

North Sea oil workers strike in the UK over wage offer; Italy: workers in USB union walk out in one-day general strike; Iran: protests and strikes continue against poverty and dictatorial regime; Nigeria: indefinite walkout in health sector over salary structure

## Workers Struggles: Europe, Middle East & Africa

1 June 2023

*The World Socialist Web Site invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature.*

### Europe

Roughly 850 offshore oil workers at various contractors represented by the Unite union are striking for 48 hours from the morning of June 1 to June 3. Another 48-hour strike will be held June 8-10.

Over 1,600 had been due to take part, but Energy Voice reports that 800 contractors at Bilfinger—the largest single-company contingent—now will not participate. A spokesperson for the company explained, “Through ongoing negotiations with Unite the Union, the union have agreed to postpone all industrial action for Bilfinger personnel whilst the latest Bilfinger offer can be tabled to their members.”

Some 600 Bilfinger workers were withdrawn from a previous round of action on May 10-12 to be balloted on an earlier offer of a six percent pay rise from operators Ithaca, CNRI and TAQA—rejected a week later.

An earlier 48-hour strike in April had a “significant” and “severe” impact, according to Unite: “there was widespread disruption which led to installations being shut down. Unite understands this included the CNR Ninian Central and Ninian South platforms while other platforms were disrupted due to planned works having to be delayed.”

Industrial action was launched to secure improved working conditions and to oppose a miserly pay rise of four percent recommended by the Energy Services Agreement, a bargaining collective between 15 employers and the Unite, GMB and Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) unions.

Unite shut down wildcat strikes at offshore oil rigs last year touting Bilfinger’s signing up to the ESA as “a fantastic win for worker and company alike,” in the words of Industrial Officer Shauna Wright.

Still striking this Thursday-Friday are around 650 Stork workers and 200 employed by Sparrows.

The dispute is among the most politically significant in Europe, hitting the energy industry at the centre of the interconnected NATO-Russia war, profit boom for the shareholding super-rich, and cost-of-living crisis for the working class. BP and Shell, the two largest oil companies affected, made combined global profits of £11.7 billion in just the first three months

of 2023, after record combined profits of £54 billion in 2022.

Last year’s wildcats were held with the demand for a “wage revolution” targeting the “industry world-wide as a whole,” under conditions in which the price of oil and profits were soaring while “The cost of living has gone up dramatically and wages on the other hand have gone down—or stalled—dramatically.”

As part of their ongoing dispute with rail companies, UK train drivers walked out on May 31, with a further strike planned for June 3.

On June 2, 20,000 station staff, train managers and catering workers in the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union at 14 train operating companies plan strikes. The drivers in ASLEF will ban overtime on June 1, affecting services.

The rail workers are in a year-long on/off fight against major restructuring, involving redundancies, closing ticket offices and the continuing rollout of driver only trains, which undermines safety.

RMT members renewed their strike mandate earlier in the month. The union bureaucracy sanctioned further strikes, while pleading with the government to stand aside to allow it to negotiate a sell-out. General Secretary Mick Lynch said, “The government is once again not allowing the Rail Delivery Group [RDG] to make an improved offer.”

In March, the RMT agreed a below-inflation deal at Network Rail. The union has dropped initial demands for an above-inflation pay rise and the ending of all the RDG attacks on jobs and conditions in the government’s Great British Railways project.

Workers at Allied Bakeries in Liverpool, England walked out over pay on May 30, with further stoppages planned for Saturday and Sunday.

The company, which produces crumpets and pancakes for the Kingsmill brand and supermarkets’ own labels at its Bootle site, refuses to increase the pay of its 346 employees. The Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) members are paid the national minimum wage of £10.42 an hour, without a premium for working unsocial hours. The company describes itself as a “24-hour a day, 7-day a week, 364-day a year business.”

A worker said anonymously to the union: “We worked through the COVID pandemic in difficult working conditions, classed as essential workers, keeping the site open, feeding the nation with above-average performances, and now we are struggling to feed ourselves and families.”

Allied Bakeries is part of Associated British Foods, an international conglomerate with 130,000 employees in 53 countries, and turnover (net sales) of £13.9 billion.

Lecturers involved in a marking boycott at Sheffield Hallam University began a five-day walkout from March 31, after management docked 100 percent of their pay. This follows strikes on May 25-26, and a similar six-day strike at Winchester University.

The UCU members were taking part in the current marking and assessment boycott, impacting exam invigilation and processing marks, in the national dispute over pay, pensions and conditions. Begun April 19 at 145 universities, staff are teaching as usual, but 22 institutions threatened to dock pay 100 percent, and 24 threatened to cut pay between 20-80 percent. The UCU is only calling action where universities dock pay by 100 percent.

The UCU organised the boycott in March as an alternative to stoppages, despite having a renewed strike mandate, with a view to ending the dispute involving national walkouts with a sellout deal.

UCU regional officer Julie Kelley said, "Sheffield Hallam should be battering down the door to employer body UCEA to re-enter negotiations so the dispute can be resolved and students graduate."

Around 500 UK workers at homelessness charity St Mungo's began a month-long strike May 30 over pay.

The Unite members will picket the charity's headquarters in Tower Hill, London, and offices in Brighton, Bristol and Oxford after rejecting a 2.25 percent pay offer made in April.

Nurses in Unite walked out for 24 hours at Guys and St Thomas' National Health Service (NHS) Trust in the UK capital on June 1. The action is part of the continuing NHS dispute with the government over pay and staff shortages, involving nurses, junior doctors and ambulance crews.

Unite members at the Yorkshire Ambulance Trust will walk out on June 2, between 2-10pm.

Unite and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) are in dispute with the government over a five percent pay offer for 2023/24 with a one-off £1,655 payment. RPI inflation is currently 11.4 percent. The 12 other unions on the NHS Staff Council, including Unison with 500,000 members but not doctors and dentists, accepted the deal.

RCN leader Pat Cullen recommended its acceptance, but RCN members voted against, with some organising a petition calling for an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss a no confidence motion in the union leadership. The RCN leaders then alleged voter fraud to silence detractors and hired security firm Dionach to investigate, which found the petitioners "unlikely to be responsible" for fraudulent signatures.

The RCN was forced by the mood of the membership to reballot for further strikes covering the next six months. The ballot runs May 23 to June 23.

Hundreds of workers at Coca-Cola Europacific Partners' (CCEP) in Wakefield, England plan to strike for 14 days from June 8-22. The factory is the largest soft drinks factory in Europe.

The Unite members voted 87 percent to reject a six percent pay offer. CCEP's latest profit figure rose 37 percent to £1.85 billion.

UK workers on the Manchester Metrolink tram system are to walk out June 10-11. The 600 Unite members voted by 94 percent on an 84 percent turnout against Metrolink's offer of five percent over 15 months. According to Unite, the company refused to negotiate.

Starting pay rates at Metrolink, owned by Keolis/Amey, are £22,000 for drivers, £26,000 for engineers and £20,000 for inspectors.

The strike is set to have a major impact as it is on the weekend of the city's major Parklife summer music festival, Soccer Aid at Old Trafford, Roger Waters' *This Is Not a Drill* concert at the Arena and The Weekend at Etihad Stadium.

Around 200 bus workers at XploreDundee, owned by McGill's in Scotland, will walk out after rejecting a seven percent pay offer.

In a turnout of 88.6 percent, 93 percent including drivers, duty managers, platform and administrative staff voted to strike. The Unite union has yet to announce strike dates.

The company used the excuse of a pay rise, which it has yet to implement, to raise fares.

Workers in security, terminal operations, and search areas at Edinburgh Airport, Scotland voted to walk out.

The 275 Unite members rejected an 11 percent pay offer plus £1,000 unconsolidated, by 85 percent on a 75 percent turnout. At London's Gatwick Airport, workers accepted 12 percent plus a one-off £1,500 payment.

On June 1, security guards at Heathrow Airport will continue their strikes with a three-day stoppage, after rejecting a 10 percent offer. Unite says they are paid less than equivalent workers in London and the South East.

Workers employed by Suez to empty bins for South Gloucestershire council in England will walk out June 12-18 and June 26-July 9.

The 150 Unite members rejected by an 89 percent vote an eight percent pay offer. Suez raked in £80.8 million in profits last year, while workers earn just £11.53 an hour.

School leaders in England will ballot to strike from June 19 to July 31. This is the first national strike ballot in the ASCL union's 150-year history.

The government offer of a 4.3 percent pay rise next year, and £1,000 one-off payment this year, was rejected by 87 percent of educators, who also oppose unsustainable workloads.

The National Education Union (NEU) began reballoting its 300,000 members on May 15, until July 28. The NASUWT will reballot members from June 5 to July 10, after previously failing to meet the 50 percent turnout threshold. The headteachers' union NAHT ballot runs until July 31.

NEU members voted 90.44 percent to strike, but the NEU only called a few days of walkouts in February, and the mandate of the current ballot runs out on July 13.

Workers at the Ministry of Defence munitions depot in Beith, Scotland are voting on strike action over bonus payments.

The GMB members, who prepare arms and munitions for transport, want the same retention bonus as managers and craft workers who assemble munitions for the army.

Almost 16,000 UK Home Office and Border Force workers are threatening to walk out if they are forced to implement the Conservative government's vicious policy of deporting migrants to Rwanda to make their asylum claim.

The Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union members also oppose the government's small boats legislation. Home Secretary Suella Braverman intends to detain and deport anyone who arrives in the UK in a small boat.

The Illegal Migration Bill is presently under consideration in the House of Lords. A legal case brought by the PCS is awaiting a Court of Appeal verdict on whether the Bill breaches the Refugee Convention. Last year, the High Court ruled it did not.

The Prospect and FDA civil service unions have called off strikes and suspended ballots in response to the UK government's offer of talks. The first meeting took place May 26.

PCS, Prospect and FDA members walked out across 132 government departments after rejecting a pay offer between 4.5 and five percent. The biggest union, with 100,000 members, the PCS, will also join the talks. The PCS has been involved in months of limited, rolling strikes across 132 government departments over pay and conditions.

Teachers in Europe continue a widespread strike wave, resisting media and governments which have attacked them for disrupting exams. Teachers are determined to fight for sufficient funding for schools, and to keep up with the rising cost of living.

In Romania, 150,000 teachers began an indefinite strike last week, and around 20,000 joined a protest in Bucharest. Teachers demanded a 60

percent pay rise and massive funding increases, and an online petition supporting their demands has gathered over 86,000 signatures.

The teachers' unions rejected a government offer of 2,500 lei bonus paid in two instalments. This is less than a month's salary for many teachers. *Agerpres* reported the government's comments that this was an additional 1.23 billion lei for education, but it is far below what teachers and student groups say is needed.

The government insists there will be no increase in salaries, and the Labour Minister claimed any extra funding would need to be "realistic," but unlimited sums were made available for the military. Two weeks ago, the Chamber of Deputies approved the government's request to buy 54 Abrams tanks for the US, at a cost of around 5 billion lei, according to *Defense News*. After rejecting the pay offer, the unions lowered their demand to a 25 percent pay rise.

The Romanian government has made defeating the teachers' strike a political priority. All three parties of the ruling "grand coalition"—the National Liberal Party, Social Democratic Party and Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania—agreed to delay a scheduled rotation of ministers until the end of the strike, leaving former general Nicolae Ciuc? as Prime Minister.

Ciuc? denied teachers' right to strike during an exam period, telling the National Student Council, "No demand should have as an effect blocking the students' educational pathway," although claiming he would end the strike only through "dialogue."

Serbian teachers will also hold a national partial strike on Friday, shortening every class to 30 minutes to demand more protection from violence in schools following the mass shooting at a Vladislav Ribnikar school in Belgrade on May 3. The Independent Union of Educational Workers of Serbia said the government had avoided "taking responsibility for the state of society and more serious work on the reform of the education system in Serbia. The position of the current government that 'the system has not failed' is unacceptable for educators."

Local walkouts also took place in some Serbian schools. Teachers at the ?ura Jakši? school in Belgrade held a one-day warning strike last week to oppose the sacking of the headteacher Tamara Jeli?. The Minister of Education fired Jeli? after a media furore about a rap video featuring reality TV star and convicted criminal Kristijan Golubovi?, which was filmed in the school. Jeli? told *NI* she gave permission for the video to be filmed but did not know Golubovi? would take part. In April, the Minister of Education said he did not see a big problem with the video being filmed in the school but decided to dismiss the headteacher following an inspection.

Teachers at the Sixth Belgrade Gymnasium also held a strike on Wednesday to demand the dismissal of the school's director, whom they accuse of falsifying documents and threatening critical teachers with disciplinary measures.

In Northern Cyprus, teachers continue a strike begun last week against a new law to "modernise" education. *LGC News* reported that the Cyprus Turkish Secondary Education Teachers' Union criticised the law for ignoring the dilapidated condition of many school buildings, which are not earthquake-proof.

Extracurricular teachers in the Austrian state of Carinthia will protest on Friday, against a planned reform which will also make them work as teaching assistants in schools, according to the *Kleine Zeitung*. Another stoppage is planned in Graz on June 15.

Teachers in France are also resisting the imposition of a reform of vocational schools, which will increase the amount of time children spend working as interns. On Tuesday and Wednesday, teachers held protests around the country against the reform.

In Berlin and throughout Portugal, strikes are planned next week. The Portuguese government announced that it would impose minimum service requirements on the teachers to ensure exams go ahead, *BNN* reported.

Workers including transport workers, teachers and healthcare workers in Italy joined a one-day general strike on May 26 called by the *Unione Sindacale di Base* (USB) trade union. The union claims a membership of around 250,000. Many demonstrated under the USB's slogan "weapons down, wages up!"

The union is demanding a 300 euro pay rise, that wages be indexed to inflation, a shorter working week, and other improvements to working conditions and safety. As well as economic demands, the USB called for an end to weapons deliveries to Ukraine and opposed attacks on migrants.

Transport workers, teachers, healthcare workers and others in the public and private sector joined the walkout, although workers in the flood-affected areas of Emilia Romagna were excluded. The media reported widespread participation in the strike, with public transport paralysed in many cities.

Justice officials in Spanish courts continue their indefinite all-out strike begun last week, demanding a pay rise in line with that offered to public lawyers, judges and prosecutors. Large numbers of officials have joined the stoppages, which have postponed hundreds of thousands of hearings.

The government broke off negotiations with the unions representing officials, due to the general election called for July 23. A union spokesperson told *Europa Press* "we will continue [striking] like this until they sit down to negotiate with us."

Railworkers in Greece will walk out for 24 hours on Friday, to demand additional safety measures. Workers on the railways and throughout the country have walked out to demand safety and oppose the cover-up of the government's responsibility for the death of 57 people in the Tempi train crash on February 28.

According to *ef.syn*, the Panhellenic Union of Traction Personnel sent a letter to the Hellenic Railways Organisation and railway companies questioning many of their recent decisions and demanding to know what measures had been taken over known safety risks.

Miners at the Zenica coal mine in Bosnia and Herzegovina began an all-out strike over unpaid wages on May 25, telling management, "Not one kilogram of coal will come out until you pay our wages."

The miners began the walkout despite the fact that the Zenica Brown Coal Mine Union cancelled its call for a strike, as it had not met the legal formalities, reported *Telegraf*.

The striking miners are demanding their full salary and meal allowance for April be paid, as well as the remaining part of their missing salary from March.

Hospital workers from the Iris network of public hospitals in Brussels held a one-day strike and protest in the Belgian capital on Tuesday. Protesting health workers demanded more resources for hospitals and more respect from the government.

*BXI* reported that all of Belgium's major unions asked for systematic hiring of new staff when workers resign, as the workload continued to increase when workers left because of overwork.

Retail workers in several German states held warning strikes this week, to demand pay rises in the new collective agreement. The United Services Union (Verdi) is asking for a 2.5 euro hourly increase in negotiations with employers' associations, in an agreement to last one year that covers hundreds of thousands of workers.

According to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, employers in the states of Lower Saxony, Bremen and Rhineland-Palatinate offered a total pay rise of five percent spread over two years. This would be a huge cut to real pay, as annual inflation is currently 6.1 percent.

Workers at canteens in schools, hospitals and other workplaces in Portugal, which are operated as concessions, walked out on strike on May 26 to demand improvements in their pay and conditions. The Union of Workers in the Hotel, Tourism, Restaurants and Similar Industries members demand a 10 percent pay rise, a shift and weekend bonus of 25 percent, a 35-hour working week and 25 days of holiday.

According to *Lusa*, the union said that the Association Restaurants and Similar Companies in Portugal countered with “a proposal to brutally withdraw workers’ rights: concentrated 12-hour schedules, multi-purpose functions, transfers of workplace, reduction in overtime pay, reduction in holiday pay, remission to the minimums of the Labour Code for many rights, elimination of union activity, elimination of conditions for food in kind.”

## Middle East

Pensioners and truck drivers continued their protests across 282 cities in Iran against the collapse of the economy and the bourgeois clerical regime.

Protests on May 24 marked the 252nd day of opposition. In some areas of Tehran, workers shouted the slogans “Down with Khamenei, Down with the dictator, Down with state executions,” according to *PMOI* (People’s Mojahedin Organisation of Iran).

Nine death row prisoners were executed this week, and families protesting outside the judiciary building in Tehran were attacked by police.

Truck drivers unable to make ends meet due to the cost-of-living crisis continued their nationwide stoppage, while pensioners continued to protest pensions not rising to match inflation in Shush and Ahvaz. Workers continued to protest salaries unpaid since the sugar factory in Fas province closed five years ago. Oil and gas workers joined rallies, while Makush Steel Company workers in Bandar Abbas protested unpaid pay cheques.

The current unrest began with the murder of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini by morality police on September 13. Iran’s inflation rate for 2021 was 43.39 percent. Around 50 percent of the population live beneath the poverty line, due to punishing US economic sanctions and Iran’s removal of price subsidies.

## Africa

On May 25, Nigerian health workers began an indefinite strike over the federal government’s failure to adjust the Consolidated Health Salary Structure (CONHESS) in line with the Consolidated Medical Salary Structure (CONMESS) for physicians.

It followed the expiry of a 15-day ultimatum to the government over an allegation of “inconsistencies in the ongoing negotiations to adjust” CONHESS, which covers health workers other than doctors. A last-minute meeting ended in “deadlock,” when unions found the negotiation body was entirely made up of the Federal Ministry of Health members who had already insisted adjustment of CONHESS was impossible.

The Joint Health Sector Unions (JOHESU) and Assembly of Healthcare Professional Associations (AHPA) members are demanding immediate payment of shortfalls and omissions in COVID-19 hazard allowances in federal health institutions, as well as recognition of health workers in non-core hospital facilities in payment of these allowances.

CONHESS and CONMESS were established as separate structures in 2009, but with a Memorandum of Understanding that adjustments to one would be reflected in the other.

Dr. Ogbonna Chimela, JOHESU’s Vice Chairman, accused the Ministry of a “nonchalant, biased, and lackadaisical attitude” to JOHESU’s members. While denouncing government, Chimela said the unions

showed their patriotism over the last four years by not conducting any industrial action. Other unions in the sector held strikes in that time.

JOHESU is a federation of unions representing all health workers but doctors and dentists. The strike only covers federal health facilities and hospitals, and there is disagreement between the individual unions in JOHESU about participation at state level.

In Ondo State, the Nigerian Union of Allied Health Professionals (NUAHP) called its members out, but the Medical and Health Workers Union of Nigeria (MHWUN) told its members in state and local government public hospitals and health facilities to ignore the strike call.

MHWUN state chairperson, Segun Ajiboye, said only federal workers were presently included, but “The state will comply fully when directed otherwise.”

The NUAHP report that settlement of CONHESS adjustments has been deferred to individual states. They praised the “progressive, responsive and labour-friendly government representatives” who had taken measures to forestall the strike.

The JOHESU strike comes less than a week after doctors in the National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) ended a five-day warning strike, also demanding improved welfare and payment of salary arrears. NARD ended the strike with plans to review government efforts to resolve the issues over the next two weeks.

Workers in the legislative arm of government locked the gates of Ogun State Assembly on Tuesday, to mark the beginning of a three-day warning strike. The Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASAN) members are demanding the state’s immediate implementation of the Consolidated Legislative Salary Structure to give them parity with the state judiciary.

PASAN’s Ayotunde Ojediran said the state government failed to respond to a written demand. He said state non-compliance with salary legislation resulted in non-payment of due salaries and allowances to some Assembly members.

PASAN is in negotiation with the state government, but no agreement has yet been reached. Ojediran expressed optimism that “government will do the needful” during the warning strike, but warned they would call for an indefinite strike if there was no positive response.

A nationwide strike of court staff in Ghana over non-approval of salaries and allowances was suspended for further negotiation. The Judicial Service Staff Association of Ghana (JUSAG) called the indefinite strike from May 25.

JUSAG accuses the government of not addressing the conditions of service and emoluments of their members and of consistent dishonesty. The government has failed to deal with their proposals for implementation of approved cost of living allowances introduced last year for all public sector workers, the union says.

Courts across Ghana were closed, with red bands round their gates, for five days. JUSAG initially said it would only call off the action if their concerns were addressed, but on May 29, after meeting with the Office of the President, the Ministry of Employment and the National Labour Commission, JUSAG President Samuel Afotey Otu announced that the strike was suspended for two weeks. Otu said this was “to pave way for engagement amongst parties in order to fast track the consideration, approval and payment of new salaries” in June.

He said the strike will resume on June 13 if the government does not comply with the agreement.

Cleaners at Busolwe General Hospital in Butaleja District, Uganda walked out last week over four-month salary arrears. The 20 workers are employed by Mahiga Enterprises, a private contractor at the hospital.

The cleaners also complain of being mistreated, working without protective gear, and unfair dismissal.

One striker told the media, “We have been demanding our salary for the last four months. Our children are sleeping hungry and we don’t have school fees for our children and landlords are demanding for their rent.”

The contractor and hospital are disputing responsibility. Mahiga claims it is awaiting payment from the hospital. The hospital insists delayed payments are down to the contractor, with local Chief Administrative Officer saying Mahiga was paid a week earlier.

The Kenya County Government Workers Union (KCGQU) called off a strike by Nairobi County workers after a deal with the county government. The strike had disrupted most services across the county for two days from May 29, with workers camped outside City Hall demanding a meeting with officials of Governor Johnson Sakaja's administration.

The strike broke out over various issues in a Collective Bargaining Agreement, including the failure to deal with promotions, the non-payment of allowances, intermittent payment of National Health Insurance Fund contributions, electricity disconnections and unresolved questions of unremitted third-party deductions.

KCGQU Secretary General Festus Ngari said, "We are invisible before our employer. Our demands have never been fulfilled and all we take home are empty promises. We are going to halt services to the public until an agreement over this stalemate is reached."

The county has now agreed to refund PAYE illegally deducted from police and firefighters within a fortnight. KCGQU and the county agreed to settle the outstanding issues around allowances, medical refunds and per diems in the same timeframe, but all of these are subject to the approval of the Controller of Budget.

The county has also drawn up a schedule for resolving questions of promotion and appropriate placement by September 30.

Hundreds of student nurses from the Gauteng province, South Africa are continuing their protest against the ending of bursary contracts in May 2022.

Students marched to Premier Panyaza Lesufi's office on Wednesday, despite a court interdict to halt the protests.

Dozens of final year students will be taking board exams in November with no financial support. They are demanding an extension of bursary stipends.

Hundreds of security officers and cleaners marched in Pretoria on May 24 for permanent employment.

The South African Cleaners, Security and Allied Workers' Union members work for 22 different companies contracted to the City of Tshwane, many of them moving around the different employers due to lack of contracts.

The workers, who are currently on R5,000 before deductions demand a living wage, with benefits such as medical aid, a pension and leave.

Angry workers protested outside the headquarters of Emfuleni Local Municipality (ELM) in Vanderbijlpark on Monday, demanding May's unpaid salaries.

Workers burnt tyres and barricaded the entrance.

An employee told the *Sediburg Star*, "Our livelihoods are at risk. We own cars, houses, and other important things that need to be paid for each month. With the municipality not paying us, and not communicating when will we be paid really leaves us vulnerable. We came out in our numbers to show our outrage and want nothing, but our May salaries."

South African workers from North West Transport Investment (NTI) barricaded the entrance to the North West Provincial Legislature in Mahikeng on May 30, demanding outstanding salaries. In addition, their pensions and medical contributions have not been paid.

Workers blockaded roads with buses in protest. Collen Kabelo Sehoshe a driver, told *sabcnews*, "We've gone three months without salaries and wages. So, we need a lot of things. We have outstanding Provident Funds for 18 months, a six percent increase in 2022 as well as a seven percent in 2023 increase is still outstanding. So we came here to meet the premier, last week in Mabopane, but he failed to meet us and that's why it was important for us to come here."

Over 2,000 Makro workers in South Africa marched to the US Embassy

in Pretoria, demanding fair wages and reinstatement of sacked workers.

Over 400 South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union members were sacked for striking over pay increases. Workers demanded a 12 percent increase, against a 4.5 percent offer. Walmart, which owns giant retailer Makro, is a US company.



To contact the WSWs and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**