

Key Dates in the History of Sactwu

JANUARY

We remember:

7 January 1919: The first mass trade union of black workers formed in Cape Town – the Industri

9 January 1973: The Durban strikes start

18 January 1973 : East London Consolidated Fine Spinners and Weavers (Frame) 1000 workers

26-30 January 1973 : 10 000 Frame workers strike in Natal

27 January 1990 : Sactwu launches its leather workers membership drive with a blitz in Wellington

7 January 1992 : Sactwu and employers present a plan to government to save jobs in our industry

31 January 1998: Nictex blanket workers strike for more wages.

21-26 January 2002: Sactwu holds its second annual National Organising and Negotiating School for

26 January 2003: First-ever National Textile Bargaining Council is registered, a significant step fo

Febuary

We remember:

1-17 February 1991: Over 1000 SANS workers go on strike for higher wages.

3 February 1998: Table Bay Spinners strike in support of industry- wide-cotton-worker demands.

4 February 1973: Smith and Nephew Textile strike of 600 workers for more wages.

9-15 February1991: First national organiser training course is held at Oakford Priory in Natal.

12 February 1958 : 2000 workers sacked during a strike at Amato Textiles in Transvaal.

15 February 1988: Cape Cotton workers strike for June 16 as a public holiday, and higher wages.

17 February 1986: BKB woolworkers in Port Elizabeth strike.

21 February 1985: Workers at SA Nylon Spinners go on strike

22 February 1983: Bata shoe workers in Kwazulu, members of NUTW, strike

5-6 February 2000: Sactwu hosted its first ever, negotiating school for staff, in Brackenfell, Cape To

1-28 February 2002 : Sactwu Recruitment Offensive starts.

9 February 2002 : Sactwu launches its Regional Servicing Conferences throughout the country. T

27 Feb/1March 2002: 1000 David Whitehead workers in Durban, strike in defence and protection of w

28 February – 3 March 2002: uwu holds its first-ever National Bargaining and Servicing Conference in Ea

3 February 2003: Sactwu annual Recruitment Offensive starts.

10-14 February 2003: The ITGWLF holds first-ever organisational building workshop for the Ramatex

28 February 2003 : Sactwu Annual Bargaining Conference starts in East London. The theme of th

March

We remember:

12 March 1956: Workers at Hextex in Worcester go on strike for 4 days in support of a demand

5 March 1980: 300 African and coloured women at Berkshire clothing factory go on strike over

8-9 March 1991: Cosatu Campaigns Conference which adopted Worker Charter constitutional document

14-15 March 1992 : Fifty worker leaders convene in East London at the first ever national shop stewards conference

21 March 1960: Massacre at Sharpeville, as police kill 69 peaceful protesters against pass laws

24 March 1993: Over 2000 Da Gama workers strike for 47 days in support of a demand for high

11-12 March 2000 : Sactwu's annual Bargaining Conference takes place in East London. The them

March 2000: Tens of thousands of Cosatu members participate in peaceful demonstrations,

5-6 March 2002: Sactwu and the Department of Labour raid clothing companies in Newcastle, K

12 March 2002: Sactwu launches its Creative Writing Project in the Western Cape region. The p

3 March 2003: Sactwu's non-metro recruitment campaign starts. The aim of the campaign is to

April

We remember:

1 April 1992: Cosatu meets with the Minister of Finance to discuss the setting up of a National

7 April 1992: A 16-day strike at Pep Textiles in Transkei ends, with workers winning a 17% w

25 April 1998: 2000 Rex Trueform clothing workers conduct a strike ballot, to force employers

April 1991: Open School.

15 April 2000: Hundreds of people attended the funeral of Beauty Thys a key Sactwu shop ste

28 April 2000 :Lillian Malan, first ever Sactwu female regional chairperson, dies peacefully, tw

April 2002: House of Monatic, a clothing company in the Western Cape region becomes th

15 April 2003: Launch of the Chris Hani Institute in Johannesburg. The aim of the institute is to

17 April 2003

:Sactwu's National Office-bearers meet with the Cosatu National Office-bearers.

April 2003:

Sactwu's first ever closed ballot in the textile industry commences.

May

We remember:

1st May: International Labour Day

1st May 1886: 350 000 American workers strike for an 8 hour day and a 40 hour week.

2 May 1986: Start of 21 day Rex Trueform strike.

2-3 May 1991 :Sactwu holds an Economics Conference and invites employers and internation

4 May 1992 : The 1992 national clothing wage campaign starts with meetings in Natal with e

8 May 1952: The government bans Solly Sachs, secretary of the Transvaal Garment Union.

11 May 1935 : Blanket workers strike in Transvaal: 250 white women strikers picket the factory

18 May 1989: Start of the 7 week long Hextex strike (one of the longest strikes ever in our industry)

18 May 1991 : Over 1000 workers and their families take part in a “Big Walk” in support of the

19 May 1997: National launch of the Sactwu Education Trust’s Scholarship Fund in Johannes

22 May 1980: 6000 Frame workers strike over wages and recognition of their union (NUTW).

May 1990: 3 day strike of Eastern Cape Clothing workers

10 May 2000

: More than 4 million workers throughout the country stay away from work. The a

14 May 2002

: Ebrahim Patel, Sactwu's General Secretary signs the Founding Agreement, Te

23 May 2002: Historic registration of the National Clothing Bargaining Council. The National C

1 May 2003 : 51Workers die tragically when bus plunges into a dam en-route to the Phuthad

Sactwu donates R50 000 towards the families of the deceased.

13 May 2003: The newly registered National Clothing Bargaining Council holds its first-ever A

13 May 2003: A Sactwu delegation led by the General Secretary Ebrahim Patel, meets with th

15 May 2003: Auntie Mary Williams, Cosatu's longest serving shop steward passes away. Au

June

We remember:

2 June 1997: Thousands of workers nationally took to the streets in a legally protected protes

3 June 1997: 110 Botshabelo workers embark on a 10 week long strike for better working con

16 June 1976 : Start of the Soweto uprising against bantu education and apartheid.

14-16 June 1991: Third Sactwu National Congress is held in Cape Town.

18 June 1992: More than 50 000 clothing workers in Natal and the Cape march during working

18-19 June 1993: Sactwu hosts a conference looking at Worker rights in a future democratic South

22 June 1980: Rex Trueform workers go on strike for higher wages.

27 June 1983: Natal Thread strike – first ever legal strike in South Africa since the Wiehahn ref

June 2000: Sactwu run historic regional winter schools for matriculants. The winter school v

23 June 2003 : Sactwu's annual National Winter School Programme for matriculants starts. Th

25 June 2003 : Sactwu and textile employers sign constitution for first-ever National Textile Ba

July

We remember:

6 July 1989:

260 Textiles workers at Finitex strike against the company's use of breathalyse

11 July 1990:

10 000 Frame cottonworkers start a three week long legal strike over wages, w

16-18 July 1993: Sactwu's 4th National Congress – Durban. A new feature of the Congress is an

18 July 1980 : 26 000 Cape Workers form a massive “human chain” to show their support for

24 July 1996: Start of the historic seven day strike by more than 80 000 Sactwu clothing work

29 July 1974: East London Frame workers strike.

July 1931: 2 300 white clothing workers in Johannesburg and Germiston strike for higher v

July 1974: Smith and Nephew Textile company signs a recognition agreement with NUTW

July 1981: The industrial court reinstates dismissed workers at Stag Packing Textile comp

July 1999: Thousands of Sactwu members demonstrate throughout the country to focus p

3-14 July 2000: Sactwu modernises the world of work for union shop stewards, through compute

8 July 2000: Sactwu General Secretary, Ebrahim Patel, and Pentech vice-chancellor, Profes

21 July 2000: Start of a 12 day long strike by more than 1 000 Seton leather workers. The strik

1-31 July 2002 : Sactwu's second leg of its annual national recruitment campaign commence.

July 2002: Sactwu's president Amon Ntuli steps down after 12 years' service as the union's

24 July 2002 : Launch of the newly established National Clothing Bargaining Council in the W

2-22 July 2003: Sesli strike for higher wages and trade union rights.

August

We remember:

1 August 1991: Start of first course at Sactwu-initiated Workers College with 18 students.

3-4 August 1992: 160 000 Sactwu members support general strike in support of peace and demo

3 August 1974: Zwelitsha – 3500 workers at Good Hope Textiles (Da Gama) go on strike over v

4 August 1982 : Veldspun Textile company – 1000 workers strike against retrenchments.

7-9 August 1997 : 5th Sactwu National Congress was held in Kwazulu Natal.

11 August 1954: Durban – 1500 workers strike at Consolidated Fine Spinning & Weaving (Frame

18-21 August 1997 : Thousands of Sactwu members nationally support Cosatu's rolling strike action

19 August 1987 : Hundreds of workers at SBH Cotton Mills strike over a company rule which req

28 August 1990: Natal Human Chain Day: 23 800 workers link hands in support of the Workers C

28 August 1991: Textile employers meet with Sactwu on the union's demand for a national coun

August 1992 : Selective strikes in the Clothing industry in Natal.

9 August 1999 : Sactwu launches its HIV/AIDS awareness campaign at the William Clarke Child

August 1999: Thousands of Sactwu members nationally vote in secret ballot in favour of the c

10 August 2000 : Sactwu launches its HIV/AIDS shop steward education programme in Durban.

29 August 2000: Historic Clothing and Textile Sector Summit takes place in Durban. Senior mem

29-30 August 2001 : Cosatu anti-privatisation general strike takes place.

2 August 2002: Special School's Launch – Durban

12 August 2002: Sactwu officially launches its National HIV/AIDS Project in Durban.

26 August 2002: Sactwu opens its Voluntary, Testing and Counselling Centre's in all regions. Th

6 August 2003: Sactwu files Section 77 LRA notice with the National Economic Development &

September

We remember:

4 September 1991 : National Sactwu Human Chain

4 September 1932: General Clothing strike in Transvaal.

5 September 1990: 1000 Da Gama workers march through East London, to force their company to

10-12 September 1993: Connie September, Sactwu treasurer, is elected as the first woman vice-president

16-17 September 1989: SACTWU is born through the merger of ACTWUSA and GAWU.

18 September 1976: Da Gama Textiles recognises SACTWU after a four-year battle.

19 September 1992: 300 Sactwu members occupy Woolworths, a clothing shop in Cape Town, in so

29 September 1976 : 3000 workers at Da Gama's King Williamstown plant go on strike.

September 1973: The National Union of Textile Workers is born at a meeting in Pinetown.

September 1975: Workers at the Carpet Manufacturing Co. in Jacobs go on strike over the dismis

8 September 1999: Over 100 000 Sactwu members nationally participate in protest action in defens

16-18 September 1999:SACTWU's 7th National Congress in Cape Town – celebrating its 10th annivers

18-21 September 2000: Cosatu 7th National Congress rejected new proposed labour amendments, add

September 2000: Sactwu's historic bilateral relationship with the NUTGTW of Nigeria is strengthe

7 September 2002: Negotiations for the establishment of a National Bargaining Council for the Text

16-18 September 2002:Sactwu celebrates its 13th Anniversary.

16-18 September 2003: Cosatu holds its 8th National Congress in Midrand. The theme of the congress

October

We remember:

1 October 1990 : Da Vinci Clothing workers in Natal go on strike, sparking off an industry-wide s

15 October 1990: 8 000 workers and an aeroplane is part of the Transvaal human chain in suppo

15 October 1991 : The first resource centre in Sactwu is officially launched in Cape Town, providi

25-27 October 1989: 1400 Leather workers at Futura (Bata Shoes) shoe company in Pinetown went

27 October 1975 : Natal Cotton and Woollen Mills (Frame) workers strike for 2 weeks, and 200 po

26-29 October 1992: Meeting of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (

24 October 2000 : 35 workers from Castellano Beltrame in East London are dismissed for an illeg

1 October 2001 : Launch of a month-long recruitment campaign that signs up 5000 new membe

16-17 October 2001 : Parliamentary hearings on amendments to the LRA and BCEA.

July/October2002 : Team Puma, a textile factory in the Western Cape legally strike over wages an

1-31 October 2002 : Sactwu's 3rd and final leg of its annual national recruitment offensive.

1 October 2002 : Sactwu commences its first-ever-national closed shop ballot in the textile indus

31 October 2002: Sactwu hosts first-ever Fashion Festival in Cape Town. The Fashion Festival is

November

We remember:

4-5 November 1991 : General Strike by 3 million workers against Vat and for a National Economic F

7-8 November 1987: ACTWUSA formed through a merger of the National Union of Textile Workers (N

8-13 November 1993: Sactwu hosts first ever historic meeting of the ITGLWF in Cape Town.

17-18 November 1990: COSATU Workers Charter Conference endorses the demand for basic worker r

21 November 1989: Start of the Cape Cotton “grasshopper strikes”

19-23 November 1993: After a 4-day strike, monthly staff at Frame – all members of Sactwu – win a 9,5

28 November 1991: Union delegates sit on an industry committee with manufacturers, cotton farmer

November 1973: Smith and Nephew Textile workers strike

November 1976: John Copelyn, SACTWU's General Secretary, is banned together with a number

16 November 2001: Parliament votes to approve changes to the LRA and BCEA, giving workers the

December

We Remember:

1 December 1985th of COSATU.

1 December 1992: Sactwu meets with Fawu and Ppwawu at Cosatu Head Office to discuss the org

4 December 1989 : 550 Cotton textiles workers march to the industrial court to show support for a

5-6 December 1987 : GAWU formed through a merger of the Garment Workers' Union (Western Cap

8 December 1992: The union meets employers to negotiate changes to the new tariff duties which

15 December 1993: Tariff duties discussed with government, employers and the union for the clothi

1 December 2001 : COSATU celebrates its 16th anniversary.

10 December 2001: Operation 'Clean-up' is launched in Newcastle (KZN), to put an end to sweatshe

1-7 December 2003 : Sactwu annual Fashion Festival is held at the Cape Town International Conver

7 December 2003 : Sactwu launches first ever Fashion Film Festival, at Labia Theatre, Cape Tow

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