



**NUMSA supports the indefinite strike by Metalworkers at General Motors in Brazil**  
**26 October 2023**  
**Press statement**

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa stands in solidarity with Metalworkers who are on strike at General Motors in Brazil. More than 4000 workers are on strike at Sindmetal in Sao Jose dos Campos and surrounding areas to protest against the lay-offs and the job cuts implemented by General Motors (GM) in that country. GM has announced that it is reducing its workforce at three of its factories in Sao Paulo state and it claims this is due to a 'drop in sales'.

GM management brutally cut jobs and implemented lay-offs without consulting the unions or the workforce. They simply fired them through email and telegram messages. Since July this year at least 1200 Metalworkers have been on lay off, with their employment contracts temporarily suspended. The trade union has vowed that it will not produce a 'single screw' until all job cuts and layoffs have been reversed. It says the greedy bosses at GM have violated an agreement which promised job stability until May 2024.

NUMSA condemns the management of GM, it is obvious they are motivated by pure greed. We have noted that GM has benefitted from generous tax exemptions offered by the government of Lula Da Silva. Since June this year car manufacturers have received over 800 million Reais worth of incentives which they have received in order to subsidize popular cars and stimulate the automotive industry. But instead of giving back to workers, the selfish, self-serving bosses are trying to extract even more from workers through job cuts. They do not care if families go hungry because of job losses, they care only about enriching themselves. They are typical, shameless capitalists!

NUMSA stands in solidarity with the courageous workers and with the union for taking action and going on strike to defend their jobs and defend their livelihoods. We support their demands. The working class are the creators of wealth and they deserve to benefit from the wealth that they create, the same way that the auto bosses are benefitting. It is workers whose sweat and hard labour generate profits, not the bosses.

NUMSA will never forget the negative experience of GM in South Africa. They are a globe-trotting exploiter and a global oppressor of workers. They left more than a thousand destitute workers when they abruptly shut and closed down their operations in South Africa. The move was entirely driven by absolute greed so we are not surprised by their actions. At the same time, GM is at the centre of a strike in the U.S. where workers led by our sister union UAW, are demanding fair benefits and conditions to be paid to them, after the bosses at GM made mega profits at their expense. It seems everywhere GM exists, they cause workers and their families to suffer. NUMSA is making a clarion call that as unions all over the world, we must take a stand in solidarity with workers in Brazil and workers in America against the notorious oppressive and exploitative GM.

We must remember that there is strength in unity, and therefore we must not allow the capitalist enemy to divide us. We are inspired by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the Communist Manifesto who famously declared,  
*"Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains!"*

Aluta continua!  
The struggle continues!

Issued by Irvin Jim  
NUMSA General Secretary

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