency for International Development programme that serves as a de-facto US intelligence operation masquerading as charity, the closure of US

military bases in the country, and the withdrawal of Peru from the Lima Group – the bloc of right-wing governments in the region established in Peru's capital that have attempted to overthrow the government of Venezuela.

Castillo's victory, during the year of Peru's independence bicentennial, marks a new chapter in the country's history. But it is a milestone that will not go unchallenged. People around the world should remain on high alert as Fujimori's team makes unsubstantiated claims of fraud in an attempt to steal the election from Castillo. These completely evidence-free allegations have already made headlines in Peru's corporate media and could fuel violence similar to what happened after the results of the 2019 presidential election in Bolivia.

Castillo's democratic proposals for long-awaited change will require the participation of the entire country and struggle against those who attempt to reassert the power of the elite.

*LiberationNews.org*

## Coup warning as right wing reacts

THERE will be serious challenges ahead for Pedro Castillo, with open talk already in the media of a coup.

The right-wing novelist and prominent Fujimori supporter Mario Vargas Llosa wrote a column for the Spanish daily *El País* after Castillo was the leading candidate in the first round of the election, declaring that if he were to win the second round it would "probably mean a military coup in short order in Peru".

Leading Peruvian columnist Juan Carlos Tafur, while warning against civilian and military "hot-heads" trying to overturn the election, allowed that a "restorationist coup" might be required if Castillo were to take radical measures.

Most blatant was the right-wing daily *Perú21*, which on the eve of the second round carried on its front page the headline "The political risks of communism which is today being irresponsibly promoted". It featured a large photograph of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet side-by-side with President Salvador Allende, who was overthrown in the 1973 coup led by the general, ushering in 17 years of dictatorship and bloody repression. The article stated that Allende had "provoked" the coup by seeking to "alter the economic system that then ruled in Chile", warning that Castillo would do the same in Peru.

While the right wing has grown increasingly belligerent in its threats, Castillo and his supporters

have worked to calm "the markets" by disavowing any radical measures. After a dramatic fall in the value of Peruvian sol and a sell-off on the financial markets, Castillo issued a statement affirming that as president he would "respect the autonomy of the Central Bank" and guarantee payments on Peru's crushing foreign debt, now equivalent to roughly 40 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

He went on to declare, "We reiterate that we have never considered in our economic plan nationalisations, expropriations, confiscation of savings, exchange controls, price controls or import prohibitions." Instead, he is now calling merely for improved tax collection on corporations and seeking a better deal on royalties from the transnational mining companies. As far as agrarian reform is concerned, his campaign has also foresworn any expropriation or redistribution of land.

The statement seemed to have had the desired effect, with Peruvian bonds regaining half the value they lost and the stock market rising.

The elections have provided a distorted reflection of the immense social divide that exists in Peru. While wealthier Lima neighbourhoods like Miraflores and San Isidro voted between 80 and 90 percent in favour of Fujimori, impoverished regions in the interior like Ayacucho, Cusco and Huanacavelica, voted by similar margins for Castillo.

*wsws.org*

## 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.

### Sanctions defence

TARGET of numerous US and EU sanctions, China has passed an anti-sanctions law to create legal defences against western attacks. The law introduces penalties for those who comply with foreign sanctions against China, such as visa cancellations and freezing or seizing of assets.

*Asia Times*

### 5G developing well

DESPITE pressure from Washington, a growing number of African and other developing countries are embracing Chinese 5G technology. With 70 contracts in 41 countries for cloud infrastructure and government services, Huawei is the largest telecoms equipment and technology provider in Africa.

*South China Morning Post*

### Vaccination boost

WITH 20 million people vaccinated daily against COVID-19 (60 percent of global total), China administered more than 923 million vaccine doses by June 15. It accounts for 37 percent of the world's vaccinations total (2.5 billion), followed by the US (311 million) and India (255 million). China has exported 350 million doses to more than 75 countries.

*Global Times*

### Law to protect data

CHINA has passed a data security law to protect domestically-stored data from US jurisdiction and strengthen national security, effective September 1. International companies in China must store data domestically, with fines of up to US\$1.55 million for non-compliance.

*South China Morning Post*

### Investment up by 30%

BETWEEN January and May, foreign direct investment in China (US \$75.3 billion) increased 30.3 percent over the same period in 2019. FDI grew in-service industry (41.6%, US\$59.7 billion) and the tech sector (34.6%) year-on-year. Investments increased from ASEAN (56%), Belt and Road countries (54.1%), and the EU (16.8%).

*China Daily*

### The power of nature

THE Three Gorges Renewable Company has raised US\$3.5 billion to invest in wind energy, in the largest initial public offering (IPO) in 17 months. The company's profit (US\$558 million) and revenue (US \$1.7 billion) grew by about 27 percent last year. IPO capital will finance seven coastal projects.

*Nikkei Asia*

### Leading the way

CHINA published the highest number of papers globally on decarbonisation technologies in 16 of 18 research areas between 2015 and 2020. With US\$250 billion government budgeted R&D in 2018, China leads in battery storage – critical for renewable energy supplies – solar cells, and electric vehicles, and is reaching US lead in paper quality and impact.

*Nikkei Asia*





# The price of inequality

As food prices soar and hit developing countries especially hard, **Vijay Prashad** says Tricontinental's researchers are gathering evidence, not only of the problems, but also seeking to assemble the elements for solutions to the structural crises with countries needing a long-term plan to exit the neoliberal nightmare

EACH month, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) releases a monthly food price index.

The release on June 3 showed that food prices have surged by 40 per cent, the largest rise since 2011. The impact of this food price rise will grievously hit developing countries, most of which are major importers of food staples.

Prices rise for a range of reasons, the current rise largely fuelled by the collapse of sizeable sections of the global economy during the pandemic. Warnings of general inflation due to lockdown-related pent-up demand, shipping bottlenecks, and oil price increases loom over richer states, which, due to the power of the wealthy bondholders, have few tools to manage inflation, and by poorer states, which swirl in a cataclysmic debt crisis.

Rising food prices come at a time when unemployment rates in many parts of the world have skyrocketed. On June 2, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) released its annual World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2021 report, which showed, as expected, that the pandemic-related economic collapse has meant the loss of hundreds of millions of jobs and working hours.

The ILO shows that this collapse – accelerated by COVID-19 – has brought on the “worsening of long-standing structural challenges and inequalities in the world of work, undermining recent progress in poverty reduction, gender equality, and decent work”.

The effects of the collapse are “highly uneven”, further exacerbating what we call the “three



Top: Faisal Laibi Sahi (Iraq), *Cafe 2*, 2014. Above: Xul Solar (Argentina), *Casas en alto*, 1922 (detail)

apartheids of our times (money, medicine and food)”. Stalled vaccination programmes in countries such as India, which produces 60 percent of the world's vaccines, and grave debt challenges for countries such as Argentina, which cannot get wealthy bondholders to give it a grace period for debt-servicing payments, prevent recovery and further the cascading phenomenon of hunger and despair.

The editors of *New Frame* (Johannesburg, South Africa) were struck by the fact that youth unemployment in their country has hit 74.7 percent (overall unemployment is at 42.3 percent, itself a jaw-dropping number). More and more people struggle to survive. The words of the *New Frame* editorial are worth lingering upon:

## Despair

“Millions of people endure blocked lives, passing time in a stasis marked by tightening circles of shame, failure, fear, and despair. Some start to sleep most of the day. Some turn to transactional forms of religion, offering submission in the hope of reward. Some succumb to the temptation to dull their pain with cheap heroin. Some take what they can from who they can, how they can. Some, often supported by the grace of family, friends, and community, manage to find a way to hold on to enough hope to keep going.”

The weight of what all this means for these people and their

families, the colossal squandering of their gifts and possibilities, are not taken as a crisis for our state, the people that govern it or most of our elite public sphere.

Lives are rendered as waste, voices as noise rather than speech, protests as traffic issues or crime. People are told that their suffering is a matter of personal failure, their attempts to cope with their situation consequent to moral dissolution. They can be murdered by the state during a protest or an eviction without consequence.

Nothing here will be alien to readers in South America or South Asia, Papua New Guinea or Equatorial Guinea.

The ILO report shows that the “worst-affected regions in the first half of 2021 have been Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Central Asia”. This is one of those phrases – “worst-affected regions” – which mean little. Every region of the world is the worst-affected, each region dense with suffering.

Nonetheless, Latin America and the Caribbean has been the most impacted by COVID-19, with 8.4 per cent of the global population and 27.8 per cent of the deaths because of the pandemic (though these numbers are inaccurate, given the collapse of measurement in India).

Spikes of COVID-19 infections continue across Latin America and the Caribbean, the death toll surpassing one million in late May. As a consequence of long-term vulnerabilities in the region and

erratic lockdowns, the unemployment rates are high and the external debt service as a proportion of the export of goods and services is debilitating (above 59 percent).

A key problem in the countries of Latin America is the rise of poverty among the working class, which includes both those who are employed and those who are unemployed. The employed, many of whom work for fewer hours than before and under precarious conditions, are as likely to face the challenges of hunger and indignity as those who have slipped into the ranks of the almost permanently unemployed.

Policies for the generation of employment “must be at the centre of the economic recovery”, said the ILO's Latin America and the Caribbean director Vinicius Pinheiro, although the grip of international finance makes it difficult for governments to adopt employment generating policies.

This is precisely why Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research – in dialogue with a network of like-minded research institutes – has begun to draft a Plan for the 7.9 billion under the leadership of Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America – Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP). We drafted a five-point plan that we hope will spur discussion and debate:

- Enhance the levels of social goods and services, such as public health, public education, and public leisure to lessen pressure on wages.
- Strengthen trade unions and the culture of trade unionism so that

people no longer see themselves as despairing, isolated individuals trying to find work or to improve their workplaces on their own.

- Create publicly financed employment centres to assist the unemployed in seeking employment. These centres should be rooted in a network of the union of the unemployed.

- Provide robust publicly financed systems of social welfare without means testing and work requirements.

- Begin a process to shorten the work week, with a living wage for all.

We welcome any input regarding these points, which will be part of an integrated plan that includes a proposal to raise finances for it. If you have any suggestions, please email them to [plan@thetricontinental.org](mailto:plan@thetricontinental.org).

## Robust

Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research is a decentralised network of research centres and projects based in the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. One of these centres is in Buenos Aires, where Instituto Tricontinental de Investigación Social has been closely studying the crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean, but also looking carefully at modes to exit the crisis. One report, for instance, looks in detail at the precarious workers of Argentina, the excluded workers whose labour holds together society. In this report, the researchers note that the

Movement of Excluded Workers (MTE) not only leads the sector with struggles against their terrible working conditions, but that the workers have an integrated plan for the reconstruction of Argentina's economy. Another report from the Research Collective on Work – Argentina (Colectivo de trabajo Argentina) looks closely at the rise of inequality between the richer and poorer nations. These researchers are building a robust assessment of the social reproduction of poverty with special emphasis on the gendered division of labour to equip the public debates about the way forward not only out of the crisis of the pandemic, but out of the crisis of capitalism.

In 2019, the team in Buenos Aires set up the Observatory of the Conjunction in Latin America and the Caribbean (OBSAL) to produce an analysis of the strategies and policies that confound the region. The OBSAL reports are published every two months. In OBSAL's Report number 12 (May 2021), for instance, the researchers travel from the massive protests and crackdown in Colombia to the elections for a new constituent assembly in Chile. There is no better place to get a handle on the density of events that reveal – after analysis – the structural tendencies at work on the continent.

During her presentation to the UN's High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation on June 2, Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), said that the continent needed to eradicate poverty, move towards equality, and revitalise the process of regional integration. This is a correct assessment, although tempered by the intrusion of the United States and wealthy bondholders, the former seeking to drive countries of Latin America against each other and the latter preventing a healthy renegotiation of regional debt.

Our researchers are gathering evidence, not only of the problems, but also seeking to assemble the elements for solutions to the structural crises. Our countries need a long-term plan to exit this neoliberal nightmare. Help us develop such an agenda.

*Tricontinental*

<https://thetricontinental.org/contact/>



# Miners in worldwide action for fair play

Global strikes over low wages, safety issues, bribery and COVID-19

Eric London

FROM the nickel mines of Ontario and the coalfields of Alabama to the Atacama desert in Chile and the jungles of Colombia, miners throughout the world are engaged in a wave of struggles against the world's most powerful transnational mining corporations.

The corporate media and trade union bureaucracies have withheld this vital information from workers to keep them in the dark and isolated. But these strikes are part of one global movement in which workers face the same issues: low wages, a lack of safety precautions, trade unions that are in the pockets of the companies, and profound anger over the deaths of countless co-workers who contracted COVID-19 on the job and were sacrificed at the altar of capitalist corporate profit.

In Alabama, 1,100 coal miners have been on strike against Warrior Met for two months after rejecting a sell-out contract proposed by the United Mine Workers of America, which has refused to call out any other mine in support of the strike. In Sudbury, Ontario, 2,400 miners walked out against Vale Inco after rejecting a similar deal put forward by the United Steelworkers, which agreed to a special one-year contract in June 2020 to keep workers on the job during the pandemic.

Though miners speak many different languages, their story is the same everywhere. In Chile, several hundred office workers necessary for production at BHP's Escondida copper mine went on strike recently, while thousands of miners are preparing for what the industry press is calling a "prolonged strike" against the Australian-owned BHP.

Even though the Escondida miners' contract is expiring, the trade union has kept miners on the job, effectively crossing the picket lines of the office workers' strike. The union issued a pathetic statement in advance of negotiations, saying it would conduct itself "entirely within a framework of respect" for the corporation, which made US\$8.7 billion in profits by forcing workers at Escondida to produce 1.2 billion tons of copper in 2020. Escondida is the largest and most productive mine in the world.

In Colombia, miners in Pacifico, Bajo Cauca, Antioquia, Caldas, Córdoba, and Sur de Bolívar, went on strike on May 13 demanding wage increases and environmental protections for nearby indig-

enous tribes whose homes have been massively polluted by the global mining corporations. Recently, miners at the Cerrejón mine (owned by BHP, Anglo American and Glencore) began blocking the entrance, stopping production.

Across Colombia, mass demonstrations and strikes of industrial workers against massive levels of social inequality and state violence stopped the export of 200,000 tons of coal and caused US\$80 billion in losses for the mining companies, according to the Colombian Ministry of Mines and Energy.

In Peru, iron ore miners at the Chinese-owned Shougang Hierro Perú mines are on strike because at least 24 of their co-workers have died of COVID-19, which spread through tent encampments in which miners live 10 to 15 to a tent. Shougang made US\$340 million in profits from the mine in 2020, a 20 percent increase from pre-COVID profits in 2019.

## Tempers

Across Mexico, coal, copper and zinc miners are engaged in strikes in the states of Zacatecas, Guerrero, Baja California and Queretaro. At one mine in Cosalá, Sinaloa, 175 miners have been on strike for over a year against the Canadian Americas Gold and Silver Corporation.

At a Tayahua, Zacatecas, mine owned by Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim's Ocampo Mining Company, workers walked out on strike on May 22 and were brutally assaulted by company secu-



Striking miners in Brookwood, Alabama, United States. More than 1,000 have taken action against Warrior Met over a sell-out contract

rity goons. One local news report explained that "tempers flared and there was an exchange of blows between workers and security personnel. Workers explained that for over a year, [the company and union] have not renewed the collective labour contract even though workers have not stopped labouring during the COVID-19 pandemic, which puts the workers at risk of contagion".

In South Africa, industry publications are nervous over the prospect of renewed miners' strikes. South Africa's mining output jumped 21.3 percent between March 2020, when the pandemic first spread globally, and March 2021. A pro-industry attorney wrote an editorial in South Africa's Business Live worrying that the trade unions might not be able to contain working class anger.

"We saw it with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), until it became known as the 'sweetheart' trade union," the attorney noted. "Even though the NUM did the best it could for its members with agreements being calmly reached, its members lost faith in its ability to act in their best interests, suspecting union leaders had been co-opted." In August 2012, the NUM, police, and Lonmin company thugs massacred 34 platinum workers engaged in a wildcat strike.

Strikes and protests have also taken place across Europe and Asia in the midst of the pandemic. In recent months, uranium and coal miners in both western and eastern Ukraine engaged in strikes

and mine occupations, largely demanding back pay. In September 2020, iron ore miners in the city of Krivoy Rog stayed underground for 43 days, demanding wage increases in opposition to the trade union, which attempted to prevent the strike from spreading.

It is not possible to list all the examples of ongoing sectors participating in this global resurgence of the class struggle. Suffice to say it goes well beyond mining and extraction and includes autoworkers in India and Virginia, steelworkers at ATI in the US, BBVA bank workers in Spain, oil workers in Argentina, and more.

Certain critical lessons must be drawn. Miners occupy a critical position in the global capitalist economy. They produce the primary materials needed for cell phones, batteries, car parts, conductors and other advanced technology, without which the entire world economy grinds to a halt.

The imperialist powers are engaged in a permanent scramble over these resources and fight to establish control through bloody wars, such as the US conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The trade unions, by advancing the nationalist lie that workers in each country benefit by supporting the corporations in "their own country", not only pit workers against each other in a race to the bottom, they also help the capitalist class carry out its wars of plunder.

Workers in every country must understand that they are part of an international movement. This very fact opens up enormous pos-

sibilities for the development of the class struggle. The unification with workers throughout the world must become an integral element of the strategy of conducting any particular fight.

The fate of the struggles of miners and other sections of the working class depends on the development of new organs of struggle capable of harnessing the interconnected social power of the international working class against the global capitalist system, independent of the trade unions and the capitalist political parties.

On May Day this year, the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) issued a call for the building of the International Workers' Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC). In a statement announcing this initiative, the ICFI explained:

## Resistance

The IWA-RFC will work to develop the framework for new forms of independent, democratic and militant rank-and-file organisations of workers in factories, schools and workplaces on an international scale.

The working class is ready to fight. But it is shackled by reactionary bureaucratic organisations that suppress every expression of resistance.

It will be a means through which workers throughout the world can share information and organise a united struggle to demand protection for workers, the shutdown of unsafe facilities and nonessential

production, and other emergency measures that are necessary to stop the spread of the virus.

The ICFI is initiating the formation of this alliance on a global scale, which is the only way that the pandemic can be fought. The International Workers' Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees, with the political assistance of the Fourth International and the Socialist Equality Parties, will strive to unify workers in a common worldwide struggle, opposing every effort by capitalist governments and the reactionary proponents of the innumerable forms of national, ethnic and racial chauvinism and identity politics, to split up the working class into warring factions.

The world Trotskyist movement – the International Committee of the Fourth International and its affiliated Socialist Equality Parties – has initiated the IWA-RFC within the framework of a perspective of world socialist revolution. Workers in all sectors and in all countries must be united in a common political offensive to take power, expropriate the ruling class, and establish a socialist society based on social need, not private profit.

The developing strike wave among miners is a sign of the growing radicalisation of the working class throughout the world. The transformation of this objective process into a conscious movement against capitalism and for socialism requires the building of the ICFI as the revolutionary leadership in the working class.

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# Venezuela says US is blocking vaccine payments

**VENEZUELAN officials say the country's government has been unable to complete a payment required to receive coronavirus vaccines because transfers to the global COVAX programme have been blocked.**

The socialist government of President Nicolas Maduro has said for months that it was unable to pay for the COVAX programme because of US sanctions, and then in March announced it had made almost all the required US\$120 million payment.

But Vice-President Delcy Rodriguez said in a televised broadcast recently that the government had been unable to pay a remaining balance of US\$10 million because four operations had been blocked.

"The financial system that also hides behind the US lobby has the power to block resources that can be used to immunise the population of Venezuela," Rodriguez said.

Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza later tweeted a copy of a letter from COVAX say-

ing it had received information from Swiss bank UBS (UBSG.S) that four operations, totalling US\$4.6 million, "were blocked and under investigation". It was not immediately evident who blocked the operations or why. UBS, when asked for comment, said that for legal and regulatory reasons it was "unable to comment on matters relating to potential client relationships".

The COVAX letter notes Venezuela has expressed an interest in the Johnson & Johnson and Novavax vaccines.

Maduro's government this year began negotiating with opposition leader Juan Guaido to pay for COVAX vaccines using funds frozen in the United States via Washington's sanctions against Maduro. But in March, Venezuelan officials announced they had managed to pay for the vaccines on their own, and have since backed away from talks over using the frozen funds.

Maduro said he was optimistic vaccines would be available in July. "The COVAX system has promised us more than five

million doses of vaccines for the month of July," the president said in a televised broadcast. "We are also looking for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, Janssen, and have requested it from the COVAX system."

The COVAX facility, backed by the World Health Organisation and Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, aims to secure two billion vaccine doses for lower-income countries by the end of this year. The Pan American Health Organisation, which fields media inquiries about the COVAX programme, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In recent weeks, authorities have started vaccinating medical personnel and senior citizens using doses provided by Russia and China. Venezuela's government said it had received some 2.7 million vaccines from the countries and planned to distribute around 1.3 million doses through 27 vaccination sites across the country.

However, the vaccination campaign is based on an identification system known

as the Fatherland Card that has been widely criticised as discriminating on the basis of political persuasion. Health Minister Carlos Alvarado countered the criticism saying those who were not registered under the Fatherland Card system could request vaccines via the health ministry's website.

COVAX earlier this year set aside 2.5 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine for Venezuela, but Maduro's government prohibited its use following concerns about possible blood clotting, although the World Health Organisation has said the fears are insufficient to warrant halting its use.

At the time of writing, the country had reported around 250,000 cases of COVID-19 and nearly 3,000 deaths, although doctors say the actual figures are likely to be higher due to underreporting and limited testing. The government is currently investigating whether the Indian variant of the virus has entered the country via Colombia.

Reuters



# Capitalist system has eroded the planet's capacity to sustain life

## World Environment Day emphasises the need for ecosystem restoration

Vijay Prashad

AT THE 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the delegates decided to hold an annual World Environment Day. In 1974, the UN urged the world to celebrate that day on June 5 with the slogan “Only One Earth”. This year, the theme was “Ecosystem Restoration”, emphasising how the capitalist system has eroded the Earth’s capacity to sustain life.

The Global Footprint Network reports that we do not live on one Earth, but on 1.6 Earths. We live on more than one Earth because, by encroaching and destroying biodiversity, degrading land, and polluting the air and water, we are cannibalising the planet.

A new report from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Making Peace with Nature* (2021), highlights the “gravity of the Earth’s triple environmental emergencies: climate, biodiversity loss, and pollution”. These three “self-inflicted planetary crises”, UNEP says, put “the wellbeing of current and future generations at unacceptable risk.

### What is the scale of the destruction?

ECOSYSTEMS have degraded at an alarming rate. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report from 2019 provides stunning examples of the scale of the destruction:

- One million of the estimated eight million species of plants and animals are threatened with extinction.
- Human actions have driven at least 680 vertebrate species to extinction since 1500, with global vertebrate species populations dropping by 68 percent in around the last 50 years.
- The abundance of wild insects has fallen by 50 percent.
- More than nine percent of all domesticated mammal breeds used for food and agriculture had become extinct by 2016, with another thousand breeds currently facing extinction.

Ecosystem degradation is accelerated by capitalism, which intensifies pollution and waste, deforestation, land-use change and exploitation, and carbon-driven energy systems. For example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s report, *Climate Change and Land*, (January 2020) notes that only 15 percent of known wetlands remain, most having been degraded beyond the possibility of recovery.

In 2020, UNEP documented that, from 2014 to 2017, coral reefs suffered from the longest severe bleaching event on record. Coral reefs are projected to decline dramatically as temperatures rise. If global warming rises to 1.5°C, only 10-30% of reefs will remain, and if global warming rises to 2°C,



Setu Legi (Indonesia), *Take Care of this Land*, 2010

then less than one percent of reefs will remain.

As things stand, there is a good chance the Arctic Ocean may be ice-free by 2035, which will disrupt both the Arctic ecosystem and the circulation of ocean currents, possibly transforming global and regional climate and weather.

These changes in the Arctic ice cover have already triggered a race among major powers for military domination in the region and for control over valuable energy and mineral resources, opening the door even further for devastating ecological destruction. In January 2021, in a paper titled *Regaining Arctic Dominance*, the US military characterised the Arctic as “simultaneously an arena of competition, a line of attack in conflict, a vital area holding many of our nation’s natural resources, and a platform for global power projection”.

The warming of the ocean comes alongside the annual dumping of up to 400 million tonnes of heavy metals, solvents, and toxic sludge (among other industrial wastes) – not accounting for radioactive wastes. This is the most dangerous waste, but it is only a tiny proportion of the total waste thrown into the ocean, including millions of tonnes of plastic waste. One study from 2016 finds that, by 2050, it is likely there will be more plastic by weight in the ocean than fish.

In the ocean, plastic accumulates in swirling gyres, one of which is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, an estimated mass of 79,000 tonnes of ocean plastic floating inside a concentrated area of 1.6 million square kilometres (roughly the size of Iran). Ultraviolet light from the sun degrades the debris into microplastics, which cannot be cleaned up, and which disrupts food chains and ruins habitats. The dumping of industrial waste into the waters, including in rivers and other freshwater bodies, generates at

### Ecosystem degradation is accelerated by capitalism, which intensifies pollution and waste, deforestation, land-use change and exploitation, and carbon-driven energy systems

least 1.4 million deaths annually from preventable diseases that are associated with pathogen-polluted drinking water.

The waste in the waters is only a fraction of the waste produced by human beings, which is estimated to be 2.01 billion tonnes per year. Only 13.5 percent of this waste is recycled, while only 5.5 percent is composted; the remaining 81 percent is discarded in landfills, incinerated (which releases greenhouse and other toxic gases), or finds its way into the ocean. At the current rate of waste production, it is estimated that this figure will rise by 70 percent to 3.4 billion tonnes by 2050.

No study shows a decrease in pollution, including the generation of waste, or a slowing down of the rise in temperature. For instance, UNEP’s *Emissions Gap Report* (December 2020) shows that the world at the present rate of emissions is on track for warming by at least 3.2°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100. This is far above the limits set by the Paris Agreement of 1.5°-2.0°C.

Planetary warming and environ-

mental degradation feed into each other. Between 2010 and 2019, land degradation and transformation – including deforestation and the loss of soil carbon in cultivated land – contributed a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions, with climate change further worsening desertification and the disruption of soil nutrition cycles.

### What are common and differentiated responsibilities?

IN THE 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development declaration, the seventh principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” – agreed upon by the international community – establishes that all nations need to take on some “common” responsibilities to reduce emissions, but that the developed countries bear the greater “differentiated” responsibility due to the historical fact of their far greater contribution to cumulative global emissions causing climate change.

A look at the data from Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Centre’s *Global Carbon Proj-*

ect shows that the United States – by itself – has been the largest source of carbon dioxide emissions since 1750. The main historical carbon emitters were all industrial and colonial powers, mainly European states and the United States. From the 18th century, these countries have not only emitted the bulk of the carbon into the atmosphere, but they also continue to exceed their fair share of the global carbon budget in proportion to their populations. The countries with the least responsibility for creating the climate catastrophe, such as small island states, are the ones hardest hit by its disastrous consequences.

Cheap energy based on coal and hydrocarbons, along with the looting and plundering of natural resources by colonial powers, enabled the countries of Europe and North America to enhance the wellbeing of their populations at the expense of the colonised world. Today, the extreme inequality between the standard of living of the average European (747 million people) and the average Indian (1.38 billion people) is as stark as it was a century ago. The reliance by China, India, and other developing countries on carbon – particularly coal – is indeed high, but even this recent use of carbon by China and India is well below that of the United States. The 2019 figures for per capita carbon emissions of Australia (16.3 tonnes) and the US (16 tonnes) are more than twice that of China (7.1 tonnes) and India (1.9 tonnes).

Every country in the world has to make advances to transition from reliance upon carbon-based energy and to prevent the large-scale degradation of the environment, but the developed countries must be held accountable for two key urgent actions:

### Reducing harmful emissions

The developed countries must urgently bring about drastic emission cuts of at least 70-80 percent of

1990 levels by 2030 and commit to a pathway to further deepen these cuts by 2050.

### Capacitating mitigation and adaption

Developed countries must assist developing countries by transferring technology for renewable energy sources as well as by providing financing to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change recognised the importance of the geographical divide of industrial capitalism between the Global North and South and its impact on respective inequitable shares of the global carbon budget.

That is why all of the countries at the numerous climate conferences agreed to create a Green Climate Fund at the Cancun Conference in 2016. The current target is US\$100 billion annually by 2020. The United States under the new Biden administration has pledged to double its international finance contributions by 2024 and triple its contributions for adaptation, but, given the very low baseline, this is highly inadequate. The International Energy Agency suggests each year in its *World Energy Outlook* that the actual figure for international climate finance should be in the trillions. None of the western powers have intimated anything like a commitment of that scale to the fund.

### What can be done?

#### Shift to zero carbon emissions

The world’s nations as a whole, led by the G20 (which accounts for 78 percent of all global carbon emissions), must enact realistic plans to shift to zero net carbon emissions. Practically speaking, this means zero carbon emissions by 2050.

#### Reduce US military footprint

Currently, the US military is the single largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases. The reduction of the US military footprint would considerably reduce political and environmental problems.

#### Provide climate compensation for developing countries

Ensure that the developed countries provide climate compensation for loss and damages caused by their climate emissions. Demand that the countries that polluted the waters, soil, and air with toxic and hazardous wastes – including nuclear waste – bear the costs of clean up; demand the cessation of the production and use of toxic waste.

#### Provide finance and technology to developing countries for mitigation and adaption

Additionally, developed countries must provide US\$100 billion per year to address the needs of developing countries, including for adaptation and resilience to the real and disastrous impact of climate change. These impacts are already borne by the developing countries (particularly the low-lying countries and small island states). Technology must also be transferred to developing countries for mitigation and adaptation.

Tricontinental



Edgar ‘Saner’ Flores (Mexico), *Hijos del Lago Perdido (Children of the Lost Lake)*, 2017





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