

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**by CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (CDP)**

**16 AUGUST 2011**

**Gordham sees light on labour laws**

“It is symbolically significant that precisely 50 years after the erection of the Berlin Wall, South Africa’s communist Finance Minister, Pravin Gordham should see the light and state that South Africa should consider revising its labour laws if it hopes to reach its employment targets,” says Christian Democratic Party (CDP) leader, Rev. Theunis Botha.

“It is also significant that the call comes at the launch of country wide municipal strikes, and after the country’s economy has already been hit hard by the present strike season. We agree that workers should earn a decent wage, and that their working conditions should be suitable. But when it comes down to killing the goose that lays the golden egg, and investors begin to look at other African countries, the warning lights are beginning to flicker – and have been for quite some time.

“We stand by our assessment that the pressure for above inflation increases is as a result of unrealistically high wages paid to public service gravy train passengers. This has led to an increase of the income gap which is the highest in the world. Realistic income distribution would go a long way in curbing expectations, which lead to irresponsible acts that could further cripple the economy.”

**Gordham slaan spyker op kop oor arbeidswetgewing**

“Dis is simbolies insiggewend dat Suid-Afrika se kommunistiese minister van finansies, Parvin Gordham, presies 50 jaar na die oprigting van die Berlynse Muur die lig sou sien en versoek dat die land sy arbeidswetgewing moet hersien as enigsins gehoop wil word om werskeppingsteikens te haal,” so ds. Theunis Botha, leier van die Christen-Demokratiese Party (CDP).

“Dit is ook beduidend dat die versoek kom net wanneer die munisipale werkers landswyd begin staak, en na die ekonomie reeds hard geslaan is deur dié jaar se stakingseisoen. Ons stem saam dat werkers ‘n behoorlike inkomste moet verdien, en dat werksomstandighede goed moet wees, maar wanneer dit neerkom op die slag vandie gans wat die goue eiers lê, en beleggers begin na ander Afrikalande kyk, het die waarskuwingsligte begin brand en hulle brand al ‘n geruime tyd.

“Ons volstaan by ons oordeel dat die druk van bo-inflasie eise aangeblaas word deur die ongehoorde salarisse wat soustreinryers in die openbare sektor kry. Dit vergroot die inkomstegaping tot die hoogste meetbare gaping ter wêreld. ‘n Bietjie meer realistiese inkomsteverspreiding salDear D baie vermag om die verwagtinge in toom te hou en so minder optredes kry wat die land se ekonoimie in die voet skiet.”

***Gordhan urges labour law changes***

*Aug 15 2011 10:39 Sapa*

*Johannesburg - South Africa won't create four million jobs by 2025 on its current growth trajectory unless it changes some labour policies, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said on Monday. “This is not enough to make a significant dent in unemployment,” the minister told an internal auditors' conference in Johannesburg.*

*According to Statistics SA, South Africa's official unemployment rate currently stands at 25.7%.*

*Under the expanded definition of unemployment - which refers to people of working age without work and available to start work that week, but who had not looked for work in the four weeks before the Stats SA interview - 7 678 000 South Africans are unemployed. The new growth path envisages the creation of five million jobs by 2025.*

*Gordhan suggested that South Africa might have to relax its labour laws in certain cases to grow jobs.*

*“We may have to change the way we see the labour dispensation in South Africa,” he said. For example, a balance needed to be found to retain the jobs of the 10 000 people working at clothing factories in Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal, while still allowing them to earn a reasonable wage and keeping the factories open. Factories*

*in the area have threatened to close down and relocate to Lesotho or Botswana if they are forced to pay minimum wages. Gordhan said laws might also have to be relaxed to allow young people to enter the workplace and gain skills and experience at lower wages, but not at the expense of people who already have jobs. Unless such changes are made, "we will not be able to make the breakthrough we need to create jobs in South Africa", Gordhan said. However, this would be done in the awareness of the bitter struggle fought against apartheid for human rights, decent work and decent wages, he said. "We are not going to lose what we have gained through hard struggles."*