SADTU statement on World Teachers’ Day

04 October 2019

The South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (SADTU) salutes all teachers and particularly her members for their dedication, passion and hard work sometimes under trying circumstances, as the world celebrates October 5, World Teachers’ Day.

The Day has been observed since 1994 to celebrate the work of teachers and to mark the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the status of teachers. The Recommendation is an instrument that sets benchmarks regarding the rights and responsibilities of teachers; standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment and teaching conditions.

The 2019 World Teachers’ Day theme: Young Teachers: The future of the profession could not have come at a better time. According to the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (Talis) report, teachers in South Africa are on average, 43 years old and 32% are aged 50 and above. We need more young teachers in order to sustain the profession. We therefore call on Government to make teaching an attractive career choice by ensuring that teachers receive decent salaries, they work in safe environments and are provided with quality training and development programmes.

We also call upon communities to support teachers by instilling discipline in the home and playing an active role in schools through the Union’s I am a school fan campaign to ensure that schools become crime, bullying and drug-free zones for the sake of their children’s futures.

Realising the importance of young workers in sustaining the profession, the SADTU Congress convened from 25 to 28 September at Nasrec Expo Centre, resolved to accelerate the implementation of the 2017 National General Council (NGC) resolution to establish young education workers network/forum and develop programmes that will encourage the participation of young education workers into SADTU.

Further, the Union resolved to look into the results of fact finding missions to other bigger unions in Europe and Australia on how their young members’ mobilization work is modelled, and implement the best practice by the second quarter of 2020.
As we celebrate this day, we are fully cognisant of increasing reports of incidents of teachers who are having sexual relations with learners and tarnishing the image of the profession. We totally condemn such conduct. Those who engage in such conduct do not deserve to be called teachers and should be dealt with harshly.

Happy World Teachers’ Day.

ISSUED BY: SADTU Secretariat

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