

Textile Workers on Strike in South Africa

September 28, 2009, South Africa – Sixty thousand textile workers have been on strike since September 15th demanding higher pay from employer Seardel Investment Corp, South Africa's biggest clothing and textile maker. All ten of its factories have had to close due to the strike. Workers are demanding a 7.9 percent wage increase plus paid sick leave and higher wages for workers in rural areas. Seardel originally offered a 5 percent increase. Following this offer the company has just offered 8 percent with certain conditions which was now refused by the workers because the conditions included the workers losing part of their annual bonuses.

Recent strikes around the country yielded various wage increases for workers from 10 percent for workers in pharmaceutical, chemical and paper industries to 13 percent for municipal workers. While workers everywhere are forced by their unions and employers to compromise their livelihoods through concessions including wage freezes, job losses, and etcetera, it is crucial to note that it is the employers, capital, that do not bear the brunt of the economic crisis. Despite years of profits for the companies which are stolen from the wages of the workers and the enormous wealth divide, workers are expendable when the economic crisis hits and the companies struggle to survive; in the capitalist system, survive translates into the continuation of yielding profits. To endure the crisis, workers as commodities within the system compete and so the acceptance of low wages becomes the norm.

Without self-organizing and connecting with other workers, the working class cannot fight back against capitalism and their cronies, the Trade Unions which subdue the workers' power, sabotage any anti-capitalist dissent and negotiate behind closed doors with employers. Workers must develop anti-capitalist demands outside of the capitalist/trade union structure in order to wage a real battle on the class system.

Against Wage-Labour
September 28, 2009
www.againstwage.com
againstwage@gmail.com