

Backing for labour broking ban

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Midrand - The Cosatu national congress on Thursday gave overwhelming support to the idea of a total ban on labour broking. Faced with a resolution giving the choice between a total ban and a stringent regulation, all speakers favoured the ban.

The resolution went even further and said that should labour broking not be banned by the end of next year, Cosatu should embark on a section 77 campaign (which allows strike action in support of non-wage related disputes).

The catering workers' union Saccawu however insisted that the federation should not wait until the end of 2010, but should immediately apply for the section 77 campaign.

A resolution passed at the same time as the labour broking ban called for Cosatu to campaign aggressively for the inclusion of the right to work in the constitution of the land, and the delegates also backed a call for the Labour Relations Act to be amended to prohibit the successive renewal of fixed term contract requiring that workers on such contract be employed on a permanent basis.

An organiser from the metal workers' union, Numsa, Vuyo Bikishe, said that only two successive contracts should be allowed.

Bikishe also told delegates that the federation has not conducted a review of labour legislation since 1994, and called for the first executive meeting after the congress ends to initiate such a review, to include all labour laws - employment equity, skills development as well as the Labour Relations Act.

"These laws we have, who are they serving?" he asked. He also insisted that the 1996 Class Project (by which the left means the Mbeki supporters) is still far from being defeated. "We are still living under the class project," he said.

The resolution called for the Labour Relations Act also to be amended by removing incentives for outsourcing, subcontracting and corporate restructuring "aimed at diminishing workers' rights by transferring employer obligations".

It urged the complete eradication of all casual work and conversion of all registered casuals to full time workers.

However, delegates allowed that it might not be possible to convert seasonal workers but that measures should be introduced to address the precarious nature of such employment. End