

Media release

South Africa's First Worker-Led Just Transition Labour Centre Officially Launched

15 May 2025 | Pretoria — The Just Transition Labour Centre (JTLC) was officially launched on 14 May 2025, marking a groundbreaking step for South African trade unions in leading research and policy development on climate justice and economic transformation. Hosted by Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS), the JTLC was established in collaboration with all four major trade union federations — COSATU, FEDUSA, NACTU, and SAFTU — forming the country's first worker-led hub focused on supporting labour and working-class communities in navigating the Just Transition.

As South Africa faces urgent economic and environmental challenges driven by the climate crisis, the JTLC will provide research, policy analysis, and strategic support to ensure workers and working-class communities are central to the transition to a low-carbon economy.

"A just transition isn't a luxury — it's a fight for survival with justice. The Just Transition Labour Centre arms trade unions with the tools to lead that fight for workers, communities, and the planet." Zwelinzima Vavi, SAFTU's General Secretary.

The JTLC will identify key policy and research areas affecting workers at all levels, helping to shape inclusive climate and industrial policies. Through direct engagement with communities, unions, and policymakers, the Centre aims to embed social justice principles in the heart of South Africa's transition pathways.

The official launch event was attended by leaders across government, labour, and academia, including Rudi Dicks from the Presidency, Lebogang Mulaisi, Policy and Research Executive Manager at the Presidential Climate Commission, and Giulia Laganà, Director of the ITUC Just Transition Centre. Also present were representatives from leading research institutions such as the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, Institute for Economic Justice, Labour Research Service, Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection, 3F Southern Africa, FES, and NALEDI.

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25

YEARS OF SUPPORTING POLICY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH RESEARCH AND DIALOGUE

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