



# ANC TODAY

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## Conversations with the President



# As lovers of freedom and of justice, we stand with the Palestinian people in their quest for self-determination

■ *By President Cyril Ramaphosa*



OUR experience with the democratic transition is a lesson about the power of empathy, negotiation and compromise.

The escalating situation in Israel and Palestine affirms once more what we South Africans know too well, that intractable conflicts can

only be solved through peaceful negotiation.

It also demonstrates that unless the root causes of a conflict are addressed, in this case the illegal occupation by Israel of Palestinian land and the denial of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, there will never be

peace.

The latest violence was sparked by an Israeli court decision to evict a group of families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in East Jerusalem to make way for Israeli settlements.

The sight of men, women and

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## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT



Israeli armed forces firing teargas at protestors at the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem

children being evicted from the homes their families have lived in for generations brings back painful collective and personal memories for the majority of South Africans – of forced removals and land dispossession.

It was a pain and humiliation faced by my own family, and by many South African families. My family was forcibly moved to different parts of the country on two occasions.

Being forced from one's home at gunpoint is a trauma not easily forgotten, and is carried across generations. As a country we are still living with the residual effects of the callous acts carried out in the name of apartheid spatial planning.

For all who believe in equality, justice and human rights, we cannot but be moved and indeed angered, at the pain and humiliation being inflicted on the Palestinian people; for it echoes our own.

Israel's actions are a violation of international law. They show a total disregard for successive United

Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions that call for an end to the occupation of Palestinian land and for the fulfillment of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Since Israeli security forces launched assaults on worshippers at Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem last week, the violence has now engulfed the Gaza Strip, large parts of the West Bank and a number of Israeli cities. It has claimed the lives of dozens of people, including children.

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According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at least 40 children have been killed in Gaza since 10 May. Over half of them were under 10 years old.

It is also deeply troubling that Israeli forces last week destroyed a multi-storey building that housed a number of media organisations, sending a chilling message to media reporting on the violence.

The senseless and continued Israeli bombardment of Gaza will have devastating consequences for more than two million people who have been suffering under an illegal Israeli blockade for 14 years. As is always the case, it is civilians who will bear the brunt, with their homes and livelihoods destroyed.

Every effort must be made to dissuade both sides from further escalation, and to end the violence that is causing fear, death and misery on both sides.

We call on all parties involved to show restraint, to respect human life, and to cease the current hostilities.

## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

Far too many lives have been lost to this intractable conflict. The continued occupation of Palestinian land and the suffering of the Palestinian people is a blight on the conscience of humanity.

As South Africa we are committed to being part of international efforts aimed at reviving a political process that will lead to the establishment of a viable Palestinian state existing side-by-side in peace with Israel, and within internationally recognised borders.

The two-state solution remains the most viable option for the peoples of Israel and Palestine, and must continue to be supported.

Just as Israeli security forces were attacking worshippers at the Al Aqsa Mosque, we in South Africa were preparing to commemorate the centenary of the Bulhoek Massacre at a religious site in Ntabelanga in the Eastern Cape. On 24 May 1921, colonial security forces armed with machine guns and artillery opened fire on worshippers, killing more than 160 people and wounding nearly 130.

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The massacre laid bare the brutality not only of the police force of the Union of South Africa, but also the racist system that it was charged to uphold.

Just like the dispute in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, the atrocity at Bulhoek was not just about a local dispute; it was fundamentally about the forced dispossession of land, about colonial occupation, about racial discrimination and about the violent suppression of dissent.

As we reflect on the crisis in the Middle East and particularly on the suffering of the Palestinian

people, we would do well to recall the words of Selby Msimang, a founding member of the African National Congress.

In the aftermath of the Bulhoek massacre he wrote: *“History has shown that the human soul naturally revolts against injustice.”*

The protests and the revolt of the oppressed people of South Africa against colonialism and apartheid proved the veracity of this prophecy.

As lovers of freedom and of justice, we stand with the Palestinian people in their quest for self-determination, but also in their resistance against the deprivation of their human rights and the denial of their dignity.

As citizens of a country that was able to turn its back on race-hatred and bloodshed and build an inclusive society rooted in human rights for all, it is our collective hope that the people of Israel and Palestine will follow a similar path; that they will find each other, and that they will find peace.



Palestinian solidarity march to parliament



# People's Power in Action: The ANC Leads!

Dear Mr President

**T**HE African National Congress has demonstrated once again that it has no equal when it comes to winning the trust of our people at the polls. The recently held by-elections across the wards in the country came at a difficult time for our people and political parties as the global pandemic rages on.

The health disaster has put a spanner in the works and has prevented normal campaigning such as rallies, large meetings and door-to-door. Be that as it may, the ANC amassed 70% of the votes to retain and win wards that were being contested.

Mr President, the by-elections also came at a time when our movement was being pilloried from all sides by our rivals and pessimists who have falsely planted a narrative of a party in meltdown. However, in a democracy, only the polls are the yardstick of the pulse of our people and they certainly shows that they are able to sift through the noise and apply their minds soberly and elect the only party that has their interest at heart.

To its credit, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has shown once again that it is more capable than most when it comes to organising and executing a seamless, free and fair elections even during trying times. The IEC



*Comrade Pule Mabe*

was able to deliver free polls, as it has always done since the dawn of democracy, because it is important that elections are without blemish. In the same vein, the ANC welcomes the appointment of eminent jurist, retired former Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke to assess the feasibility of holding local government elections during the pandemic. The coronavirus has shown that it is unrelentless and has come back with a vengeance in a series of waves that threaten lives and livelihoods even as the vaccines are being rolled out to build community immunity. We are confident that Justice Moseneke, who served in the IEC as deputy chairperson in the inaugural democratic elections in 1994, is the right and qual-

ified person to come to a correct determination. We urge all other political parties to co-operate and embrace his report when it comes out in July, whatever its outcomes may be.

Mr President, the by-elections come in the year wherein the local government elections are penciled to happen later this year and the overwhelming support of the ANC by the voters augurs well for the movement of Nelson Mandela, Albert Luthuli and Walter Sisulu.

In the last municipal elections five years ago, much was made of the fact that the ANC had ceded control of some of the metros in the country to the opposition parties and this was punted as a major shift and evidence that the ANC would in future surrender.

As shown in the by-elections, this has not come to pass and indeed, the ANC has managed to claw back control of some of the metros that we had lost to the coalition of the opposition parties.

Having said the above, Mr President, the ANC must remain humble and never take the support of the electorate for granted. It is true that many municipalities in the country face enormous challenges and are hard-pressed to deliver services to their communities. The events this week at Mangaung metro municipality in the Free State province, wherein disgruntled community members took to

the streets in protest against lack of services should guide us to ensure that only candidates who understand local government and are rooted in their communities emerge victorious.

The time has arrived for the ANC and its alliance partners to reward the trust shown in our movement by the people and deliver on the promises as reflected in our manifestos. Our branches and wards across the country should hit the ground running to realise the mandate that form the bedrock of the founding of our movement.

For the longest time, our people have been failed by successive public representatives and this failure is more pronounced at local government level because this is the government closest to the people.

These failures go beyond the individual and they have the consequence of undermining the ANC as a whole, thereby brewing discord.

The Mangaung events should serve as a warning to serving and incoming councillors that our people will not sit back where there are demonstrable failures of their mandate as public representatives.

When municipalities fail to collect refuse, provide water and fill the potholes, it is not an individual councillor who takes the blame and it is oftentimes the name of the ANC that is compromised.

The power lies with our people and we need candidates who understand that they are the servants of the people and not the other way around.

Our councillors must be in tune and in touch with our communities and be fully conversant with the needs of their communities even



before grievances flare. Local government representatives must understand their role and locate it within our manifesto that promises local business development and the need to manage public land optimally. In the year of the pandemic, our representatives must be in the frontline of the fight against the pandemic by ensuring that there is clean portable water to ensure hygiene as well as the provision of sanitation and eradication of informal settlements that hinder social distancing.

It has been said, Mr President, that COVID-19 has accentuated the chasm that divides the in-

equalities in our society and this is true. However, the pestilence also offers us the opportunity to expedite the delivery of some, if not all, of the well-known challenges that would otherwise have taken years to resolve.

The ANC was founded on the principle that it would govern differently to the previous regime which perpetuated inequalities among the races and prioritised quality services for the white people while black people wallowed in penury. To its credit, the ANC has sought to integrate communities through a well-thought out spatial development programme which brings communities together.

The economic growth of our townships has become more urgent than ever as we rebuild our communities post the pandemic.

***The ANC Lives!!!***

Yours sincerely

**Pule Mabe**

National Spokesperson and Head of the Department of Information and Publicity

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# Nakba Day – Stop and Defeat Apartheid Israel

■ By *Ronnie Kasrils*

**N**AKBA DAY – 73 years since the onset of the ‘catastrophe’, with Apartheid Israel having believed Palestinian memories would fade away, has witnessed unity and courage of a people unbowed, relentlessly fighting for their land and rights, and resisting the last of the colonial monsters.

As in all anti-colonial struggles there is an agonising high price to pay. The death toll rises hourly in Gaza, the West Bank and throughout Palestine. The international community cannot remain indifferent, and it has been uplifting for the beleaguered Palestinian people to see they are not alone in their struggle for survival.

Humanity’s voice and resolve must rise in sustained anger and to mourn and mobilise as the best way to respect the dead and wounded, the families grieving over the corpses of mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, venerable elders and broken bodies of children some still infants. At times virtually entire families obliterated. The spreading of awareness and the truth is necessary to break through Zionist Israel’s false narrative, the impunity provided by the West for its heinous crimes, and the need to beat mainstream media disinformation. Our resolve is more vital with the barbaric onslaught on the people of Palestine as Israel warmongers, and



a corrupt, desperate Netanyahu, threaten unrestrained war and a final solution. This is a time for rededication as never before. We must protest our outrage at Israel’s war crimes, recognised as such in international law. By Sunday, 200 Palestinians slaughtered of which 29 women, 68 children – 9 Israelis.

As office blocks in Gaza are turned to rubble, one housing Associated Press and Al Jazeera offices, Israel’s intentions to obliterate media outlets along with Palestinian lives shows its fear of the extent of its crimes reaching the outside world. So much for the claim that it is the Middle East’s sole democracy. Hogwash.

Palestinian comrades have asked us to break the criminal international support and appeasement of Israel and match their courage. It is imperative we confront the

shameless complicity passed on from Trump to Biden, the legacy of USA administrations since 1948. How macabre this Joe Biden is, asserting that Israel is justified in bombing Gaza in self-defence. How insidious the connivance of perfidious Britain, hypocritical France, shameless Germany, the repugnant regimes from Austria, Brazil, Hungary to India, Lithuania and Poland; the white domains of Australia and Canada; along with the treachery of spineless Arab states.

It is South Africa’s sacred duty to mobilise for Nakba Day every day; build the BDS campaign to new heights; rally to the defence of our Palestinian brothers, sisters and children. Stop Zionist liars in their tracks with the truth. Support international Jewish voices for justice, along with humanity, to expose Zionism equating criticising



Israel with antisemitism and the flawed depravity of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition Israel's racism, complicity between the racist mobs and police, and history of colonial settlement shared by the West, has spread the poison of such xenophobia and let loose the pogroms so reminiscent of Czarist times and Kristal Nacht in Germany, 1938. There are Nazi era analogies. One of Ben Gurion's own ministers, Aharon Cizling, stated after the Deir Yassin massacre in May 1948 – *"now we have behaved like Nazis and my whole being is shaken."* Einstein and Hannah Arendt warned of the rise of fascist parties in Israel that very year when Menachem Begin visited New York to raise funds. Future Prime Minister Begin, leader of the terrorist Irgun, and forerunner of Likud and the butchers Sharon and Netanyahu.

A desperate Netanyahu, seeing his prime ministerial post slipping away, and as a result the increasing likelihood of a prison term on corruption charges, grasps an escape route by fermenting war on besieged Gaza. The Israeli armaments industry is licking its chops at the opportunity to show off its latest and now once again war-proven hardware to repulsive international warmongers and arms merchants. It's time again for good business. Every time Gaza is demolished and lives crushed Israeli sales and shares rocket.

What Netanyahu and the criminal Israeli military did not bargain for was the way in which the forced displacement of Palestinian households in Sheikh Jarrah and across Jerusalem – to Judaize the Holy City – and the sacrilegious assault on the Al Aqsa Mosque, shooting and beating those at

prayer, would unite as never seen before the people of Gaza, West Bank and Palestinians living within Israel itself, and the potential enormous support in the diaspora.

President Biden, all at sea, gives Israel carte blanche right to defend itself against home-made rockets launched from Gaza, seemingly oblivious to the IDF raining death and destruction on a besieged city of 2 million. The spineless Western governments and media bark their accent like poodles; former colonial powers with the same psyche as United States imperialism, never understanding that repression begets resistance. If those rockets came from Iran, they would have precision delivery mechanisms and would be far more sophisticated. No possibility of smuggling into the hermetically sealed Gaza Strip with Sisi's Egypt treacherously guarding that back door. Home-made rockets, fashioned from water piping, are a testament to the resistance's inventiveness but hardly on a par with the most advanced ordinance in the world. The reason for the response to Israeli occupation and aggression is

patently clear to all but the aggressor and his allies – the justified anger of a people reacting against brutal racist oppression, colonial dispossession of land and rights, destruction of homes and property, murder of their children, savage ill-treatment and humiliation – for seven decades. That's just how and why South Africans reacted to the apartheid system.

The cause of the response is the amazing resilience of a people the Israeli leader, Ben Gurion, an arch-racist and coloniser like South Africa's unlamented architect of apartheid, Hendrik Verwoerd, told his followers in 1948, when he unleashed the terror and ethnic cleansing that saw 750,000 Palestinians driven from their homes and land, almost 600 villages destroyed, that the offspring of those set to flight would forget where they came from. The Palestinian people, including the youngest, who resist with stones, and some with rockets, are making a mockery of Zionist hopes. It is Palestinian dreams and fortitude that is winning the war as they show they are prepared to accept ca-

## WHAT IS NAKBA DAY?

- 'Nakba Day' is marked annually on May 15, the day following the anniversary of Israel's Declaration of Independence.
- The word 'Nakba' means 'catastrophe' in Arabic.
- Former Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat declared May 15 as Nakba Day in 1998, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel.
- Dubbed as the 'Nakba Law' by its critics, the Knesset passed a law in 2011 imposing fines on bodies that reject Israel as a Jewish state or commemorate Nakba Day.
- Nakba Day protestors often hold up keys, symbolizing their desire to return to their pre-1948 homes.



sualties in the bloody battles on their courageous road to freedom. We stand with them, righteous humanity, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindu, all faith groups, believers and non-believers.

### The BDS Weapon

It is imperative that we of the international community redouble our efforts to aid the Palestinian people in solidarity actions. The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions [BDS] campaign remains the most formidable weapon in our arsenal. It worked to bring about the demise of South African Apartheid behind the indigenous black people's resistance struggle, and is growing in scope and efficacy, to the extent that Israel has identified the non-violent global movement as a strategic threat.

Israel, like apartheid South Africa must pay for its crimes – above all by sanctions. We South Africans must continue to urge our Government and the African states, to break off all relations with Apartheid Israel. We must appeal to Africa to reject Israel's sugar-coated bribes aimed at ensnaring them.

We must apply full sanctions against the Apartheid state and become an international standard bearer for the Palestinian cause. South Africa should convene an international conference of solidarity with Palestine aimed at discussing a programme of global action by governments, trade unions and civil society to isolate Israel, strengthen the BDS campaign, end the occupation, lift the siege of Gaza, dismantle the illegal settlements, remove the apartheid wall and separation barriers, ensure the right of return of all refugees, ensure freedom of access to East Jerusalem and the rights of Palestinians residing there, declare equal rights for Palestinians

### Palestinian solidarity marchers calling for boycott of Israeli goods



within Israel which are treated as second class citizens and subject as we see to howling racist mobs. Israeli war criminals must face the International Criminal Court. Israel must pay reparations for all the death and destruction it has caused. Some will laugh because of the impunity in which Israel basks.

What the BDS campaign advocates is boycotting and divesting from Israeli and international banks and corporations that are implicated in Israel's regime of apartheid and settler-colonialism. The UN database of companies and banks that are complicit in Israel's illegal settlement enterprise in the occupied Palestinian territory, while incomplete, provides a good starting point. Boycotting American and European products, banks and companies, like Chase Manhattan, Caterpillar Tractors, Estee Lauder, Barclays and Elbit Systems UK, will pressurise that administration and corporate business to end such strategic support for Israel, as the USA's 3.8 billion dollars annual blood money of military hardware and aid – togeth-

er with its diplomatic protection and the emasculation of United Nations resolutions which if implemented could shake Israel's intransigence to the core. It is a crime against humanity to allow Israel to continue to crush Palestinian lives. The world must place the USA in the dock alongside Israel, an Apartheid state. We accuse the Western cohort nation states with the same crime of complicity.

South Africans, along with international humanity, raise the battle cry Mayihlome in solidarity with the Palestinian people's just resistance – our anger rises for the battle. There can be no neutrality in the fight for freedom and justice. A people united will never be defeated. Palestine will be free from the river to the sea – for all who live there in peace, equality and security.

**Ronnie Kasrils** is former South African Intelligence Minister.

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely that of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy and position of the African National Congress.*





# Gaza air strikes: Life lacking a sense of safety

■ By *Dr Yasser Abu Jamei*

**A**FTER Saturday's bombing raids in the heart of Gaza City killing at least 43 people including 10 children and 16 women, Gazans are once again struggling with traumatic memories. The atrocities that are happening now bring memories. Israeli planes have shattered our families so many terrifying and memorable times for decades. For instance, over and over again for three weeks during Cast Lead in December 2008 and January 2009; seven weeks in July and August 2014.

Collapsed buildings' blocks and gaping holes in Alwehdah Street where there was normal life a week ago are traumatic sights, triggering memories of those earlier atrocities.

Today there are hundreds of injured people to be cared for in our crowded hospitals which are desperately short of many supplies because of the years of Israeli siege. Huge efforts are ongoing by the community to search for people under the wreckage of the buildings.

Among the people who were killed: Dr Moen Al-Aloul, a retired psychi-

atrist who treated thousands of Gazans at the Ministry of Health; Mrs Raja' Abu-Alouf a devoted psychologist who was killed together with her husband and children; Dr Ayman Abu Al-Ouf, with his wife and two children, an internal medicine consultant who was leading the team treating patients with COVID-19 at Shifa hospital.

Memories of every previous trauma are impossible to forget because all of us in Gaza always live lacking a sense of safety. The Israeli drones have never left the sky over us between 2014 and 2021. Shelling continued to happen during random nights. Although the shelling was infrequent, it was enough every time to remind us all of what we have been exposed to and will be again.

The weekend's attack took place without any warning. It's yet another massacre. Just an evening earlier ten people were killed including eight children and two women. One family of seven was wiped out except for just the father and a three month old baby. The father lived because he was not at home, and the baby was saved after being found under the wreckage, protected by his mother's body.

These are not new scenes for Gazans, unfortunately. This is something that keeps happening throughout these offensives. During the 2014 offensive it was reported that 80 families were killed with no one left alive, just removing them from the records. In 2014 in one single attack, Israel destroyed a three story building that belong to my extended family, killing 27 people including 17 children and three pregnant women. Four families were simply not there anymore. A father, and a four year old son were the only survivors.

Now the news and fears of a possible land invasion are overwhelming us with yet other devastating memories as we confront each new horror.

One barbaric attack has included 160 jetfighters attacking for over 40 minutes in the very northern areas of the Gaza Strip, accompanied by artillery shelling (500 shells) that hit the eastern side of Gaza City and northern areas. Many houses were destroyed, though most of the people were able to escape from their homes. It is estimated that as many as 40,000 people have headed yet



again to UNRWA schools or to relatives, seeking shelter.

To most Gazans, this is a reminder of the first attack in 2008. It was Saturday 11.22 am when 60 jet-fighters started bombing the Gaza Strip terrorizing everyone. At that moment, most school children were in the streets either returning from the morning shift or going to the afternoon shift. While children started running, terrified, in the streets, their parents at home were distraught not knowing what had happened to their children.

Families being displaced now is a painful reminder of the huge displacement of 2014 when 500,000 people were internally displaced. And when the ceasefire came, 108,000 could not return to their destroyed homes.

People have now to deal with triggers to all these previous traumatic events, and more. This makes natural healing processes more complicated and in some cases it causes a relapse of symptoms. We always try to explain that Gazans are not in a post-traumatic condition, but in an ongoing condition that needs deeper attention.

This needs the right intervention. It is not clinical, but moral and political intervention. An intervention from the outside world. An inter-

vention that ends the root of the problem. One that ends the occupation, and gives us our human right to a normal family life rooted in the feeling of safety no child or family in Gaza knows.

Many people in our community have been calling us in the clinic from day one. Some were people working in hospitals, or in the NGO sector. Some appealed through our Facebook page asking about GCMHP services as they see traumatized people on every side, and feel a desperate need for our services.

Our staff are part of the community. Some of them had to leave their homes. They need to feel safety and be secure in order to help others. But still, without that safety they are still devoted to the organization and to the community. They feel a great responsibility for their vital role supporting the psychological wellbeing of Gazans. They

are totally and tirelessly available.

Over the weekend we made public the mobile numbers of most of our technical staff. On Sunday our toll free line resumed operating, and from 8 am to 8 pm it will be ringing these days. Our FB page started to raise awareness for parents on how to help deal with children and stress. It is true that we have not had the chance to prepare new material, but our library is a very rich one with our products and it's time to harvest the wisdom and support in our YouTube library. Perhaps this is not our best intervention, but definitely it is the most that we can do in these circumstances to provide Gazans with strength and skills in coping inside their terrified families.

As of Sunday evening, 197 people have already been killed, including 58 children, 34 women, 15 elderly people and 1,235 are injured. As a psychiatrist I can say that the invisible psychological toll on everyone from the youngest to the oldest is acute – from fear and stress.

It is a moral imperative for the world to look straight at us, see us, and commit to intervention to save Gazans' valuable creative lives by giving them the sense of safety every human needs.

**Dr Abu Jamei** is Director General of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme





# Dr TT Cholo – Contribution of **women** and **youth** must be **enhanced**, especially on issues of **governance**

■ By *Shalate Davhana and Malesela Maubane*

**G**LOBALLY, women's role in society include being a wife, mother, organiser, administrator, educator, economist and health officer among others. During an apartheid South Africa, the African majority were subjected to inferior education or limited access to quality education whilst Black women suffered double-fold in terms of education, social and economic rights.

Female spouses of political activists were subjected to further exploitation through abuse of power from the apartheid government. Though some were activists in their own right, involvement of their husbands in Black emancipation politics exacerbated the situation. One such heroine is Mme Mmaphuti Alinah Cholo, the late wife of struggle stalwart, Dr Tlou Theophilus Cholo. As a 19-year greenhorn, her husband had in 1945 left his home in Mmakala village in Ga-Matlala a Thaba, in Limpopo in search of job opportunities in Johannesburg. He would later in the late 1950s, as he built a family, reside in Wallmansthal, north of Pretoria.

The Cholo family and other African residents of Wallmansthal were in the 1960s forcibly removed to



*Comrade TT Cholo*

Soshanguve, where the struggle stalwart and labour activist is currently residing.

Mme Cholo was often referred to as the 'Winnie Mandela of Wallmansthal' and in this regard Ntate Cholo evidently did not box her in. She was a resilient woman, in the mould of other women from the north who are now late, such as social and political activist, Mme Charlotte Makgomo Maxeke (née Mannya) and acting chieftainess of Ga-Matlala in the 1950s, Mme

Makwena Matlala.

Mme Cholo, who passed on in 2011, was evidently Dr TT Cholo's pillar of strength and partner in the struggle for freedom, as she continued fighting for the land in Wallmansthal even when the former uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) combatant was incarcerated on Robben Island. The two love-birds met in 1957 when a younger Mme Cholo was visiting her aunt at her workplace in the well-heeled suburb of Saxonwold, Johannesburg.



Coincidentally, she was once a teacher at Ntate Cholo's alma mater, Lennes Primary School in Mmakala village. Mme Cholo was in 1961 relieved from her duties as a teacher at the school, seemingly because of her husband's political activities, though the official reason given was that her space will be given to someone young and unemployed as her husband had a job.

In light of the escalating gender-based violence (GBV) and youth unemployment, the nonagenarian lists women and youth empowerment as some of the issues that need urgent attention. As one looks back to a segregated South Africa once again, spouses of political activists had to bear the brunt of brutality from security forces and yet still face disdain from neighbours, as was the case with the late wife of the Ga-Matlala a Thaba born struggle icon. Like many spouses of liberation proponents, Mme Cholo faced enormous distress whilst living under the spotlight for marrying a 'terrorist' as labelled by some in the Wallmansthal community.

Ntate Cholo's view on the need to urgently attend to women and youth empowerment is aligned to aspiration number six of African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 "An

AU Agenda 2063 - ASPIRATION NO. 6:

**"An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children."**

*Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children."*

The struggle stalwart currently resides in Block K, Soshanguve in the north of Pretoria. Notably, as you drive into the township, you are likely to drive on Ruth First Road, which is named after the late activist, journalist and academic, Ruth Heloise First. Another notable factor is that both First and Dr Cholo share South African Communist Party background. The 95-year old Cholo was further exposed to communism during his days as an MK soldier, wherein he underwent military training and trade unionism in Moscow in the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

and China.

Cholo dedicated his life to the freedom of the South African majority, which also meant giving up his late youth years and adult life to the struggle for emancipation. An advocate for fee-free education, the veteran is rightfully encouraging the youth to grab available opportunities to pursue education in order to build a prosperous South Africa.

It is worrying that, according to facts and figures in terms of the United Nation (UN) Sustainable Development Goal number 5, "Globally, women are just 13 percent of agricultural land holders". On the flipside, that "More than 100 have taken action to track budget allocations for gender equality", is an encouraging development which Ntate TT Cholo will surely welcome.

Dr TT Cholo was in 2018 conferred an honorary doctorate in public management for a lifetime dedicated to the fight for justice and social accountability by the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT).

**Davhana and Maubane** are Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) alumni and residents of Gauteng and Limpopo, Dr TT Cholo's province of current residence and birth respectively.





# The renewal project of the ANC must encapsulate nipping **political clientelism** in the bud

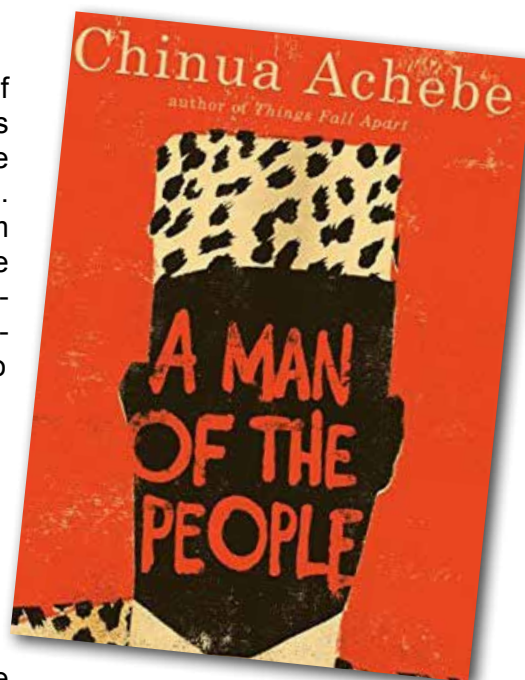
■ By Sello Tatai

**T**HE political literature of Africa's independence is awash with many case studies of malfeasance. This administrative conundrum has had an adverse impact on the socio-political and economic stability of many post-colonial countries. This has often resulted into civil wars, genocides, famine and human rights abuses.

Chinua Achebe in his much-celebrated novel, *A Man of the People*, augments this narrative through a dubious character named Chief Nanga whom after independence becomes the Minister of Culture.

His primary responsibility is to become a custodian of the country's traditions and culture instead he uses his political power to only serve himself, his pals and some in his constituency.

He further uses his wealth to bribe law enforcement agencies and other officials in an attempt to amass more political power and enrich himself as well as his family. He also preys on vulnerable



young women determined to overcome the post-colonial mirage.

South Africa's post-Apartheid discourse mirrors a similar narrative and over the past few years provincial governments and municipalities have fallen prey to political clientelism. In its watershed Conference of 2017, the African National Congress committed to the renewal of the organisation.

This as a consequence of cronyism, patronage and critically clien-

telism which have engulfed the organisation since at least the 2007 Polokwane Conference.

This has had a detrimental impact on the smooth running of government and in particular the country's municipalities where the poor and economically disenfranchised reside.

In the North West the appalling state of municipalities has left many residents disgruntled.

Some maintain the ANC is vindicating those who are still clamouring for the Bophuthatswana Administration. They allege a flourishing infrastructure which was inherited from Mangope's government has been left to decay leaving hundreds of communities in a state of paralysis akin to many failed post-colonial democracies.

Under the banner of Khawuleza, an initiative by the ANC to expedite service delivery, the governing party maintains its members in public office need to be agents of change.

### Delegates at the 54th National Conference



High on the agenda is to put emphasis on ethical leadership, fight corruption in all its forms, and to speed up the delivery of services with the sole purpose of improving the lives of South Africans.

While these intentions are noble and are aimed at putting the ANC in the right political trajectory, the diagnosis seems to be wrong. Issues ranging from corruption, mal-administration, fraud and patronage are variables of a broader malice which is political clientelism.

**Political clientelism** can be defined as a **reciprocal relationship which provides political support** in exchange for granting access to state resources. This practice relies on the use of state resources to provide jobs and services for mass political support as access is in most instances conditioned on subordination, compliance and dependence on the goodwill of power brokers who have the money.

As the governing party gears itself towards this year's local government elections the ANC must guard against the processes designed to nominate councillors

being hijacked by political- and tenderpreneurs.

The country's municipalities are currently riddled with councillors who first and foremost pledge their allegiance to business people who funded their campaigns and later their political bishops who have assisted them manipulate nomination and list processes.

Tenderpreneurs would later be rewarded with lucrative tenders while political bishops would be granted support with money accrued from state projects.

In the process service delivery is

compromised due to shoddy work. As accountability fails to trickle down violent service delivery protests become the order of the day.

This is not far from how Chief Nanga was toppled. And as the masses turned their backs on him the post-colonial state was thrown into a state of disarray and consequently a civil war.

*Sello Tatai is an activist. He writes in his personal capacity.*

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely that of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy and position of the African National Congress.*



Delegates at the 54th National Conference





# Economy forecast 2021

■ By *Ulrich Joubert*

## INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Indications are that the world economy will show a healthy recovery from the negative growth – due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – in 2020. Last year all mentionable economies showed negative growth, with the exception of China and Turkey which showed positive growth of 2.3% and 1.8% respectively. Latest information indicates negative growth of 3.6% in 2020 for the world economy.

The developed economies were hardest hit with negative growth of 5%, while developing economies – which includes China – showed negative growth of only 1.5%.

If China is taken out of the developing economies' equation, devel-

oping economies showed negative growth of 4.6%.

Forecasts for 2021 indicate a recovery in all mentionable economies. Forecasts indicate US real growth of more than 6%, less than 6% in Western Europe, Germany less than 5%, United Kingdom less than 7%, Japan just more than 4%. Chinese growth of more than 9% is forecast, although the Chinese government indicated it aims for only 6%. India is forecast to show growth of more than 13% in 2021.

Positive real growth for the world economy is based upon mainly four assumptions:

- Given the negative growth recorded in 2020, even a modest turnaround is likely to show a

good performance in 2021.

- It is assumed that a large portion of the world population will be vaccinated against the Covid-19 virus by the middle of the year, diminishing the risk of a recurrence of the pandemic.
- Growth is stimulated by large fiscal packages – especially in the US.
- Central banks continue to stimulate growth by pumping large amounts of liquidity into the financial system while keeping official interest rates in many cases at record low levels. In the USA, the Federal Reserve Board (the Fed), indicated that official interest rates will be kept at current low levels until 2023. Short-term interest rates in Western Europe, the UK

and Japan are likely to stay at current low levels for the same duration.

The Fed forecasts inflation to remain subdued while employment improves only slowly in the period until 2023. Low inflation and modest improvement of employment is also foreseen in Western Europe, the UK and Japan.

Given the improved outlook for the world and especially the Chinese economy, mining commodities showed a healthy recovery since the beginning of 2021. Oil prices also rose sharply since the beginning of 2021.

It finds support from the anticipated stronger demand from road traffic, but also from the decision by OPEC and Russia not to increase their oil production in the foreseeable future. The higher oil price could, however, encourage US oil producers to increase production. In the meantime, wind and solar energy increases.

For the time being, the worldwide tourism industry is in the doldrums and is only expected to improve once large percentages of populations have been vaccinated and tourists feel comfortable to travel internationally and locally.

As international long-term interest rates rose sharply in February/March, the gold price weakened. The Fed expects inflation to remain under control in the rest of the year, while they would tolerate some periods when inflation exceeded the 2% target.

Long-term interest rates have risen quite sharply since the beginning of 2021. This rise reflected the expected strong recovery of the US economy which could lead to inflation rising faster than earlier forecasts. In February, US



inflation rose by 1.7% year-on-year, which was the highest in the past 12 months, but less than the 2% targeted rate. The sharp rise in international oil and food prices could be reflected in higher inflation rates in the second half of the year.

The overall impression of the world economy is one of a relatively positive economic recovery, while inflation and international interest rates remain at subdued levels for quite some time.

### DOMESTIC ECONOMY

According to figures published by Statistics SA, the domestic economy showed negative growth of 7% in 2020. This reflected the impact the invisible virus had on the population and the ensuing lockdown of the economy. During 2020, lockdowns varied in intensity, but the five-week complete shutdown of the economy resulted in a very deep recession in the second quarter. As the lockdowns eased, the economy showed a strong recovery in the third quarter. This recovery subsided somewhat in the fourth quarter – the important holiday season in South Africa – as the lockdown intensified due to a sharp rise in infections.

The level three lockdown contin-

ued into the first quarter of 2021 with negative economic growth implications. Fortunately, the lockdown eased to level one at the beginning of March. The risk still exists that infections could rise again later in the year, leading to stricter lockdowns and negative implications for the anticipated economic recovery. Most forecasts, however, indicate a positive growth rate of approximately 3% in 2021.

The domestic economy will benefit from:

- The forecast recovery of the world economy;
- The resultant stronger demand and higher prices for commodities;
- The fiscal and monetary stimulus in the domestic economy;
- Current low interest rates which are unlikely to rise before 2023;
- The assumption that successful vaccinations will prevent further lockdowns and result in lifting of current restrictions on economic activities.

The deep recession of 2020 had various implications. Firstly, the trade surplus improved substantially in 2020 to R270.6-billion compared to the R23.7-billion surplus in 2019 as imports declined



by 11.8% while exports rose by 7.8%. Given this trade surplus the current account of the balance of payments showed a surplus of R108-billion in 2020, compared with a deficit of R153-billion in 2019. Given the forecast recovery of the domestic economy, it is expected that imports will rise strongly in 2021. To a certain extent this will be offset by a further improvement of exports, given the forecast recovery of the world economy as well as commodity volumes and prices. However, it is anticipated that the trade account as well as the current account of the balance of payments could show much smaller surpluses or even some deficits in 2021. Any future deficit will have to be financed by the inflow of mostly short-term foreign capital.

The negative growth of 2020 resulted in a further deterioration of employment and unemployment rising to 32.5% in the fourth quarter of 2020. Given the financial distress that many companies, and especially small and medium sized companies experience, it is expected that unemployment will rise even further in 2021. The high unemployment rate indicates that crime and social disorder could increase in coming months.

The poor performance of the domestic economy, as well as the decline in international oil prices, brought about a healthy decline of the inflation rate.

The average inflation rate was 3.3% in 2020 which is lower than the Reserve Bank's target rate of 4.5%. The current sharp rise of international oil and international and local food prices, the recovery of the economy, all indicate that inflation will rise in 2021, but will remain on average below the target rate of the central bank.

The expected modest economic recovery, the relatively low inflation rate as well as the unacceptable unemployment rate, indicate that local short-term interest rates could stay at current low levels until even 2023. Given international trends as well as the large financing needs of the public sector, local long-term interest rates could however rise in coming months and years.

The biggest problem South Africa faces is the large central government budget deficit and the rising trend of government debt as a percentage of the total economy. The expected budget deficit in the financial year 2020/21 of 14% is much higher than the accepted international norm of 3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It is assumed that government revenue will improve in the 2021/22 financial year, while expenditure will be managed very carefully.

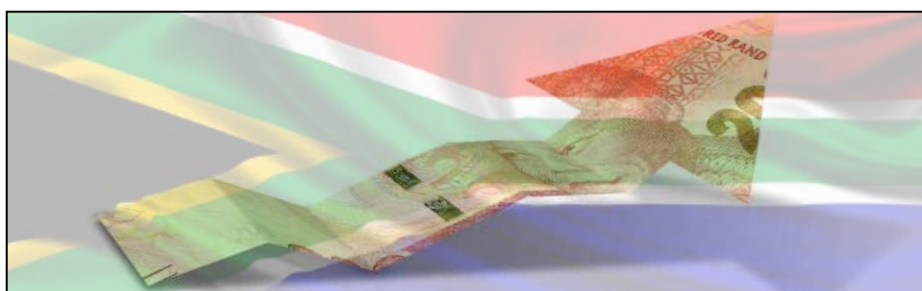
This should enable government to cut the budget deficit to less than 10% of GDP in the next fiscal year. A large portion of bringing down the deficit, will depend on the success of freezing government employees' salaries and wages – not only in the current financial year, but also in subsequent years. Hopefully the effort to control the budget deficit will also limit the rise of government debt as a percentage of the GDP to less than 95%. Government finances remain a serious concern and needs the serious attention of all role players. Some of the biggest headaches

are however the dire financial situation of state-owned enterprises, like Eskom, Transnet, SABC, the Post Office, Denel as well as the large percentage of local authorities which are actually bankrupt with no indication of a turnaround in these financial situations in the foreseeable future.

The dire financial situation of municipalities and state-owned enterprises remains a very serious problem as these authorities and institutions must provide an environment where businesses can do profitable business and employ people. If this is not the case, unemployment as well as social grant payments will continue rising further, leading to intensified financial and social problems in coming years.

If there are no clear indications that government is very serious in bringing government finances under control it is likely that South Africa could face further credit downgrades in the second half of 2021. This will increase the cost of borrowing in international markets and could once again weaken the rand. Currently the rand still finds support from the well-developed local financial system as well as the high level of local interest rates compared to most international interest rates, but is likely to weaken in the longer term against all major currencies.

*This article was first published in **Business Update Number 20.***



22–28 May 2021

Sources: SA History Online and O'Malley Archives

## ■ 22 May 1942 ANC Intellectual and Veteran, Pallo Jordan born



Zweledinga Pallo Jordan, ANC leader, intellectual and veteran was born in B Location, Kroonstad, Orange Free State. He is the son to Professor Archibald Campbell Jordan, an African novelist, linguist and academic and his mother, Dr Priscilla Phyllis Jordan, was a teacher, researcher and lecturer. He became politically active in the early 1960s, first in the Non-European Unity Movement, and later in the ANC. In exile, he worked in ANC offices in London and various African states. He also served as administrative secretary of the NEC Secretariat (1985–1988), on the NEC's Strategy and Tactics Committee as convenor (1985–1989), on the NEC's sub-committee on negotiations and the NEC's sub-committee on Constitutional Guidelines, and as the Director of Information and Publicity (1989). After 1990 unbanning, he served in various positions within the ANC, including in the Department of Information and Publicity, the ANC Elections Committee and as

member of the ANC National Executive Committee. From 1994, cde Pallo served as Member of Parliament, as the first Minister of Post, Tele-communications and Broadcasting (1994–1996), as Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (1996–1999), and Minister of Arts and Culture (2004–2009). An ardent patriot and intellectual, he continues to contribute to debates in the movement and the country, edited *Oliver Tambo Remembered* (2007) on the life of the ANC President in exile; and is the author of *Letters to my Comrades. Interventions & Excursions* (2017)

## ■ 22 May 1945 SA Bureau of Standards established

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) is established by an Act of Parliament. The SABS is responsible for quality control and safety of all products, and issue regulations and standards, running a product certification scheme and also provides testing and related services.

## ■ 22 May 1970 Campaign against all-white sports teams



The anti-apartheid movement called for a cancellation of the all-White rugby South African team that was due to tour the UK. Veteran anti-apartheid campaigner Peter Hain led a campaign called *Stop the Seventy Tour*. The campaign threatened to disrupt any matches played during the tour. African and Asian countries also threatened to boycott the Commonwealth Games that would be held in Edinburgh in the same year should the South African team be allowed to be a part of that tour. In May 1970, the British government requested that the English Cricket Council reverse its decision to invite the South African cricket team on tour. The English Cricket Council withdrew the invitation on 22 May 1970.

## ■ 23 May 1699 Sheikh Yusuf, father of SA Islamic Faith passed on

In the late 1600s many Muslim men of wealth and influence were banished to the Cape from their homeland in the East because the Dutch feared them as a threat to their hegemony. Shaykh (Sheikh) Yusuf of Macassar is the best known of the Orang Cayen from Sumatra. Shaykh Yusuf ['Abidin Tadia Tjoessoep] was born in 1626 of noble birth in Gowa in the East Indies. He fought alongside and supported Sultan Ajung of Bantam, Gowa, in his war against the Dutch. Sheikh Yusuf was banished, along with his family and followers, first to Castle in Colombo, Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] and later to the Cape of Good Hope ten years after his initial surrender. The Sheikh arrived on board 'De Voetboog' on April 02, 1694 along



with his entourage of 49 which included his two wives [Carecontoe and Carepane], two slave girls [Mu'minah and Na'imah], 12 children, 12 imams [religious leaders] and several friends with their families. They were moved to a farm in Zandvleit on June 14, 1694 as a means to isolate him, but Zandvleit became a rallying point for 'fugitive' slaves and other exiles from the East. It was here that the first cohesive Muslim community in South Africa was established. Since many of the Sheikh's followers hailed from Macassar, the district around Zandvleit is still known today as Macassar. Sheikh Yusuf is regarded, by many, as the founder of the Islamic faith in the Cape. He died in Zandvliet on 23 May 1699. His *Kramat* (grave) has been a place of pilgrimage ever since.

### ■ 23 May 1994 South Africa admitted to the OAU



After the first fully democratic elections, South Africa was officially admitted as 53rd member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) at a summit, held in Tunis, Tunisia. The South Africa delega-

tion was led by the Foreign Affairs Minister Alfred Nzo, who was applauded after membership was authorised at an OAU Council of Ministers meeting. After joining the OAU, South Africa participated actively in all activities and structures, such as the Secretariat, the Centre for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the Central Organ, the Council of Ministers and the Annual Summit.

### ■ 24 May 1973 South Africa to start Uranium enrichment project

South African Prime Minister, BJ Vorster disclosed in July 1970 in the House of Assembly that the government has decided to make funds available for a uranium enrichment programme. Uranium was used to manufacture nuclear weapons by the South Africa government.

### ■ 25 May 1963 OAU formed in Addis Ababa



The Pan African movement, born out of the early 19th century anti-colonial and anti-slavery movements, debated approaches to African unity after colonialism, in the context of more and more countries gaining independence. Two strands emerged, the Casablanca group of countries advocated for the immediate unity of the African continent (along the line of a

## OTHER MAY BIRTHDAYS

■ **23 May 1926**  
**Joe Slovo, SACP General Secretary, Umkhonto we Sizwe and ANC leader**



■ **23 May 1939**  
**Evelyn Dalberg, Opera diva**

■ **23 May 1943**  
**Rejoyce Mabudafasi, UDF Northern Transvaal Secretary, FEDTRAW and NECC organisers, ANC NEC member, and former Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism**



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

united states of Africa), whilst the Monrovia group of countries called for a more gradual approach. Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie convened a conference of both groups, and this Pan African conference of independent African states (and anti-colonial and national liberation movements) met in Addis Ababa, and on 25 May signed the Charter which gave life to the Organisation of African Unity Charter (OAU). The Charter was signed by thirty-two (32) independent states. The OAU regarded as its *raison d'être* to support the remaining countries still under colonialism and apartheid, mainly in east and southern Africa, through the liberation committee. In July 2002, the OAU was transformed into the African Union in Durban, with the adoption of its Constitution Act. 25 May is celebrated across the country as Africa Day.

### ■ 25 May 1986 Witdoeke attacks Crossroads



The Cape Town City Council, after years of trying to move informal settlements of Crossroads near the Cape Town Airport to Khayelitsha, eventually succeeded when on this day the so-called Witdoeke, a third force group attacked residents of Crossroads, leaving over 6,000 homeless.

### ■ 25 May 1994 Term Apartheid used for first time

Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd,

used the word Apartheid for the first time in Parliament to refer to his government's policy of separate development and white privilege and domination. The word apartheid became part of a global lexicon.

### ■ 26 May 1989 Uppington 14 sentenced to death



On this day, fourteen of 26 accused – also known as the Uppington 14 – were handed the death sentence by Justice J. Basson for the murder of Lucas Tshenolo Sethwala, a police constable who fired at demonstrators attacking his home with stones on 13 November 1985. The rest of the accused, the largest group ever to be convicted of murder in a single SA trial, received sentences ranging from six to eight years imprisonment and another six defendants were sentenced to community service. The group were all convicted on the basis of the “common purpose” principle, “a legal doctrine that imputes criminal liability on the participants involved in criminal activity for all that results from such activity.” Campaigns for the release of the Uppington 26, especially the fourteen on death row, amongst them one woman (Theresa Ramashamola) were conducted across the world and in South Africa.

### ■ 26 May 2003 Sibusiso Vilane conquers Mount Everest summit

Sibusiso Vilane, a game ranger with dual South African and Swazi nationality reaches the summit of

Mount Everest, where he plants a South African flag. 32-year-old Vilane is the first Black South African to successfully ascend Everest.

### ■ 27 May 2007 International Cricket Council President Percy Sonn passed on

International Cricket Council president Percy Sonn (57) passed on in a Cape Town hospital. An anti-apartheid campaigner for non-racial sports, after 1994 he served as vice-president on the South African Cricket Board and was president of the new United Cricket Board of South Africa for three years until 2003.

### ■ 27 May 2016 Lulu Dube passed on



The youngest daughter of former ANC President John Langalibalele Dube passed away in Durban at the age of 84 years. Lulu Joan Dube was born in Inanda Durban in 1931 and was the last surviving daughter of the John and Angelina Dube. She is well known for the community leadership role she played in her home town. She was described as a humble servant, community leader and a freedom fighter. Lulu Dube, also known as Mama Lulu



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

is survived by three daughters, two sons, thirteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren. She was buried alongside her parents, John and Angelina Dube at the Ohlange Institute in Durban.

### ■ 28 May 1913 Waihoek Women mass protest



Black women from Bloemfontein started a mass protest against pass laws, meeting in the settlement of Waihoek and marching into the city centre. The following day they managed to meet the Mayor of Bloemfontein, Ivan Haaburgen, who told them local authorities have no choice but to implement the pass laws. The women then marched to the police station, where they burn their passes. 80 women were arrested in this peaceful protest action.

### ■ 28 May 1984 Linguist Ernest Sedumedi Moloto passed on

Linguist, educationist and teacher, Ernest Sedumedi Moloto, who served as chair of both the Tswana Language Committee of South Africa and the Botswana National Language Committee, passed away in Mamelodi, Pretoria. He was buried at Moruleng, Rustenburg on 10 June 1984. Moloto was Ellen Kuzwayo's first husband.

### ■ 28 May 1991 Mengistu regime fall

Ethiopians People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), the current ruling party of Ethiopia, captured the capital Addis Ababa, overthrowing the Derg regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, in power since 1977 when he overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie. The EPRDF was led by the Meles Zinawi, who became Ethiopian Prime Minister until his death in 2012. Zinawi waged a successful rebel war against the forces of Mengistu and his appointment marked

the end of years of civil war in the country. 28 May is also celebrated as Ethiopia's National Day.



## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

22–28 May 2021

Source: <https://www.un.org> and <http://www.dirco.gov.za/events>

### ■ 22 May International Biodiversity Day

The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and promoting biodiversity. The theme for 2021 is *"We're part of the Solution. #For Nature"*

### ■ 23 May International Day to end Obstetric Fistula

Obstetric fistula is one of the most serious and tragic childbirth injuries.

A hole between the birth canal and bladder and/or rectum, it is caused by prolonged, obstructed labour without access to timely, high-quality medical treatment. It leaves women with incontinence

problems, and often leads to chronic medical problems, depression, social isolation and deepening poverty. This problem is preventable with the correct medical assistance and its occurrence is a violation of human rights and a reminder of gross inequities. *"Women's rights are human rights! End fistula now!"*

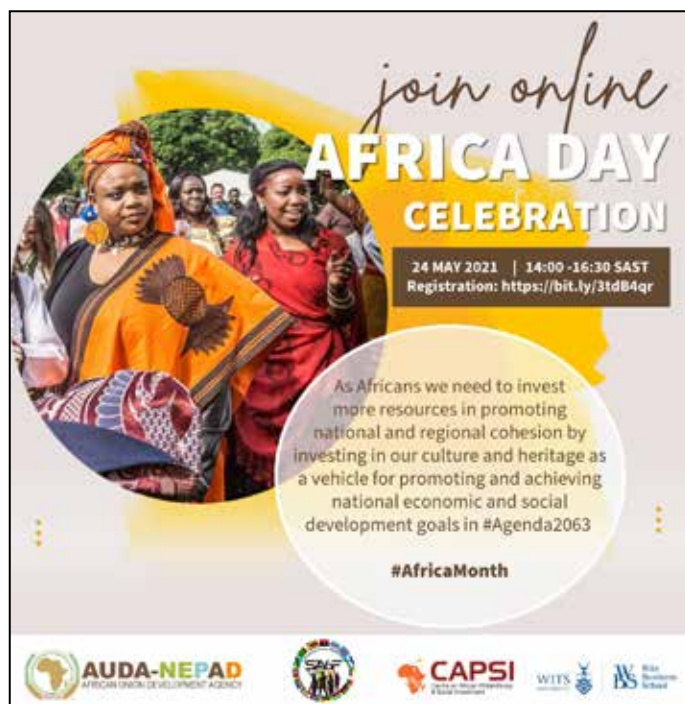


## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### ■ 25 May

#### Africa Day

This year marks 58 years since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa on 25 May 1963. The continental union played a major role in supporting struggles against colonialization and apartheid, and for the self-determination of the African continent. The OAU in 2002 transformed into the African Union, with its overarching objective of building an Africa that is peaceful, integrated, democratic and prosperous, and take its rightful place in the world. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU in 2013, the continent resolved and committed towards a vision for the next 50 years, **Agenda 2063. The Africa We Want**. The theme for Africa Day 2021 is: *“Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa we Want”*.



### ■ 25-31 May

#### International Week of Solidarity with Non-Self-governing Territories

The UN Charter defines a ‘non-self-governing’ territory as a territory “whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government.” In many of these territories, the UN Declaration on Decolonization of 1960 apply, and there is a UN list of such places. In Africa, Western Sahara is still on this list, and we must therefore during this week reaffirm our solidarity with the Saharawi people, and their right to self-determination.







# THE AFRICA FACT BOOK. BUSTING THE MYTHS

The Africa Fact Book, edited by Baffour Ankomah

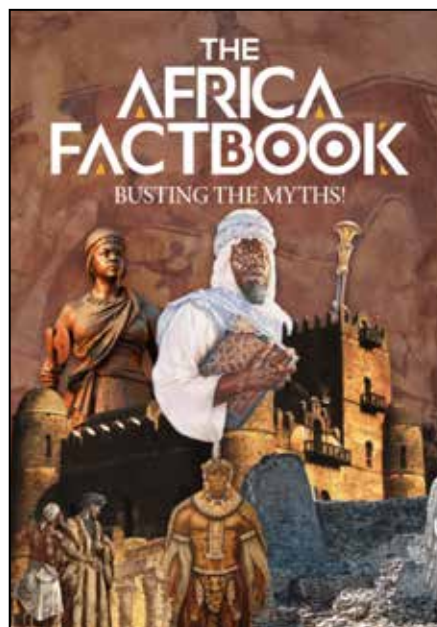
(2020. Book of African Records in partnership with the African Union Commission)

**“F**OR six centuries, the people of European descent have spoken and written about Africa and for Africa in ways that have been detrimental to us. They told us that our ancestors added nothing to civilisation because they weren’t civilised, yet their museums are filled with stolen treasures from all over Africa made in the image and likeness of our African ancestors..”, so reads the blurb about **The Africa Fact Book** on the African Union website.

It is a timely publication, as the African continent celebrates Africa Day on 25 May, under the AU theme for 2021: “Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building an African We Want”. We all know about other Factbooks, travelogues, history and other books, which presented information about the continent with a particular perspective.

**The Africa Fact Book** in its founding edition seeks to ‘bust these myths’. The hefty edition is divided into four parts:

**Section A** with seventeen chapters, tackles some of the key myths about the continent, including chapters on pre-colonial history and civilisations, Egypt and Africa, our links to world religions,



how Africa developed Europe and the quaintly named chapter, ‘the gods are not crazy’ and subtitled ‘The Khoisan are not Bushmen, they are the first Africans’!

**Section B** has country profiles and fast facts about Africa’s 55 nations, including geography, physical features, climate, people and society, health, education, languages, government, economy, agriculture, heritage and tourism, energy profile, communications, transport, military, mining, international affairs, arts and culture and sport.

So you’ll learn that Algeria has

a Strawberry Festival, that Cabo Verde means “green cape” in Portuguese, that the environmental challenges faced by Central African Republic includes deforestation, desertification and wildlife depletion, and that like most other countries, football is Uganda’s national sport, but also boxing.

The much shorter **Sections C** and **D** explore African inventions, journeys, pioneers, discoveries, innovations, writing systems, and the African Diaspora, with only two chapters each, which wets the appetite for more.

Apart from really interesting history, perspectives and facts, the book is beautifully illustrated with pictures and maps that show the diversity and rich history of the cradle of humanity.

The **Epilogue** by Prof Simbi Veke Mubako, amongst the key drivers of the project sums up **The Africa Fact Book**: “as a whole, reading the preceding pages must have felt like the greatest journey one could ever take. The cinematic landscape of African history, if converted into film, would probably bring a movie needing the combined strength and creativity of Hollywood, Nollywood and Bollywood.” A fitting read during Africa month indeed.

# #AfricaMonth **AFRICAN MUSIC**

**ACROSS**

3. Genre which hails from South Africa.
8. Won Grammy award four times, from Benin.
10. Songwriter and music star from Mali, blending mande, jazz, rhythm and blues.
11. Music of the brain from Dar es Salaam.
12. Cabo Verdean artist with new twist to kizombo.
13. West African musicians campaigning for gender equality.
16. He made Senegalese music genre mbalax famous.
17. Afridelic with love from Cameroon

**DOWN**

1. Nigerian legend of Afrobeat.
2. Musical instrument of the Luo people of Kenya, used in Benga music.
4. Father of Ethio-Jazz.
5. Mama Afrika, 9 passports and honorary citizenship in 10 countries.
6. Music genre originating in DRC, stems from rumba.
7. Music from Zimbabwean liberation struggle.
9. Ethnopop from the Sahara desert.
14. Famed drummers of Burundi.
15. Pressure drum associated with Yoruba, Nigeria.

**WORD BANK**

Soukous

Youssou N'Dour

Inkiranya

Manu Dibango

Miriam Makes

Les Amazones D'Afrique

Gwana

Nyatiti

Salif Keita

Angélique Kidjo

Fela Kuti

Mbaqanga

Dundun

Mulatu Astatke

Soraia Ramos

Ubongo

Chimarenga