



Strengthening the Organization, and to build an All-Round Activist

Approach to defectors who want to rejoin our ranks

A Northern Cape sponsored draft resolution paper

1. Introduction:

The African National Congress is built on a strong foundation of Unity that forms the backbone of this giant Organization. This is not just ordinary unity; it is the unity of purpose of the movement that found practical expression through many years. There are various elements which led to the formation and ultimate birth of the ANC in 1912, (then called the South African Native National Congress – SANNC).

There are two outstanding rudimentary reasons that ultimately motivated the founders of the ANC to form this liberation movement. Firstly, the land dispossession by the European colonizers, that subjected our indigenous society to exploitation and oppression. As a result of this, our people fought in different and separated wars of resistance against the imperialist colonialist, largely from the Netherlands (the Dutch) and the British settlers who arrived in 1652 and 1820 respectively. The last war which called for a review and refocus was the **battle of Bambatha in 1906** it took place in Natal (presently known as Kwa-Zulu Natal); the British settlers brutally and cold bloodedly murdered our African people.

Secondly, is the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 whereby the Dutch and the British formally formed an alliance with the White Afrikaners and some few Whites to establish a 'quasi government' that excluded the African majority? This became the last straw for the African people to succumb to the brutal, unjust system of apartheid and colonial dispossession.

This moment and situation created a platform and space for the African peasantry leadership to come together, they mobilized our communities and the broad society to unite against exploitation, oppression and economic exclusion from their own mother land. Amongst the leadership which rose in defense our masses and country were Reverend Langalibalile Dube, Tshekisho Plaatje, Pixley Ka Seme and many more others. This leadership came to the

conclusion that our people's major weakness was that the different tribes fought the wars of resistance along their tribal lines, which divided the entire African nation, to the advantage of the colonizers.

In 1911 comrade Pixley Ka Seme made a clarion call, calling on all Africans to unite and fight for their freedom and independence. Aggressive mobilization and canvassing was made which culminated into the formation of the ANC on the 08th January 1912. Unity in action is and has always been an important attribute and fundamental element in the ANC.

The ANC is the oldest liberation movement in our African continent. For 100 years it has sought to unite the African people. It fought against the efforts of the colonial and apartheid governments to divide the majority based on different languages and cultures. For 100 years, the ANC has fought to unite black people (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) into a single formation of the oppressed. For 100 years, the ANC has led the struggle for a creation of a united, non-racial, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

This struggle to liberate black people in general and African people in particular came into being in response to the subjection of our people in the context of discrimination based on race, gender and class. The claims of our people are summarised in the demands of the Freedom Charter. The National Democratic Revolution is the struggle for the fundamental change and thoroughgoing transformation of our society foreseen in the Freedom Charter. From this standpoint, our struggle is far from over.

For all of our 100 years, our enemies have used every means at their disposal to divide our people and their movement, but have always failed. As former ANC President Comrade Thabo Mbeki said "many of those who are convinced that the ANC must be weakened and defeated are convinced that individually and collectively the opposition parties do not have the strength and capacity to achieve this goal. They are therefore permanently on look out for the enemies of our movement that would have the possibility to accomplish this objective, whom they would obviously encourage and support. **A favourite hunting ground for these enemies is within the ANC itself, the Alliance and the broad democratic movement.** The popular thesis is that the strongest and the best opposition to the ANC will come from within the organisation, as well as the broad democratic movement."

Since its inception, the ANC has gone through various challenges and turbulences', it is having the ability to always take care of its own membership, and to also correct its own mistakes.

Because of our experience, we periodically assess the state of the organization at every particular epoch, and take corrective measures in going forward on how to deal with our shortcomings and to best advance our struggle. Commenting in 1991 on the outcomes of our first national conference inside the country after the unbanning, *comrade Walter Sisulu had this to say "ANC members know that jealousy does not build, pettiness destroys. Jealousy and pettiness are poisons born out of ignorance that will make us lose focus on the key revolutionary tasks to liberate the people of this country. We are focused on those tasks, and we consider fighting over positions as pettiness driven by sheer jealousy. We can't afford such bad behavior as the hopes and wishes of the people of this country are in our hands"*. Comrade Sisulu goes

further to asserts that:

- *"To invoke tribalism when discussing issues of leadership, that is pettiness,*
- *To invoke regionalism when discussing issues of leadership, that is pettiness,*
- *To be personal when evaluating the collective work of the organisation, that is pettiness,*
- *To hinder the organisation, its members and its leaders, from doing the right thing that is jealousy"*.

Additionally, Amilcar Cabral asserts that "revolutionary practice is the only true expression of a revolutionary ideology. To work tireless and fight uncompromisingly for unity of the progressive forces is revolutionary". At this extraordinary epoch when our glorious movement celebrates 100 years of selfless struggle and the birth of comrade Walter Sisulu we must be obsessed, possessed and surrender ourselves to the revolution through both our conduct and articulation.

As direct descendants of the originators of the People's Selfless Struggles, we must execute our revolutionary duty, by fearlessly defending the unity of our movement in the province against pettiness and jealousy.

The ANC has never been necessarily punitive in its approach; it has always taken the approach of re-educating, rehabilitating and forgiving comrades. But with the current massive onslaught on the ANC, both as government and political organization we need to consistently review and analyze the serious threats to our National Democratic Revolution. This course must be

defended and never be betrayed. We overwhelmingly agree that an Organization that does not defend itself will definitely perish. Most importantly we further re-affirmed that the ANC is a progressive National Liberation Movement, it encapsulates Organizational Discipline as one of its most important attribute in marching forward.

Ruling parties often go through certain challenges after the first decade, when the interests of different strands within the broad liberation movement begin to diverge. People begin to explore other avenues, especially when they feel they are losing control and influence within the movement. The interests of people outside the movement, locally or internationally would also come into play.

2. Characterization of Organizations formed by the defectors

These parties were formed by small groups in the main by former ANC members in our COUNTRY. We regard these individuals as ill-disciplined and disgruntled members who could not accept internal democratic processes in the organization (we are referring to all of them, with no any exception). These individuals instantly became the enemies of the revolution. They presented themselves as the alternative political parties in the country that can best champion the interest of the working class and the poor.

These individuals thought they can unseat the ANC with the intensions of forming a coalition government with other opposition parties to gain control of a number of ANC provinces. The primary objective of these defectors was to weaken and defeat the ANC in the national general elections of 2009 (also including the Local Government elections of 2011). It was unfortunate for them because they miscalculated their capabilities and strength. The ANC is more grounded and rooted amongst the ordinary masses of people.

These defectors thought that some of their individuals are above the ANC, they have misjudged their popularity in the broad Movement, and they really punched above their weight. Ordinarily when you lead in the ANC its broad membership will always recognize and give you the necessary respect; it's a title of honour to lead in the Movement that is why the general membership will always recognize the position of responsibility bestowed on comrades. The majority members of the African National Congress remained in the organization and rather fought back to ensure that the ANC retain its overwhelming support.

We must be concerned because we know that even small splinters can cause great damage to our movement. What historical were Splits about?

Splinter 1: The unhappiness in 1949

Comrade Jeff Radebe summarises the first experience of splits in his article to the ANC Today Volume 8, No. 42, 24-30 October 2008, as follows:

“In the past 60 years or so, but particularly during and after the Second World War, there was a radical push for the leadership of the ANC to adapt to the changed political landscape both locally and internationally. Inspired largely by the independence of India, this demand for change grew in intensity. The ANC Youth League led by Lembede, Majombozi, Sisulu, Tambo and Mandela, demanded radical change - mass action, mass mobilisation of the people of South Africa, as opposed to the main political activities of the leadership of the time which was characterised by representations, deputations and petitions to the colonial masters and apartheid regime.

“This culminated into the watershed **1949 ANC National Conference** with the adoption of the Programme of Action, inspired by the ANC Youth League conference resolutions of 1948 and saw the replacement of the conservative leadership of Dr Xuma by Dr Moroka, with Walter Sisulu being the first ANCYL leader of the 1944 generation to occupy a very senior leadership role as ANC Secretary General.

“There were unhappy and disgruntled supporters of Dr Xuma who broke away from the ANC and formed the **African Minded Group led by Seloape Tema. This breakaway was linked to policy change brought by the Programme of Action, and the changes and the direction of the newly elected leadership.**

“The roaring 1950's saw the emergence of the ANC as a mass movement organising the first national strike in 1950 and followed by the 1952 Defiance Campaign. At this point, the ANC needed to articulate a clear vision as to where we are going as a people and ascertain the correctness of some of the actions being taken.”

Sound familiar?

Splinter 2: The PAC in 1959

We are reminded by the breakaway of 1959 whereby a **few comrades led by Prof. Robert Sobukwe** broke ranks with the ANC to form their own organization called the Pan Africanist Congress. As a result of disagreeing on the then posture the ANC took, these few individuals also undermined the internal democratic processes and principles of the ANC. Since the PAC was formed in 1959 it never became a serious factor, it degenerated to an extent that its existence is of less significance, it is a shell of itself. The PAC failed to appeal to the general demands of our people; it is slowly dissipating from the political landscape of our country.

The leaders of the PAC broke away from the ANC after having failed to be elected into ANC's leadership positions. The PAC broke away because of the non-racial character of the Congress Alliance, and most significantly its hatred for communists.

The PAC also tried to build a right-wing union movement to counter SACTU activities, especially during the underground days. A key figure in these attempts was one of the leading PAC founders, Nelson Nana Mahomo, who was secretly working with the CIA-sponsored African-American Labour Centre (AALC) established in 1964. The AALC focused on building reactionary trade unions as part of an offensive to separate African trade unions from progressive liberation and independence movements.

Just like the current grouping failed to (re)capture the ANC in Polokwane, the PAC claimed to be the true custodians of the "ANC of 1912".

The PAC has since witnessed multiple splits and is now practically a dead organisation, an illustration of what happens when organisations are founded on opportunism to fight for positions, instead of acting on a principled programme.

Sound familiar?

Splinter 3: The Gang of Eight of the 1970s

The Group of Eight led by the Makiwane brothers in the late seventies, also took on the then leadership of the ANC under the stewardship of Comrade O.R.Tambo, amongst their grievances was the perceived dominance of the South African Communist Party in the ANC, for example: they also had serious problems with the adoption of the Freedom Charter because they saw it as a Communist blueprint. They undermined the decision taken by the then NEC to

adopt the Freedom Charter as its minimum programme. The Gang of Eight launched its offensive when the apartheid regime was tightening repression against our people especially in the wake of the 1973 workers' strikes, and increasingly labelling the ANC as a front for the communists. But the Gang of Eight is now an almost forgotten footnote in our history of struggle.

The then NEC had no choice but to expel the eight comrades IN 1975 due to undermining the internal democratic processes and decisions of the collective. And these were not just ordinary comrades they were among the best and grounded cadres of the ANC.

The SACP Central Committee had this to say about this group in a 1976 statement: "The issues on which they have chosen to attack the liberation movement are as old as the struggle itself. The slander that the ANC is run by the Communist Party is not something new; the racists and those who act as their agents have always spread it. And it has always been designed to weaken the people's struggle. As early as the 1920's, liberals like Ballinger helped destroy the ICU by raising the banner of anti-Communism, and spreading scare stories about 'Communist take-overs'. In the late 1950s, the breakaway PAC group also used the white liberal parrot-cry that 'the Communist were running the ANC' in an attempt to destroy it".

In one of its statements, the Gang of Eight spewed the same anti-communist bile that we see re-emerging with the 2008 conventioners. "The SACP relies entirely on using the ANC as its front organisation," they said in the early 1970s. The gang also ended up attacking the outcomes of the Morogoro conference, yet its members participated in that conference, at which their narrow nationalist positions were defeated.

Sound familiar?

Splinter 4: Inkatha yeNkululeko YeSizwe

Another organisation formed initially with the consent of the ANC, albeit under different conditions, was Inkatha yeNkululeko YeSizwe, now **refashioned as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)**.

The IFP, founded in **1975**, was quickly captured by an anti-ANC elite made up of some of the most backward elements within the ranks of traditional leaders, senior bureaucrats and

business beneficiaries of the then KwaZulu Territorial Authority, a forerunner to the KwaZulu Bantustan.

At the heart of the IFP's offensive was rabid anti-communism, unashamedly reflecting similar accusations by the apartheid regime that "the ANC was a communist front." The IFP perhaps went further than many of its predecessor splinters from the ANC by fully collaborating with the apartheid regime in unleashing violent counter-revolutionary warfare against the liberation movement, culminating in its attempts to try and derail the 1994 elections.

In 1986, hardly a year after the formation of COSATU, the IFP, funded by the apartheid regime through Adriaan Vlok's departmental funds, established UWUSA as a direct counter to COSATU. Similarly the 2008 splinter from the ANC is also planning to establish a labour federation directly aimed at weakening and undermining COSATU.

Sound familiar?

Splinter 5: The United Democratic Movement

The latest casualty of these reactionary tendencies is **Bantu Holomisa**, who did not fully appreciate the internal processes of the ANC, and he thought, as a former Homelands' General, he could tell the ANC leadership what to do, in the process slandering the character of leadership. Unfortunately, the then NEC under the leadership of Comrade Nelson Mandela expelled him. He went to form his own party called United Democratic Movement (UDM) but his party consistently fails to match the ANC or to attract the masses of our country.

In the 1990s, after Bantu Holomisa was expelled from the ANC, he worked with former National Party Minister Roelf Meyer to form the United Democratic Movement (UDM). Like the other splinters, its concern is also with the communists, as Holomisa said in a speech in October 2008:

"South Africa doesn't deserve a one-party state, and we certainly don't deserve to be governed by ANC puppets controlled by communists who don't even have the guts to participate in elections."

Holomisa sought to organize some disgruntled trade unionists in NUM associated with the “Five Madoda”, which caused such chaos in the mines around 1997. The UDM is now an insignificant regional party.

Sound familiar?

Splinter 6: 2008 - a Black DA?

The latest splinter from the ANC joins this long list of anti-communist and anti-working class crusaders.

We are therefore not surprised that the 2008 splinter group has found common cause with the likes of the DA, IFP, UDM and other opposition parties. One common factor that draws them together is their anti-communist and anti-working class, anti-trade-union political outlook. This ganging up is further proof that there is more in common between the dissidents and the likes of DA than with the Polokwane resolutions and mandate.

Will this reactionary grouping go the way of its political ancestors?

It is no accident that almost all defectors, including the former trade unionists, are now wealthy businessmen. They and some of their families are beneficiaries of the narrow BEE policy that seeks to give a small number of Africans shares in big companies. They are led by members of the whisky-drinking, cigar-smoking, class that profited from policies we now call the “1996 class project”- the grouping in government who imposed the neo-liberal, pro-business and pro-rich GEAR policy on South Africa in the late 1990s.

Sound familiar?

The right Wing backlash after Polokwane

The faction that had been driving the pro-capitalist line within the ANC did not accept their defeat at Polokwane. They met again just one week after the conference. They decided to continue contesting from within. They decided that they would contest all remaining regional, provincial, youth league, women league conferences. If they won, they would move a vote of no confidence against the leadership that had just been democratically elected.

This strategy failed.

For a while the defeated minority in the ANC also tried to exploit the “two centres of power,” They refused to co-operate with the new ANC leadership. They hoped to use their government positions to undermine the ANC’s attempts to implement the pro-poor Polokwane resolutions and to unite the ANC. In this context, Judge Nicholson gave a damning indictment of government manipulation of legal processes against ANC President Jacob Zuma. At the same time, former President Thabo Mbeki continued to avoid the ANC leadership. These factors brought matters to a head, and the ANC recalled Comrade Mbeki from office.

In light of these developments, some supporters of Comrade Mbeki, led by Lekota and Shilowa, saw that the ANC would no longer give them a route to power. So they decided to form a new splinter party. In cahoots with other opposition parties, it would fight for their class project outside, and indeed *against*, the ANC and the Alliance. They know however that to win any kind of support they cannot openly proclaim support for a blatant pro-capital class project. So they seek demagogically to exploit whatever social grievances they can find amongst the people. They don’t want us to remember that these grievances result from the very policies they themselves imposed while they were in government.

If this agenda succeeds, it would disrupt and cripple the organised working class and our liberation movement. It would blunt our weapons and turn the trade union movement into a conveyor belt for the interests of big business.

This agenda seeks to replace the ANC - which has always been a broad liberation movement with a bias towards the working class - with a neo-liberal, centre-left, bourgeois political party. It follows directly from the efforts of the splinter group’s leadership in the past to demobilize the ANC. They sought to turn it into a narrow electoral political party, where our people would act only as voters during election periods, leaving the “leaders” free to use state power to amass private fortunes and support big business.

3. Splitting the Alliance - the wedge drivers

One thread that runs through all the groupings that have broken away or engaged in factionalist activity in our liberation movement is their anti-communism and anti-worker, anti-trade-union attitude. Often they express themselves in exactly the same way as the apartheid regime. Like their predecessors, the 2008 dissidents have turned their anti-communist volume ever louder,

coinciding with the campaign to project the ANC as having been “captured” by communists and COSATU.

In his closing remarks to the ANC Morogoro Conference in 1969, the then President of the ANC, *Comrade Oliver Tambo*, responding to anti-communist sentiments in the movement, warned about the dangers of such elements within our movement:

"Be vigilant comrades... Beware of the wedge-driver, the man who creeps from ear to ear, carrying a bag full of wedges, driving them in between you and the next man, between a group and another, a man who goes round creating splits and divisions. Beware of the wedge-driver, comrades. Watch his poisonous tongue".

The individuals who left the ANC and joined these reactionary organizations were once given serious responsibilities in the ANC. Some of these defectors projected themselves as possessing the political clarity of the Movement and as genuine leaders of our people. Lest did we know that our Movement and struggle were in the wrong hands.

After have jump shipped, their first responsibility was to attack the integrity of the ANC and its leadership. They call for the demise of this glorious organization; they want to weaken the ANC. They speak bad and attack the ANC through both the print and electronic media. According the culture and tradition of the ANC, these behavior and actions are totally unacceptable within the ranks of the Movement. We expect all comrades to stick within the ANC and to respect the internal democratic processes of the organization; this behavior is uncharacteristic to the ANC. These reactionary tendencies have the potential of liquidating our movement, and seek to undermine our struggle and what we stand for.

Equally so, we need to make the point that there are also a number of these individuals who joined the defectors but never really lambasted the ANC openly. Some of these members were just coerced and won over through despicable lies and empty promises. Due to a number of challenges, amongst the ‘weak’ state of the ANC branches, we had members in our ranks that are vulnerable, innocent and inexperienced who does not know how to close ranks and defend the ANC to the latter.

We must with necessary political resilience respond to the historical political question Vladimir Lenin sought to address during his seminal work by asking

4. What is to be done?

Tactical Considerations to rehabilitate defectors:

Re-affirming the ANC as a mass base and multi-class organization, we believe that the ANC must provide leadership to the broad society against those who want to divide, divert and weaken it from its task. The ANC must influence the thinking of society and ensure that the Movement hegemonises the broad society. The entire membership of the ANC must give impetus to the mass character of the ANC through mass campaigns, sustainable mass mobilization and deepen relations between the movement and the people.

The following important programmes must be considered:

- How to minimize and reverse the electoral support of the Opposition parties, against the 60% of electoral support which the ANC enjoys. How do we ensure that the 9th electoral cycle in 2014 the ANC must achieve a popular expression of 70%. If we want to boost the electoral support base of the ANC, we need to make some considerations as a Movement, informed by historical facts and our ideological and political tasks at hand.
- There are some defectors from all different parties who are contemplating to 'rejoining' the ANC, are we ready to welcome them back in our ranks, what should be our 'acceptance programme'?
- The 52nd National Conference of Polokwane has re-endorsed the one million members by 2012.
- But also what is paramount is to weaken and dislodge our opposition parties, how do we implement this programme?

Political and ideological tasks in defending and deepening the NDR

Amilcar Cabral ``Responsible members must take life seriously, conscious of their responsibilities, thoughtful about carrying them out, and with a comradeship, based on work and duty done...Nothing of this is incompatible with the joy of living, or with love for life and its amusements, or with confidence in the future and in our work.

We must practice revolutionary democracy in every aspect of our Party life. Every responsible member must have the courage of his responsibilities, exacting from other a proper respect for his work and properly respecting the work of other. Hide nothing from the masses of our

people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories!

- Our entire approach to this matter needs to reflect on the evolution of the Movement, and should be highly political and ideological. We need to reflect a high sense of maturity and consistency.
- We need to tilt the balance of forces in the forthcoming 2014 General Elections. We must again consolidate on our existing strengths and advance on the terrain of the enemy.
- What programmes should unfold focusing on improving service delivery?
- The ANC must formulate its own rehabilitation process for all those who are re-joining the ANC.
- The NEC we must clearly strive and identify the 'ring leaders' and the 'followers' in this whole process. The followers are those who are misled due to ignorance, political immaturity and promises. The ring leaders are those who spearheaded and agitated for the exodus from the ANC.
- We need to be extremely cautious about the returning of 'ring leaders'. Ring leaders and everyone should be allowed to return to swell the ranks of the ANC, but should be taken through a rehabilitation process so that they must not work against the ANC from inside. The ANC should not allow any comrade to work as a mercenary or a spy for any opposition formation, stringent measures should be put in place to combat any foreign tendencies from those who return to the ANC. The Renewal of the Organization, Unity and Cohesion must be drilled into the mind and understanding of all the members of the ANC. This programme must be embraced by all those who return to the ANC.
- But we need to be cognizant that the 'ring leaders' can also play a pivotal role in bringing more defectors to rejoin the ANC. Some of them played a major role in demobilizing our structures; it might be opportune for us to make them undo the 'damage' they have caused. This is a matter that needs sharp focus from all structures of the Movement.
- We recommend that all defectors must apply and rejoin at branch level for membership as per the constitution, sign the pledge and should be paraded in the Branch General

Meetings and public platforms to be accepted by the general membership of the ANC. **However**, those who rejoin the ANC from the defectors are in essence expelled members, they must reapply to the branch, but it is only the PEC and or NEC that can readmit their membership into the ranks of the Organization. After the PEC and or NEC has processed the application the results will be communicated to the concerned branches through the BEC.

- None of these individuals (defectors) must be treated differently from the rest of other comrades, this process needs strict management in order to avoid any violation of the ANC constitution, and (it means we must have a strict monitoring process by our branches and REC's). All those who return must be fully and effectively demobilized.
- The former members who are returning from Splinter groups and other expelled members accepted back into the ANC, **are not new members**; they were expelled hence **they must wait for five years before they can contest leadership**. These comrades must be put on probation during the period they will be serving at the level of the branch, this would be a period of rehabilitation for the five years.
- We need to fully invoke the ANC constitution (Rule 4.) in regard to the eight-week probation and the commitment through taking the Oath. This can partly assist the ANC to close ranks and avoid unnecessary infiltration.
- The ANC as the leader of the Tripartite Alliance must canvass all alliance partners for the buy-in, and to ensure that we have a clear common perspective on this subject in order to avoid defectors coming back through the Alliance or MDM formations.
- The ANC must prioritize our political education and training program to ensure that we build a crop of politically conscious cadres who understands the ANC and should be capable to defend the organization at all times. All those who return must be subjected to a compulsory political education programme. Organizational tasks should be given to these individuals to prove their allegiance and commitment.
- Must build able, active and vibrant branches that must fully embrace amongst others; the principles of collective leadership and democratic centralism.

- The ANC through the Alliance Secretariat must further discuss the provincial posture in regards to defectors who want to 're-join' the ANC. We must allow the comrades to further enrich these views.
- The position of the ANC must then be communicated to all branch members of the ANC in pursuit of establishing a common perspective around defectors who want rejoin the Movement.

There is a much greater need for better understanding of the dynamic that pertains to defectors rejoining the ANC. The rejoining of the ANC by FORMER members must be welcomed, as the establishment of Splinter groupings eroded some aspects of the traditional support base of the ANC. However, the conduct of some of the comrades who rejoins the ANC sometimes borders on being **agent provocateurs**. We welcome these comrades with open arms into the ranks of the movement, which we believe is their home. However, some just continue to be on a destructive path behaving like mercenaries to destroy the ANC from within. Equally, as we fought and defeated these Splinter groupings as an exogenous opposing force, we will fight and defeat these comrades who rejoined the ANC with a single motive to destroy it from within. The structures and members of the ANC must put an abrupt end to this **mercenary activity**.

5. Conclusion

Our immediate programme is to build Unity and Cohesion of the Movement. The National Executive Committee of the ANC, under the leadership of **Comrade President Jacob Zuma** always emphasizes and calls for unity within the African National Congress and its Alliance partners. This is a programme which must be safeguarded and advanced in all what we do. The strength of the movement and our struggle lies within our unity.

In his message to *Kabwe Consultative Conference in 1985*, our former president **Nelson Mandela** states “... *We still remain a closely knit organisation, ever conscious of the crucial importance of unity and resisting every attempt to divide and confuse us ... unity is the rock on which the African National Congress was founded, it is the principle which guided us down the years as we feel our way forward ... in the course of its history the ANC has survived countless storms and risen to eminence partly because of the sterling qualities of its membership and partly because each member has regarded him or herself as the principal guardian of that unity*”.

The African National Congress is a National Liberation Movement which is revolutionary and progressive; it carries the hopes and aspirations of millions of our people, both nationally and internationally. Thus the importance of strengthening and defending it is of paramount and sacrosanct. We must never and will never allow the ANC to die in our hands.

We must take a leaf from many revolutions throughout the world, the Cuban Revolution has taught us that; “Every revolution creates its own martyrs, and equally so, it also produces its own traitors”. We must never lower our guards; we must be vigilant all the times in defense of the National Democratic Revolution.

Our immediate pre-occupation is to deepen the hegemony of the ANC, as we march towards the watershed conference of the ANC in 2012 in Bloemfontein, and to further strengthen the ANC to remain as the only logical solution to the needs, demands and aspirations of our people. The strength of the ANC lies within its collective and mass character, ‘together we can accelerate the realization of the objective of our National Democratic Revolution’.

Members and cadres of our movement, while not ignoring the splinter faction, must not be distracted by the emergence of this new grouping. We must focus on the key challenges facing our revolution, including preparing for an overwhelming ANC electoral victory in 2014. *We should again draw wisdom from Dr A.B. Xuma in the same Presidential address of the 14 December 1941 when he says:*

“ You and I are inheritors of these great traditions. We are debtors to their fine examples. We are called upon to copy their fine example of sacrifice. We are urged not to only build upon the foundation they layed but also to improve and modernise the plan of their structure. To do this it requires the best African brains, and I believe we have them at this conference. It calls for the greatest effort and sacrifice from every man and woman of our race. It means for all of us wherever we are and whoever we are, to do our duty. Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people.”

These words are as true today as they were 71 years ago` `Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people”.

We also need to develop strategies to deal with changing conditions, including strategies to reach out to the youth, especially young workers, the new middle strata, professionals etc. We need to be more creative in dealing with hostile media and other groupings, and find ways to

communicate our perspectives more effectively. Above all, we must remain focused on the key strategic and policy questions, and avoid being diverted from the real issues or scoring own goals that give ammunition to the other side. Unlike our adversaries we don't need to rely on disinformation or coercion to advance our agenda - we have the strength of our organisation, our policies and our revolutionary morality.

A lesson we need to learn from this saga is the importance of consolidating and deepening democracy in our organisations, so that we never again allow a clique to hijack them. Unlike the defectors, we must fight to advance our positions democratically within our organisations, not walk away when there are problems.

We also need to ensure that we address organisational weaknesses and real grievances that members may have against our organisations. Defector-groups will never destroy the revolutionary determination of the South African people to complete the NDR. It will never break the will of the South African workers to transform the lives of their families and communities. Unless we take decisive action to prevent it, however it could cause serious disruption, and confusion. It could delay the next phase of the NDR and leave people mired in poverty for many more years.

The Freedom Charter became the cornerstone that guided the policy and practices, and the strategy and tactics of the ANC after its adoption and today still forms the core guiding principles of the ANC. The delegates that met at Kliptown responded with a call that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people".

Unity is an organisational value upheld and pursued by all political movements because it enhances the effectiveness of collective action. But, political collectives are made up of diverse individual members, who have come together to pool their energies in pursuance of shared objectives. The more elastic the breadth of the collective and the greater the depth of its potential appeal, the greater the prospect of tensions and conflicts among its adherents. The imperatives of coherent and effective action therefore require a leadership to exercise vigilance not to allow potential and actual tensions to jeopardise it. ***"Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people"***.

Yet, a mechanical uniformity holds out the threat of stifling, undermining and repressing the creative thinking and innovation so necessary for growth and adaptation to ever-changing

situations and environments. The art of successful political leadership entails the management of the tension/contradiction occasioned by the demands of coherent collective interventions and the reality that the political environment is not static and thus requires adaptation and constant adjustment and re-adjustment

The late President of Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and of Mozambique, Comrade President Samora Machel had this to say on the central feature of revolutionary action: "Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle, the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals. Without persistent effort, time itself becomes an ally of the insurgent and primitive forces of irrational emotionalism and social destructions. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is the time for vigorous and positive action. "

The ANC will never stray from the culture and traditions of our movement. We confirm that we will continue to draw inspiration from the lessons gained from the lives of Comrades Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Joe Slovo, Beyers Naude, Braam Fischer, Chris Hani, Dorothy Nyembe, Florence Mophosho, Billy Nair and many others.

In memory of these heroes of our struggle, we urge all ANC members to remain steadfast in the principles and traditions of the movement. They must not be swayed into negative action by the anger arising out of the new phenomenon of some ANC members who are calling a so-called convention to discuss the formation of a new political party.

In the ANC Constitution, on being accepted as a new member, one is expected to make the following **solemn declaration**:

"I ..., solemnly declare that I will abide by the aims and objectives of the African National Congress as set out in the Constitution, the Freedom Charter and other duly adopted policy positions, that I am joining the organisation voluntarily and without motives of material advantage or personal gain.. that [I] will defend the unity and integrity of the organisation and its principles, and combat any tendency towards disruption and factionalism."

The growth, development and maturation of a political formation is not a linear process. A delicate balance that sustains continuity but which nonetheless offers the political space for new initiatives and for the emergence of novel ideas is vitally necessary to keep it alive. This intervention is an attempt to examine how the ANC has historically maintained that delicate

balance and to open up discussion on how we should handle the inevitable tensions that accompany development and growth in the present.

For maximum effect, any political movement relies on the collective action of its adherents. Unity of purpose and of action are indispensable for effect. Objectives - immediate, intermediate and long-term - must be known and understood by the protagonists to attain this. Consequently political programmes and the programme of action by which to pursue them are the devices by which political adherents commit themselves to common action. The collective commitment made by the adherents of a movement is further reinforced by agreed mechanisms of mutual discipline - the whips in a parliamentary party play this role - which entails submission of the individual member to the collective in all matters affecting the collective good. The unity of the movement thus involves a social contract between the individual member and the collective in terms of which the individual member surrenders a measure of personal sovereignty in order to pursue a common purpose, in return for which the individual is reciprocated by the support of the collective to pursue an individual objective that is unattainable except through collective action.

“Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people”.

Our experiences as a liberation movement which has come of age, provides that the African National Congress should learn from its successes and challenges. This places greater responsibility on the current generation of members and leaders of the organisation to ensure that during this year, and the years that follow, we build a concrete political and organisational foundation that will carry the ANC into a second centenary with striking success. Building a strong organisation is a necessary condition to improve the quality of life of our people and to ensure that we cast a concrete foundation to defend the political hegemony of the ANC during the 2014 General Elections, and beyond.

The 2014 General Elections will not be an easy election. The ANC will be 102 years old and as the country we will be 20 years into democracy. Progress has been made to improve the quality of life of our people, the pace and the scope of our transformation agenda is contested. To win the 2014 General Elections will be an outcome of a united ANC that rejects mediocrity, an ANC that is not inward looking and at war with itself. The 53rd National Conference must be used as a base to concretize unity in our structures and infuse a spirit of activism in all our members and cadres.

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The 100 years celebration makes us the rare heirs of a great heritage of principled, selfless struggle of the previous generation of freedom fighters who built this movement into a true custodian of the genuine aspirations of the overwhelming majority and the principal agent for change in our country. It is this great and glorious inheritance that should guide us at all times, to do whatever is possible, within our powers, to redeem the movement from any signs of decay. ***Frantz Fanon, in his historical works entitled ‘Black Skin, White Masks’ was clearly instructive on this particular front when he said “Sometimes people hold a core belief that is very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against that belief, the new evidence cannot be accepted. It would create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect the core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn’t fit in with the core belief.”***

The plethora of break-away and defections from the movement, has indeed resulted in - *A promise betrayed.*

When addressing the SACP in London, 30 July 1981, OR Tambo had this to say about the ANC anniversaries: “For the revolutionary movement, anniversaries cannot only celebrate the past. We must recall and acclaim our history, but more importantly, we must use the past to arm ourselves for the future: to learn lessons and to strengthen our resolve and commitment”.

In this profound assertion OR underscores the fact that 100 years of existence of the ANC must give inspiration to the people of this country and should give them hope for better life for all.

“Congress claims us. Congress demands our best service for our people”.

The ANC Lives, the ANC Leads.

END

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