



NUMSA WELCOMES THE MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM COMRADE MUMIA ABU JAMAL

**23 February 2023
Press statement**

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) welcomes the message of support from comrade Mumia Abu-Jamal, which he recorded from inside prison. In the recording comrade Mumia thanks the union for the support the union has given him over the years. We are so encouraged by his strength and resilience and we hope that, despite his situation, he remains strong.

Abu-Jamal is a former member of the Black Panther party and he has spent over 40 years in jail, the majority of that time was spent on death row. He was convicted for the 1981 murder of Daniel Faulkner in Philadelphia. He is a victim of political persecution, as a radical activist and journalist, who attracted the attention of the state security apparatus from the young age of 14.

NUMSA is part of a month long global campaign, calling for Mumia's release. We have written an open letter to Justice Lucretia Clemons calling on her to right this historical wrong in U.S. judicial history, and release him. The NUMSA General Secretary comrade Irvin Jim said the following in the letter,

"We firmly believe that the time has come that justice must prevail and Mumia Abu-Jamal must be set free. We humbly submit to you that you happen to be in a historical moment, and our clarion call to the US and its institutions of justice and the judiciary, which must further the aims of justice and humanity, is that we are of the view that, as an honourable judge, you must be on the right side of history, as this very history has afforded you the opportunity to correct this injustice of Mumia Abu-Jamal. We firmly believe it is about time to set him free, and he has served his sentence, and justice must prevail,"

He went on to say,

"The struggle of the civil rights movement in the 1960s captured the imagination of the world. Figures like Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X became global icons. They fought and died for human justice. One would have thought that today the brutal system of oppression would have withered away, and that the struggle for justice and humanity would prevail and win the day. To our disappointment as peace loving people of the global South and the rest of the world, we continue to witness, the fact that in America, a Black man is always already guilty in the eyes of the police. So many innocent people have been murdered by the police – people like George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. And more recently, the murder of Tyre Nichols by Memphis police. Despite the huge mobilizations against racism and racist police violence, since 2014 these attacks have worsened and the killings continue, day after day."

On December 16, 2022, a hearing was held before Judge Lucretia Clemons of the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas, in the U.S. on a Post-Conviction Relief Application. Mumia's defence team filed for a new trial on the basis of new evidence of prosecutorial misconduct which may have had a negative impact on the outcome of the trial.

Judge Clemons did not issue a decision that day, but she did order the prosecution to turn over up to 200 boxes of documents and materials in Abu-Jamal's case to his defence team, with a final ruling on the matter expected by March 16. This is why organizations like NUMSA as well as our friends the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, and other progressive organisations are ramping up campaigns for Abu-Jamal's release.

A report by Amnesty International, "protested the politicization of the trial" and noted the role that police abuse and corruption played in fabricated evidence and use of excessive force. Amnesty International concluded, "*The proceedings used to convict and sentence Mumia Abu-Jamal to death were in violation of minimum international standards that govern fair trial procedures and the use of the death penalty. Amnesty International therefore believes that the interests of justice would best be served by the granting of a new trial to Mumia Abu-Jamal*", and it called for him to be granted a [new trial](#).

In the letter to Justice Clemons, NUMSA says:

"His trial has been rife with police, prosecutorial and judicial misconduct. The worst example of this for us which constitutes an injustice in the hands of the judiciary, which, in our view should consistently further the aims of justice regardless of any persons colour or creed, was when a former court stenographer, Terri-Maurer Carter said in a sworn affidavit that she witnessed Judge Albert Sabo, the Judge who was presiding over Mumia's case, say that he "would help them fry the nigger." At the same time, newly discovered evidence documented that key witnesses received promises of money for their testimony, and evidence emerged that these witnesses would receive favourable treatment in pending criminal cases. It is a disgrace that the American judicial system has not corrected this appalling miscarriage of justice!"

A link to the full letter has been published [here](#):

NUMSA is participating in this campaign in the hope that during this period, Justice Clemons will make the right decision and release America's most famous political prisoner, given the grave miscarriage of justice which has occurred. The campaign to #FreeMumia is running from the 16th of February until the 16th of March.

Aluta continua!

The struggle continues!

Issued by Irvin Jim

NUMSA General Secretary

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