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COSATU stands in solidarity with the workers and people of Kenya - calling for an end to economic exclusion, unjust taxation and global economic capture by IMF/WB

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COSATU joins the millions of working people all over the world, particularly on the African continent who stand in solidarity with the fighting masses of Kenya against the Finance Bill 2024, and its draconian implications for the country and its people.

The Federation condemns the use of state violence against peaceful protestors and supports the call for an inquest to hold those responsible to account. The 7 Days of Rage is a culmination of mass mobilisations which targeted the 21st to 27th June for sustained mass action. It has become a historic moment for the people of Kenya, particularly the youth, unemployed, workers and mass movements across the country who are on the streets, protesting against unbearable living conditions.

In acts of courage, on 25 June, they stormed parliament to demand accountability by public representatives on key policy positions, particularly on the draconian economic and financial decisions.

There are two important factors behind the historic mobilisations by the working people of Kenya, which are critical for all who are committed to economic and political justice. These are:

1. The deepening crises of poverty, hunger and huge inequalities caused by the imposition of neoliberal policies such as the Finance Bill in the midst of the rising costs of living, deepening poverty, unemployment, hunger and elite spending on importation of luxuries from abroad. This bill is part of that economic capture of the Kenyan economy by external forces, particularly the IMF, World Bank and favoured multinational companies who have been the main reason for the perpetual underdevelopment of Kenya and the African continent as a whole.
2. The recent agreement between Kenya and the US during which US President Joe Biden designated Kenya as a “Major non-NATO” ally, the first African country to have that status. NATO is the military alliance of imperialist countries of the global north. The agreement means the people of Kenya and their future generations will pay for the military bases, weapons of the US in that region and all the loans related to the transactions. This will include training of Kenyan armed forces, sophisticated military equipment, shared intelligence by both countries and more defence spending in identified areas of the agreement.



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This is a very important lesson for all African countries about the real intentions of the global private sector led “Cuts against every Public sector good” to increase profits for business elites and increase poverty for the people. Public representatives in parliament, local government and other spheres of power should be held accountable for using public office to advance the interests of the people, particularly the working class and the poor.

We call on all progressive forces to join the campaign for more practical solidarity and impact, particularly as we call on President Ruto to heed to the reasonable demands of the people.

Issued by COSATU

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