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Conversations with the
President



Resolution of conflict in Ukraine must be durable and lasting

■ By **President Cyril Ramaphosa**

In a world where far too many disputes between and within countries are settled through the barrel of a gun, the view that differences are best resolved through negotiation, dialogue and compromise may seem out of touch, and even fanciful.

And yet, as a country that attained democracy through a negotiated settlement, we remain steadfast in our conviction that achieving world peace through negotiation, and

not force of arms, is indeed attainable.

This is a principle on which we have been consistent since the advent of our democracy, and which remains an important part of our foreign policy orientation.

South Africa abstained from voting in last week's United Nations resolution on the escalating conflict between Russia and its neighbour Ukraine because the resolution did not foreground the call for meaningful engagement.

Even prior to the resolution being passed at the UN last week, talks between Russian and Ukrainian officials had already started. South Africa expected that the UN resolution would foremost welcome the commencement of dialogue between the parties and seek to create the conditions for these talks to succeed. Instead, the call for peaceful resolution through political dialogue is relegated to a single sentence close to the conclusion of

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the final text. This does not provide the encouragement and international backing that the parties need to continue with their efforts.

Calling for peaceful negotiation is aligned with values upon which the UN was founded. We are particularly concerned that the UN Security Council was unable to discharge its responsibility to maintain peace and security. This gives impetus to the long standing calls for the Security Council's reform to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The UN Charter enjoins member states to settle their disputes by peaceful means in the first instance, stating explicitly that parties to any dispute should first seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and similar mechanisms. Since the outbreak of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, South Africa's position has been to affirm this call.

There have been some who have said that in abstaining from the vote condemning Russia's military operation in Ukraine, South Africa has placed itself on the wrong side of history. Yet, South Africa is firmly on the side of peace at a time when another war is something the

world does not need, nor can it afford. The results of these hostilities will be felt globally and for many years to come.

A cessation of hostilities may indeed be achieved through force of arms or economic pressure, but it would be unlikely to lead to a sustainable and lasting peace.

The historical tensions between Russia and Ukraine make it all the more important that whatever agreements are brokered are sustainable in the long run and address the concerns of both parties to the conflict.

Our own experience with ending apartheid, and our country's role in mediating conflict elsewhere on the continent, have yielded a number of insights.

The first is that even the most seemingly intractable differences can be resolved at the negotiating table. The second is that even as talks may collapse, they can and do resume, as was the case in our own negotiating process. And that even when it seems the parties cannot see eye to eye, breakthroughs can and do happen.

That we continue to support the call for negotiation and dialogue does not render our

commitment to human rights any less. Since the outbreak of the conflict, we have expressed our concern at the impact of the conflict on civilians believing that war is not the solution to conflict and that it leads to human suffering.

Our country is committed to advancing the human rights and fundamental freedoms not only of our own people, but for the peoples of Palestine, Western Sahara, Afghanistan, Syria and across Africa and the world.

It is our hope that negotiations between Russia and Ukraine yield positive outcomes that pave the way for an end to the conflict.

Even though the pace of negotiations may proceed slowly, there is progress nonetheless. Every effort of the international community should be oriented towards supporting these talks, and to bringing the two sides together.

South Africa is greatly encouraged by the words of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres who said last week he would do everything in his power to contribute to an immediate cessation of hostilities and urgent negotiations for peace.

We all call upon Russia and the Ukraine to subject this conflict to mediation and do everything in their power to reach an agreement that will lead to the cessation of hostilities.

The peoples of Russia and Ukraine – two neighbours whose histories, peoples and fortunes are inextricably bound together – deserve a peace that is durable, sustainable and lasting ■

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Saving the Planet. One plastic at a time

Dear Mr President

Plastic? Most South Africans are familiar with this enquiry from a teller at any shop and supermarket across the length and breadth of our country. More often than not, a shopper will default into buying the single-use plastic bag in order to carry their groceries home. The question arose in 2003 when the South African government introduced a levy on plastics in an effort to discourage consumers from using them and to mitigate the impact of plastic on the environment.

Indeed Mr President, the plastic bag creates a huge amount of plastic waste and with some minor changes to our daily routine, we can do without it. Single-use plastic shopping bags, commonly made from low-density polyethylene plastics have traditionally been given for free to customers by stores when purchasing goods: the bags have long been considered a convenient, cheap, and hygienic way of transporting items.

In 2002, the government, representatives of labour and of industry, signed a memorandum of agreement concerning use of disposable polythene shopping bags. The main elements of the agreement were: regulation of the minimum thickness of plastic bags and, disclosure and transparency regarding the costs of plastic shopping bags.



Comrade Pule Mabe

Governments all over the world have taken action to ban the sale of lightweight bags, charge customers for lightweight bags, or generate taxes from the stores that sell them.

There is plastic all around us. From cold drink bottles, grocery bags, pens and your ID card, we see and use plastic every day. Many of these plastics come from materials like petrochemicals.

The amount of plastic around us can have advantages and disadvantages. Plastics are inexpensive, lightweight and durable materials, which can be readily moulded into a variety of products that find use in a wide range of applications. They have substantial benefits and have remained part of our lives for many years. Plastics are found in containers and packaging (e.g., soft drink bottles, lids, shampoo bottles). They are

also found in durable (e.g., appliances, furniture) and non-durable goods (e.g., diapers, trash bags, cups and utensils, medical devices). The plastics economy makes a significant contribution to the GDP of many countries through the support it provides to the manufacturing and other related sectors.

Plastic can cause litter and pollution in the environment. These effects can put human beings and the environment in danger. It is thus reasonable to reuse and reprocess plastic to prevent waste. For an example, the torrential rains that pounded KwaZulu-Natal in 2019 did not only cause devastating flooding and mudslides that left more than 60 people dead; it also brought the province to the brink of an environmental disaster.

Further away at Durban harbour, another kind of rescue operation was under way, as reported by TimesLive. The Blue Port project, run under the Wildlands Trust, a conservation organisation, helped with beach and harbour clean-ups. Project manager Sibho Dlamini said they were playing their part in the fight against pollution. "Once the plastic has been picked up we then sell it to our (recycling) depot where it will be recycled and reused for something else," said Dlamini. He said pollution had cluttered the city's waterway following the rains. Nhlanhla Sibisi of Greenpeace Africa, an environmentalist

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organisation, believed the kilometres of plastic lining the beaches of Durban spoke directly to the campaign they had been running to eliminate single-use plastics.

Plastic recycling is the method of gathering waste plastic and reconverting them to new and useful plastic products. The world produces and makes use of more than a trillion pounds of plastic material. Plastic recycling ensures that this massive amount of plastic does not go to waste.

Why does it matter to our African National Congress comrades? Well, Mr President, we need to lead by example because there is a lot at stake for today and future generations. This is the only planet we have and consciousness about the impact of human endeavour has taken centre stage. In short, it begins with me and you.

The advent of the Coronavirus pandemic has thrust into prominence how we relate to other life forms on Planet Earth.

Plastic may have revolutionised the manufacturing and helped advance the development of industrialised economies. But its negative impact threatens our flora and fauna.

However, there is a solution on the horizon. Last week, South Africa welcomed the adoption of the resolution to “end plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument”.

According to the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, this represented an important landmark and significant



decision to protect the environment and particularly our oceans that are important for food security, addressing climate change, improving the health and promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication.”

The resolution was adopted by the resumed 5th Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) unanimously by all member states with resounding acclamation and standing ovations.

Member states have recognised that urgent further international action is needed by developing an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

An intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) will be constituted commencing its work during second half of 2022.

Mr President, in a rare show of unity, the reaction by the non-governmental sector to our government’s commitment to support this International Plastics Treaty has been

generally positive.

“We are delighted to note that South Africa has committed to supporting the binding treaty on plastic pollution. Plastic pollution impacts heavily on the most vulnerable communities, blocking sewerage, contributing to flooding and impacting on health. Plastic Pollution, flowing from our rivers out into the oceans causes devastation and lingering death to many marine species,” said Reverend Rachel Mash of Green Anglicans.

“This is a step in the right direction as there is a clear need for us to support the establishment of internationally legally binding agreement and instrument to address plastic pollution,” said Niven Reddy.

So, as responsible citizens, we should think twice before we respond in the affirmative when the teller enquires: Plastic?

Yours sincerely

Pule Mabe

National Spokesperson and
 Head of the Department of
 Information and Publicity



Situation in Ukraine is about denazification of the country by Russia

■ By **Advocate SA Dikole**

In 1922 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic was established under the leadership of the Bolshevik and Lenin. The Soviet Union was comprised with many states that were surrounding Russia. All member states of the union were governed by the constitution of the Soviet Union. All citizen enjoy rights and duties that are enshrined in the constitution. Nikita Khrushchev was an Ukrainian national who was elected as the General Secretary of the CPSU and president of the Soviet Union. It is a historical fact that Ukraine was part of Soviet Union and people from Russia and Ukraine share same values of history, culture and civilization.

US Military Complex

The US military complex is trajectory project wherein big corporates of the ruling class are major producer of weapons and armaments that are produced to create war in different quarters of the globe solely to make profit. When there is no war, the big corporates who are the ruling class cannot make profit. The fall of Soviet Union created a triumphalism wherein many public figures in the west believed that it was the end of Russia. President Putin had further elucidated in this by saying that the west had mistakenly treated Russia as if it was in the 90s when the Soviet Union was overthrown.

2014 Ukraine Maidan

In February 2014 there was the Maidan coup in Ukraine wherein the democratically elected government was replaced by ultra-nationals and neo Nazis who were backed by the US and the EU. Despite this being promoted by western liberal media, this caused a serious division amongst Ukrainians. People in Crimea held a referendum which was intended to determine as to whether Crimea should form part of Russia or Ukraine. Majority of the population favoured to be reintegrated into Russia. At another level of development, people from Donetsk and Lugansk formed themselves into separate recognisable

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republics. Initially, they wanted to be part of Moscow, but President Putin had a different view because he was more interested in the integrity of Ukraine as a sovereign state. The question is why he could not stop the processes of Crimea been integrated into the Russian Federation? I think here we need to treat its case in terms of its merit. Firstly Crimea is strategically located military and geopolitically. It has important and historical infrastructure of defence that was build during the Soviet Union. It is located in the Black Sea which is important for naval operations. Secondly, the mastermind of the Maidan wanted to use political power that they possessed through coup to occupy and give political directives on Crimea.

Russia's Security concern

Early January of 2022 Russia made proposals to both US and NATO on the security concern. Central to the concern from Moscow was uncompromising position of Russia on its security measures. Both the US and NATO tried to avoid it, continuing to spread a lie and rumour that says Russia will be invading Ukraine on the 15 th of February 2022. Russia had correctly characterised the concerns as the red line for east-ward expansion.

Special Operations

Spokeswoman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova had clarified the role of Russia. She said the Russian special operation is intended to end eight years

of western sponsored war in Ukraine. President Putin made it very clear that the Russian Army was going there to smoke out state sponsored terrorism by elimination of the neo-Nazis and ultra-nationalists. He went



**The Donetsk
People's
Republic
and Lugansk
Peoples
Republic must
be recognised
by the world as
independent
states from
Kiev.**



categorically to emphasise peace by urging Ukrainian forces to corporate with Russia or to face consequences. In response to Western aggressive statements, President Putin had issued an order to introduce what he described as a special service regime in the Russian Army Deterrence. What also underpins that is the unfriendly activities against Russia on the economic sphere.

Conclusion

Nobody should embrace, let alone praise the war because it is essentially ugly. Peace cannot be promoted under a template of profit maximisation. US domination into the global affairs happened to be more about the destruction of other nations' integrity. Russia is a sovereign state that had existed for many years. It is true that it fought many years without losing one war. The leadership of Ukraine should become independent and start to address their local affairs with their neighbours. It is impossible for Crimea to be reintegrated into Kiev and authorities in Moscow hve already pronounced on that. The Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk Peoples Republic must be recognised by the world as independent states from Kiev. Russia's Special Operation in Ukraine is the most applaudable and necessary intervention to end an eight-year genocide that was conducted by Kiev against the ordinary citizens of Donetsk and Lugansk.

Equally, the eastward expansion of NATO towards Ukraine cannot be left unattended. Russia has made security proposals to both NATO and US, and this must be recognised as a serious concern that contributes to the establishment of a red line by Moscow ■

Letter to members of the ANC in Ngaka Modiri Molema Region

■ By **Khumalo Molefe**



The African National Congress (ANC) in the Ngaka Modiri Molema Region needs to find an expressed position on the challenges of renewal and unity. That is; unity of action and unity of purpose within the mass democratic movement, resultantly, our own embryonic national democratic society.

The time for the much awaited Provincial Conference of the ANC has now arrived; membership at branch levels are now holding their Bi-annual Branch General Meetings (BBGMs) and they are nominating preference of their leadership to serve in the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) and Regional Executive Committee (REC) respectively. This elective process often creates a divide; instead of our intended objective of a united ANC.

The National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC has, over and above, mandated us, to prosecute the task of bringing together comrades of the ANC who are at loggerheads with each other. We should not fail in these tasks of unity and renewal of the movement. It is our duty, as disciplined members of the ANC, to ensure that these conferences emerge with all the desired outcomes - ideologically, politically, and in terms of leadership preference.

Our primary objective is to build a harmonious, amalgamated, democratic, free and non-racial society – free from narrow, tribalistic and regionalistic bigotry; as envisaged in our Strategy and Tactics of the ANC; (Strategy and Tactics of the ANC adopted by a conference of the ANC, Morogoro, 25 April - 01st May 1969).

Our post-apartheid South Africa has lessons to learn from the post-colonial African epoch. As an organism of the people, we are not immune from the threats of conflicts of ethnographic chauvinism. The common threats of minority groups; their demonisation and consequent promotion of identity politics remain a threat to our national consensus.

There exists a propensity which is engineered by a very sinister mob within certain corners of our movement which is bent on prosecuting this ethnocentric tendency in a very clandestine method. The simplistic Afrobarometer it uses, is that, being born of a particular dialect or any other distinct dialect, makes it a taboo to lead the ANC in a certain region of our democratic Republic of South Africa. Tshekisho Solomon

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Plaatje; the first Secretary General of the ANC was a resident of Mahikeng despite having arrived from Kimberly in the Northern Cape, in 1898 and being born in Boshoff in the Free State. The same Plaatje was overwhelmingly nominated by the branches of the ANC for the President of the ANC in 1917 and he declined the nomination in favour of his fellow comrade; Sefako Makgatho who is originally from the now Limpopo Province. Evidently, this exhibits that the ANC, from its genesis, has never been an ethnocentric organisation that thrives on identity politics.

Members of the ANC are mobilised in a secret form, around the common denomination of ethnocentrism of identity politics. Social

media platforms and midnight undercover meetings are used as an altar of mobilisation to prosecute this vile tendency.

The history of Rwanda shows us how ethnicity can be manipulated and twisted, resulting in fratricide and final commission of genocidal crimes. Karl Marx (Ph.D; University of Jena, 1841) sagaciously articulates: “workers of the world unite.”

The ANC is bleeding from among others; these unorganisational manifestations. A charged member of the ANC is rising in enchantment against a fellow member of the ANC. It is, therefore, us, the members of the ANC, who must unite - in unity of action and unity of purpose. It is us; the members

of the ANC who must bring the broken pieces of the ANC together. Nobody can do this, but ourselves.

There is nothing wrong with the ANC; that cannot be corrected by what is right with the ANC. Let us, in paraphrasing the words of Marx; declare: “MEMBERS OF THE ANC IN ALL LANDS UNITE”.

The African wisdom says: “when the elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.” Our society is looking at the ANC with yearning eyes. We need a harmonious and amalgamated ANC, that is at peace with itself. We need members of the ANC that are able to reach out to each other. We need to have a descent dialogue amongst ourselves as members of the ANC. The eyes of the world and society are glued on us and they ask these difficult questions: “will the ANC be at war with itself? Will the members of the ANC tear each other apart in these coming conferences? In contrast, will the ANC emerge triumphantly as a torchbearer of our democratic society in these confereces?”

Conferences are not only about contestation of leadership; they can also be about consensus of leadership and breathing in of new ideas into the movement and society. The choice is ours! ■

Khumalo Molefe is an ordinary member of the ANC in Ward 10, Mahikeng (Ngaka Modiri Molema Region – North West Province). He writes in his personal capacity.

SPECIAL FOCUS

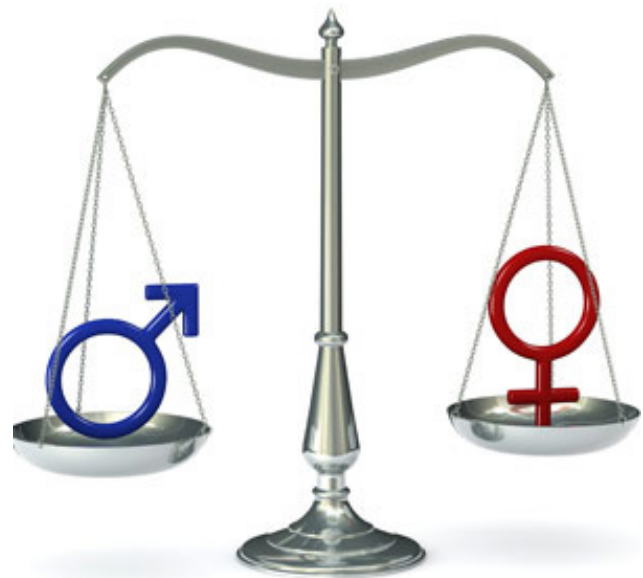
National Assembly

International Women's Day Debate

"Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow"

■ By **Cde Zanele Nkomo**

Recognizing women as a motive force of change in society: Struggles of women and girls and how South Africa has contributed to these struggles globally



"The time has come that the democratic movement as a whole and all its activists should adopt concepts and practices that overturn old modes of approach towards the female half of the population of our country. We must ensure that the women are organised from the local level upwards and draw them into struggle in their millions and as equal participants at all levels of organisation and regardless of the form of struggle. The mass involvement of the women is vital for our success in the objective we have set ourselves, that of ensuring the speediest democratic transformation of our country."

This was an instructive message from the January 8 statement of the ANC in 1990 which was delivered by President Nelson Mandela who addressed on behalf of the then President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, and the collective of the NEC on the occasion of the 78th anniversary of the ANC. The liberation movement has always maintained that the total emancipation of the oppressed

African people in our country, the continent, and the Diaspora would be incomplete without the emancipation of women from all forms of oppression.

The women's movement, which was formed and mutated alongside and within the ANC played a key and decisive role not only in the struggle against colonial-apartheid but also in the democratisation of South Africa. The transformation of the legal and constitutional framework,

the economy, culture, ideology, and other forms of relations in our society owes to the great strides which have been made by the women of our country advancing towards a non-sexist society.

The South African Constitution provides special protection for women as part of groups who remain marginalised due to historical inequities which also include the rural and urban poor, children, youth, the aged,

people living with disabilities and the LGBTQI+ community. This constitutional provision is a reflection of the commitment of Parliament to achieve maximum social transformation through representing the interests of women and the most marginalised in society. Generally, the country has made great strides in the area of women representation in political and legislative roles, the South African Parliament is ranked as “one of the most gender-diverse parliaments” across the globe, ranked third in Africa and tenth in the world.

Over the last 27 years, the democratic state has transformed the public service to the inclusion of women and place at the center the question of women empowerment. However, this has not translated to progress in other sectors such as business and academia. There are some areas where we have seen elements of regression; for example, nearly all directors-general in national government are men. This highlights that the struggle for transformation continues to wage on, and that the gains we make can be undone unless we are vigilant and focused.

Since 2015, South Africa has worn the albatross of shame of being considered by the World Bank as the most unequal society in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 0.63. Statistics South Africa confirms that the income and wealth inequalities which characterise the structure of the South African economy are not only racialised but also gender bias. The largest

contributor to overall inequalities came from the labour market at 74.2%. Women workers earn approximately 30% less, on average, than male workers. The report reveals that males are more likely to be employed and have relatively better-paying jobs compared to women.

Furthermore, Women face hunger more often than men, due to disparities in income, limited access to employment or means of production and cultural practices that put them last or allow them smaller portions when food is in short supply. According to Stats SA, in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out around 38% of households were headed by women. Female-headed households are approximately 40% poorer than those headed by men. Also, 48% of female-headed households support extended family members compared to 23% of male-headed households doing the same. In addition, women have to handle supporting children, earning less than men, coping with gender based violence, and struggling with access to resources to improve their lives. There can be no doubt that power relation remains skewed in favor of men.

The nervous conditions of women in our country, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic have reproduced Gender Based Violence and femicide. Already South Africa was named by Interpol as the rape capital of the world. Over a 100 people are raped every day in our country. This means

that the number of people being brutally violated adds up to tens of thousands every year. At the center of this reality is a rape culture which is shaped out of the patriarchal relations

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in society. Girls are made responsible for household chores and care giving, often at the expense of their homework

and further education.

The Department of Health in Gauteng, the most populated province in South Africa, said that more than 23 000 girls under 18 gave birth between April 2020 and March 2021 – of which 934 were under 14 – compared to 14 577 girls aged 19 and having babies under the same province. These shocking statistics reflects rape culture continues to thrive in our society. We call upon law enforcement agencies to follow up on these cases because sexual intercourse with a minor is an act of rape.

Linked to the rape culture in our society is the phenomenon of femicide, which can be understood as the intentional murder of women because they are women. Femicide in the majority of cases is perpetrated by men, but sometimes female family members may be involved. Most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involve ongoing abuse in the home, threats or intimidation, sexual violence or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner. There is also violence against members of the LGBTQI+ community who are victims of murder and corrective rape.

Rape culture, gender based violence, and femicide are premised upon the perpetuation of patriarchy in our society and we must make a conscious decision to wage an ideological struggle against it. We must locate the role that women must play in the radical socio-economic transformation in



our society, where we make a fundamental change in the patterns of ownership, control, and management of the economy. This is of paramount importance because women bear the brunt of the exploitation in our society. In every socio-economic challenge confronting us it is women who are most affected, whether it is poverty, crime, and vulnerability to disease it is women who suffer.

In the struggle for transformation, we must be clear that the education sector is a site of struggle. Women must make advances in academia and we must be deliberate about empowering them to acquire critical skills in the economy, Oxfam confirms that education is the great equalizer in breaching the wealth and income gap between men and women. Education is also an instrument that can be used to socialise young boys and girls

to foster and advance culture that will inform social relations which will reject backward practices and world views of patriarchy.

The ANC and the Women's League have always stood at the forefront of the transformation of society and firmly located the role and position of women in the broader struggle for the liberation of blacks in general and Africans in particular. There can be no doubt that the gender question is firmly on the national agenda and we in the ANC have moved along with the women of our country and the broader communities of LGBTQI+ as we confront the challenges posed by patriarchal social order and advance towards a non-sexist society■

**Cde Zanele Nkomo is an ANC MP and Whip of the Multiparty Women's Caucus*

International Women's Day 2021: Patriarchy in World of Work

■ By **Charlotte Lobe**

The International Women's Day (IWD) has been celebrated for over a century since 1911. I have observed over many years that while many people think of the genesis of IWD as a feminist cause, its roots lie in the labour movement. It all started in 1908, when 15,000 women marched in New York City, United States of America demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. Subsequent to this march, the "Women Workers Day" was celebrated in New York on the 28th February 1909 organised by the Socialist Party of America. This led to the early 20th century Marxist from Germany called Clara Zetkin advocating for its recognition and from 1911 onwards, the celebration of the Women Workers Day grew by leaps and bounds. Clara Zetkin was a member of the Social



Democratic Party (SPD), one of the two major political parties in Germany today. She was active in both the labour movement as well as the women's movement.

In the 1880s, when anti-socialist laws were enforced by the German leader Otto von Bismarck, Clara went into a self-imposed exile in Switzerland and France. During this time, she wrote and distributed prohibited literature, and met leading socialists of the time. Clara also played a significant role in the formation of the Socialist International. Upon her return to Germany, she became

the editor of Die Gleichheit ('Equality'), SPD's newspaper for women, from 1892 to 1917. In 1910, three years after Clara became a co-founder of the International Socialist Women's Congress (ISWC), she proposed at a conference of the ISWC held in Copenhagen that the IWD be celebrated annually. However, the IWD was only institutionalised in 1975 by the UN as part of the International Women's Year and the beginning of the International Women's Decade. The IWD has now assumed a global dimension and it is celebrated in most countries.

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This year, we celebrated the International Women's Day under the theme: "Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow". The theme underscores the reality that without gender equality today, a sustainable and an equal future, remains a pipe dream. It is aligned with the priority theme for the upcoming 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66): "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes". The UNCSW66 and 67 in 2023 are under the Chairship of South Africa. This is an important milestone because South Africa is at the helm of thinking anew the gender agenda towards Planet 50/50 in 2030. We wish Ambassador Matu Joyini, South Africa's Permanent Representative to the UN, well in her capacity as the Chairperson of CSW66 and 67.

If we were to go back to basics and reflect on the situation of a working woman in 2021, the vexing question is: Are the conditions favourable enough for women to grow and thrive or are they expected in this day and age to still perform twice as much to prove their worth in an environment that is male dominated? This question has bothered me a lot in the past few years because women all over the world sometimes work in environments that are not welcoming to their talents and their expertise. Their assertiveness is sometimes



A woman who stands for what she believes in will be isolated and other women will be used as proponents of patriarchy.



viewed as arrogance or lack of respect for the other gender.

In order to amplify this let me pose a few questions... Have you ever felt like you have been in a particular environment for years and you still feel like you do not quite fit in? It can be a church, a neighbourhood, workplace or better still, a branch of the ANC. I have served in various capacities in both the organisation and government but I sometimes feel like a complete stranger because of established traditions and norms, all of which are patriarchal in nature. I sometimes look at women

around me and would silently say: Did "she" really say that? or Do we still have "women" who think like this, in this day and age? I also listen to men talk and sometimes cadres of the movement and would sit there in total awe, amazed at the patriarchal venom they spit.

Most conversations taking place in both the public and the private sector about gender equality tend to focus on how women should strive for gender equality and not how organisations should entrench and promote gender equality. They tend to focus on arming women in the world of work with tools to deal with discrimination, not arming the organisations with requisite skills and tools to entrench gender equality and women's empowerment. Women are put on leadership courses that are never ending and believe me, I support any programme that affirms women. However, you empower women and expect them to continue working in untransformed environments. So, the burden of gender equality is put squarely on the shoulders of women, not on the organisation or on the management of institutions. In this way we fail to map the problem correctly and not recognise the elephant in the room: "Patriarchy". I have also observed this trend in the ANC, where the responsibility of gender equality is put squarely on the shoulders of women or is relegated to the ANC Women's League, thereby perpetuating a notion that gender equality is the responsibility of women and women alone.

SPECIAL FOCUS

Patriarchy by its nature is systemic and as former DSG, Cde Thenjiwe Mtintsho would say, it is like an amoeba that changes shape to fit into any and every aspect of everyday life. It is about how male dominance manifests itself in conversations around the boardroom tables, in the cafeteria or passages at work, on the street or at church or at home and even in meetings of the ANC. Patriarchy is particularly promoted at workplace by men who have earned their power through the old-boys networks over decades. May I also not shy away from saying that it is also promoted in the organisation by male Comrades who have earned their stripes through an old-boys networks over decades. In the current discussions of the leadership question, the old boys network will use terms like generational mix only in order to affirm one of their own. The generational mix discussions will only think of a woman when it arrives at a gender equality station called “Deputy Secretary General”. By the way, this station has been reserved for women since 1994. In 2022 as we prepare for the 55th National Conference, it will be good that in the spirit of gender equality and generational mix, this position be given to a male Comrade.

Patriarchy in the boardrooms within the public and the private sector usually targets women who are seen to be vocal or are inconveniencing the old-boys network by disrupting the status quo. Once this woman has said something profound,



they will either rubbish it or turn the session into an ideathon (marathon of ideas not a battle of ideas) showcasing their knowledge of the subject matter not contributing towards enriching the ideas put by a woman. In other words, the discussion is more about ideas chasing each other not a battle where the superior idea eventually wins the day. In their minds they cannot fathom a woman with clarity of mind.

The most annoying part is after raising their views, of course in a very condescending manner, they will immediately go out and not engage further on the subject. You will be left there fuming alone preaching to the converted or even responding to people who never asked a question or made a remark. The idea is just to remind you that it is the men’s world after all. During lunch they will regroup

around a particular table, very proud of themselves. Patting each other on the shoulders and saying: “Mchana or Chief, you dealt with that matter properly blah blah”... You look at these pathetic liars and in your heart you are like but “Bro, you ran away from the debate”. In the midst of this conversation they will be laughing out loud and lying to each other in order to feel good and protect their fragile egos.

A woman who stands for what she believes in will be isolated and other women will be used as proponents of patriarchy. They will assume positions as spokespersons of patriarchy and justify why certain things cannot be done. This upsets me even more but I always come back to my senses and understand that these women were raised in a patriarchal society, so their posture is a reflection of our social construct. What these sisters of mine do not understand is that male privilege is very much still part of our social fabric. Patriarchy assumes that women are weak and incapable of fulfilling any function outside the family home. It is a cultural shock for some men to see a capable woman. This threatens the Boy’s Club and as such a protectionist egoistic gear kicks in. The reality is that patriarchy is something women cannot fight on their own, it requires society to reject it in all its forms and manifestations. It requires men to stand up against male privilege by eliminating the sense of power and brotherhood created by toxic masculinity■

Contextualising the problems afflicting the ANC today

■ By **Ngoako Ramatlhodi**

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Following years of slow and consistent decline of electoral support for the ANC, twenty seven years post freedom, we are most certainly at the tipping point, with prospects of the ANC loosing the 2024 National elections. The 2021 local government elections results being the latest and worst example of a downward spiral, in this regard. Twenty seven years later we remain the most unequal society in the world, with the black majority continuing to languish at the bottom of the economic ladder. This is the result of a partial democratization of the state without the corresponding democratization of the apartheid production relations.

The question is what went wrong ?

To answer this question we need to remind ourselves as to what were the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution. The Strategy and Tactics, adopted in December 2007 answers this question in the following words: “ The main content of the NDR is the liberation of Africans in particular and Blacks in general from political and socio-economic bondage...Therefore, fundamental to the destruction of apartheid is the eradication of apartheid production relations. This is more than just an issue of social justice. It is also about the fact that these relations had become a brake on the



advancement of technology and competitiveness of the economy.”

This quotation is the reinstatement of the tried and tested policy of the African National Congress. In an article entitled, “ ANC’s fatal concessions”, republished in

the Times, 1 September 2011, I had this to say about our Constitution. Apartheid forces sought to and succeeded in retaining white domination under a black government. This they achieved by emptying the legislature and the executive of real political power... We thus have a Constitution that reflects the great compromise, a compromise tilted heavily in favour of forces against change... This imbalance is reflected across the length and breadth of the country in economic, social and even political terms to some extent.

The objective of protecting white economic interests, having been achieved with the adoption of the New constitution,

PERSPECTIVE

a grand and total strategy to entrench it for all times, was rolled out. In this regard, power was systematically taken out of the legislature and the executive to curtail efforts and initiatives aimed at inducing fundamental changes. In this way elections would be regular rituals handing empty victories over to the ruling Party...

Seventeen years later, a moment has arrived for an honest and collective reflection on the state of the nation and the common future we are duty-bound to build, as failure would lead to colossal destruction of the country. One is initiating this debate in the context of the foregoing analysis. In the last seventeen years we have witnessed sustained and relentless efforts to migrate the little power left with the executive and the legislature to the judiciary. The main drivers in this process being the opposition, who feel relatively strong in those fronts, given the mainly still untransformed judiciary.”

The foregoing synopsis on what went wrong leads us to the next question which is.

Why it went wrong.

In the same article I penned in 2011, one sought to answer the question along the following lines. “ In case we do not remember, it was the collapse of the then Soviet Union which provided the most immediate catalyst to negotiations for a new and democratic South Africa.

In apartheid South Africa in the late 1980’s, the regime could only keep a modicum of

“
**We
cannot
renew
the ANC
in its
current
form.**
”

law and order through the state of emergency, as it could no longer rule in the same old way. On the other hand, the masses were no longer willing to be ruled in the same old way. An orderly retreat for the regime meant giving up elements of political power to the black majority, while migrating substantial power away from the legislature and the executive and vesting such in the judiciary, (given the untransformed nature of the judiciary).

Interestingly, and perhaps reflecting the balance of forces at the time, the movement was willing to make this fundamental and substantial concession.

However, the concession described cannot be explained only as a reflection of or a result of a balance of forces at the time. In this regard, one ventures to suggest that the negative experience suffered by the black majority under apartheid government might explain the ease with which the liberation movement embraced what one calls the emptying of the state.

Pro-apartheid forces sought to and succeeded in retaining white domination under a black government. This they achieved by emptying the legislature and the executive of real political power. On the other hand the liberation movement was overwhelmed by a desire to abolish any form of discrimination and as a result made fatal concessions.” The above is part of the explanation of why we are at the tipping point, and on the verge of losing even the very political power we had won through successive general elections.

The wrongness manifested themselves in many ways:

On the eve of the negotiations that gave birth to democratic South Africa, we suspended the armed struggle, we abolished the political underground, we dissolved our intelligence, we abandoned mass struggles, we forgot about international support. We became a liberation movement in name only, a body that sought to wage the struggle stripped of all organizational tools to do so. This was the second fatal mistake. The regime did none of the above, whilst our energies

PERSPECTIVE

were consumed by the rush, just like the gold rush of old, as we outcompeted one another in the race to be absorbed into the bosom of the system that we once fought so hard to defeat, having forgotten what we have always preached that: “Apartheid could not be reformed but had to be destroyed and dismantled.”

Faced with the reality just described, the ANC’s ability to prosecute the struggle to achieve the objectives of the national democratic revolution were reduced to naught. The 1994 Strategy and Tactics of the ANC described our break through as a beach head. The beach head analogy could best be understood by remembering the day in 1652, when Jan Van Riebeck set his foot for the first time on the South African soil, disembarking from three ships, namely, Die Reiger, Die Dromodaries and Die Goode Hoop. So in 1994 we understood that the journey to liberate our country had only just began. This realization is at variance with the actions described above in preparation for negotiations. In fact it was a false proclamation to delude ourselves into believing against hope, the harsh reality that we had sown the seeds that would result in a miscarriage of the revolution.

At its 1991 Durban Conference the ANC revived the position of the Speaker of the house and renamed it the National Chairperson. President Oliver Tambo was elected to that position and became the custodian of ANC



policy, organizational discipline, ideology and doctrine of the movement. To the uninitiated, at its conception the ANC was conceived as a Parliament of the people, as opposed to the white Parliament of 1910 which gave birth to the white Union of South Africa. Hence the position of the speaker of the Parliament of the people.

The last speaker of the ANC Parliament before the banning in the early sixties was cde Govern Mbeki. As conceived the position of, National Chair, would be occupied by senior comrades such as Mbeki and Tambo. The reason being that they would have enough authority to address problems manifesting in the organization. We changed this in Mafikeng, when we elected cde Lekota as the chair instead of Madiba. In the position of National Chair Nelson Mandela would have been able to mediate the early skirmishes between comrades Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma.

Possibly we would have saved the movement of the cancerous factional battles currently devouring it. (Kgalema Motlante)

Challenges of mass recruitment:

Post the unbanning the ANC went on a massive recruitment campaign without initiation and guidance of new members through political education, and without evaluating each initiate as to his/her suitability to be a member and to occupy leadership positions in the branches and other levels of the movement. A liberation movement worth its salt would not have committed such an era. Interestingly, this was not forgotten when it came to deployments into government positions, which suggests that failure to create a structure similar to the deployment committee to deal with the question of new members might have been a commission and not just an omission. In which case, this would speak to the abandonment of the ideological posture, where political education is reduced to the work of a sub-committee of the NEC instead of it being the work of the entire movement undertaken by members who have undergone the initiation process and those still being mentored.

The introduction of the political initiation is being suggested as part of the initiatives to address the subjective weaknesses tearing our organization apart. This body should be composed of tried and tested cadres who should recruit to its ranks

PERSPECTIVE

members of the ANC earmarked for intensive political education and ideological reorientation. These new recruits become full members of the political initiation structure upon completion of tasks, as would be tabulated in the training program.

Chief amongst these being the code of behavior of members in relation to the following: their interaction with the whole movement, the society at large and their behavior once deployed to leadership positions, particularly in government. Leadership positions remain open to all ANC members. In fact, membership of the political underground should not entitle anyone to a position of leadership in the ANC or in government. Such a member shall earn their position in the same way as any other member of the ANC.

Leadership positions should not be reserved for members of the political underground. The Movement as a whole, includes the ANC, SACP, COSATU, SANCO and other organs of the mass democratic movement. The code of the political initiation should prohibit its members from exposing such membership to those not recruited to join. Primary compliance must be determined by the observance of this rule.

The debate on the two centers of power:

This debate is as old as our democracy and it was occasioned by the situation where the ANC became a liberation movement in government. The perspective

that won the day in the past was that in order to have cohesion in all matters political and administrative the President of the ANC had to be the Head of the State, the Chairperson of the Province had to be the Premier and so it cascades down.

Experience of the past twenty seven years has exposed the weakness of this system in that it gave too much power to individuals who became too big for the organization. We have witnessed with horror and dismay the ugly consequences of the concentration of power in individuals with very little internal accountability. In time it has become clear, that the separation of the position of the President of the ANC from the President of the country, is something we should give serious thought to. This is the option favored by the writer.

The system, without internal checks and balances such as we have, has proven to be a total failure in terms of delivering on the goals of the National democratic revolution. The country needs a strong ANC, able to reign in its members and deployees from doing as they wish in positions of leadership. In order to build such a strong ANC we need a strong team of full timers at the heard quarters, led by the President, and the SG. Their job will be to reconstruct and redirect the ANC into a liberation movement, it proclaims to be; ideologically, organizationally and in line with our revolutionary doctrines, ethos and discipline

so as to undo the damage visited upon the ANC, when we allowed colonialism of a special type to reform us instead of us destroying it. We need a new way, which is a movement away from the reformed and corrupt ANC, as represented by many of its leaders, who fell prey to poisonous venom injected by the ugly tentacles, of the socio-economic relations of colonialism of a special type that remains strong and robust. We cannot renew the ANC in its current form. We must reconstruct it, in order to restore its ability to eradicate the apartheid social relations. Once this is accomplished, the ANC achieved the objectives of the NDR and our struggle will have been vindicated.

The observations made in my 2011 article remain relevant to the day. However, new developments have come to the fore, which requires serious attention. Since then, the role of a transformed and independent judiciary, the chapter nine institutions, and elements of civil society have proven to be a bulwark against primitive accumulation methods adopted by some members of the ANC, who sought to join the lofty heights, enjoyed by the ruling class of a colony of a special type, the ANC government is presiding over. South Africa being such a colony as described in my problem statement. The primitive accumulation found expression in the piranha like feeding on state resources at the expense of the victims of the colonialism of a special type ■

PERSPECTIVE**LILIAN NGOYI**
LIFTED FROM OBSCURITY

In a tribute to struggle stalwart Lilian Ngoyi, her great-grandson NQABA NGOYI honours her life and her often overlooked contribution to South Africa's fight for freedom during the Apartheid era

Lilian Ngoyi, or Ma'Ngoyi as she was affectionately known, is an unsung hero of the Apartheid struggle. It's high time that her story is told. Ma'Ngoyi led a quiet life before she rose up to fight the regime. Her days in Soweto were spent behind a sewing machine in the confines of her matchbox house. These houses are now commonly known as RDP houses and have come to typify the townships. The semi-detached homes line the streets of some locations in Soweto and many other South African townships and often strike a nostalgic nerve with those who grew up in them whenever they return to the township to visit. A hotbed of political tension and uprisings, Soweto was very instrumental in shaking the very foundations of the monster of Apartheid.

SUPPRESSION OF COMMUNISM ACT

Like the political warriors Steve Biko, Albert Luthuli and Winnie Mandela, she fell victim to the Suppression of Communism Act passed by apartheid architect, JG Strijdom, which deemed that any act of defiance against the laws of segregation would be punishable by law. Her life was unbearably difficult after the conviction. With each lapsing banning order, another would be imposed upon her, much longer, harsher and

even more dehumanising. Some of the conditions of Ma'Ngoyi's banning orders were that she could not be with more than two people at a time (including family members) as that would've been considered a political gathering. Any form of political activism was also forbidden and no news of her was allowed in the press. Consequently, she was unable to make a living. This made her already difficult life even more unliveable.

THE ACQUITTAL

Ma'Ngoyi and 155 other treason trialists were acquitted in 1961. After her acquittal, she seemed to have disappeared into complete oblivion. And that's strange for the first woman elected to the executive committee of the African National Congress, and who helped launch the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) – an organisation for which she served as the leader. In that capacity, Ma'Ngoyi travelled to countries like England, China, Germany, Russia, Switzerland and Romania where she engaged with other women leaders involved in left-wing politics. This was at a time when it was unheard of for black women in South Africa to preside over conferences and make speeches on the international stage. Her travels cemented her resolve to continue fighting for the liberation of black people in



South Africa. She observed that while South Africans languished in racial segregation, other countries thrived in the absence of racism. And all of this with only a standard six qualification behind her name.

FREEDOM TO THE END

Lilian Ngoyi died on 13 March 1980, at the age of 69. She died a poor old woman, but her spirit was never dampened. Freedom was always a tantalising prospect for her, and she chased it to the bitter end. Sometimes I close my eyes and I see her frail body in the days leading up to her passing. It was hard to imagine that she once spearheaded a massive march of 20 000 women against the Pass Laws that existed in the 1950s, resulting in what is now commemorated as National Women's Day. Yes, her body was slowly giving in, but her mind and determination were ever so steely. I took her delicate hands in mine and reassured her that her struggle was not in vain, that freedom had come. She whispered: "What is freedom if there is no freedom for everyone?" (see This week in History of this edition) ■

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ANC Statement on the...

2021 Q4 GDP Data



The African National Congress (ANC) welcomes the announcement today by Statistics South Africa that the economy grew by 1.2% in the fourth quarter of 2021. This was after gross domestic product (GDP) shrunk by 1.7% in the third quarter of last year, mainly due to the violent unrest in July that had a broad negative impact on economic activity.

Overall, according to Stats SA, South Africa's economy saw growth of 4.9% last year compared to the record Covid-19 driven contraction of 6.4% in 2020. There were improvements in a number of sectors: agricultural production expanded by 11.2%, thanks to the good rains we have seen over the last 12 months and the hard work of our farmers and the workers they employ. Manufacturing, services and transport also expanded.

Whilst we acknowledge the statistical base effect of the 4.9% growth, we need to maintain this economic growth level.

The current data is evidence that our economy is on the road to recovery, although the rate of current and future

economic growth is insufficient to achieve our aim of reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Worryingly, the data release showed that half of the sectors that make up the economy were in contraction in the fourth quarter of 2021. Mining production fell by 3.1%, while the construction, electricity, government and finance sectors also fell. We also note with concern that the overall size of the economy remains smaller than what it was before the pandemic struck in early 2020.

As the governing party, our number one economic priority is to accelerate the pace of economic growth and job creation. This priority must shape all macroeconomic and microeconomic policies. We are fully aware that it is only through a sustained period of economic growth that South Africa will be able to significantly reduce unemployment and improve the lives of our people.

As outlined in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), and emphasized in the State of the Nation Address (SONA) and the Budget Speech, we must act urgently to deepen social

compacting and broaden consensus around what needs to be done to drag our economy out of the mire. As the ANC, we are committed to making a number of decisive, pro-growth interventions to improve South Africa's economic performance.

We urge government, working with social partners, to put in place measures that will narrow the production gap, reignite growth and create jobs.

Based on the ERRP, the government is making progress on economic reforms and targeted policy interventions. These include placing the investment in infrastructure at the centre of the economic recovery.

To reap the rewards of these reforms, and at a time of increasing uncertainty around the world due to the lingering threat of the coronavirus and the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, we must also commit ourselves to a path of policy certainty. This means we must pursue structural transformation of our economy while also heeding the necessity to nurturing a conducive environment for growth, investment and jobs■

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

12 - 18 March

Sources: www.un.org, www.au.int
and *The Africa Fact Book (2020)*

12 March 1868

British annexed Basotholand

The Kingdom of Lesotho was annexed as a protectorate on request from Moshoeshe, credited as the founder of the Basotho Kingdom. This happened after invasions by the Boers from the Orange Free state in 1867 and 1868. King Moshoeshe appealed to the British for protection, and on 12 March 1868 his country became a British protectorate, and the current borders of Lesotho were established. Most of their previous territory was lost, specifically the fertile farming area west of the Caledon River, which was ceded to the Boers. Lesotho only regained its independence from Britain, over 100 years later, in 1966.

12 March 1968

Mauritius Independence Day

The African island state of Mauritius on this day gained independence from Britain and the day it became a republic in 1992. The island was first colonised by the French in 1767. Mauritius is described as a 'melting pot of different

nationalities - descendants of African, Chinese, Indian, and European immigrants and slaves.' Since independence, the island state has from a low-income, agriculturally based economy to a high-income diversified economy with growing industrial, financial, ICT and tourist sectors. In 2018, Mauritius had a higher education enrolment rate of 40.8%.

12 March 2005

Pioneer tomato farmer Bertie van Zyl buried in Mooketsi

Bertie van Zyl (72), founder and owner of ZZ2, the biggest tomato growing operation in the country and one of the biggest in the world, was buried in Mooketsi, Limpopo. He had died the week previously in a Pretoria hospital. The funeral was attended by top government officials, amongst them Thoko Didiza, the minister of agriculture, Tito Mboweni, the Reserve Bank governor, Mbhazima Shilowa, the premier of Gauteng, MECs and farmers. Thousands of his farm workers also attended the service. Didiza said Van Zyl played a crucial role in the development of emerging farmers.

13 March 1980

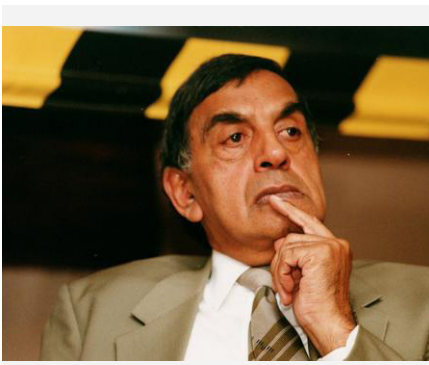
Lillian Ngoyi passed on



Lillian Masediba Ngoyi, one of the four leaders of the 1956 Women's March passed away on this day. Born in 1911 in Pretoria, she worked as a nurse, a short stint as a domestic worker, and later as a textile worker, where she joined the Garment Workers Union. She was amongst the founding members of the ANC Women's League, and became active in the Defiance campaign of the 1950s. She served on the ANC Transvaal executive, and was the first woman to be elected to the National Executive Committee of the ANC in 1954, a decade after the ANC opened full membership to women. She was elected the first president of the Federation of South African Women, and a leader of the 1956 Women's march. She was one of the 156 Treason Trialists, and was detained and banned by the apartheid regime. Newspapers were not allowed to quote her. Throughout her life, she remained active in the liberation struggle and an icon of the women's movement.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY**13 March 1888****De Beers Consolidated Mines formed**

The hitherto monopoly over South African diamond trade was registered in Kimberley, with Barney Bernato at the helm. Cecil John Rhodes in 1871 bought shares into De Beers, and in 1929 Ernest Oppenheimer became De Beers board chair. Anglo America became the largest shareholder in De Beers in 2011 when it bought into the Oppenheimer family stake of 40%. At some point, De Beers controlled between 80-90% of the rough diamonds trade in the world, but with new entrants, this is now 30-40%, and is still regarded as the world's 'leading diamond company.'

13 March 2004**Dullah Omar passed on**

Dullah Mohamed Omar was born in Observatory, Cape Town on 26 May 1934 and grew up in District Six. After matric he did a law degree at UCT, became involved in the New Unity Movement and after gaining his LLB in 1957, went on to

practice law, taking on political trials and human rights issues. He was active in the New Unity Movement, but later joined the Rylands Civic Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADEL). Both organisations became affiliates of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983. As a human rights lawyer, he represented Poqo, PAC, ANC, BCM and student activists, and was detained, surveilled and banned by the regime. He was elected as the UDF W Cape chairperson and Vice President of Nadel in 1987. Omar was the first Minister of Justice of the new South Africa and was later appointed Minister of Transport by President Thabo Mbeki. He died of cancer on 13 March 2004 and is survived by his wife and three children.

14 March 1982**ANC London offices bombed**

On this day the ANC headquarters in London, England, was bombed. General Johann Coetzee, former head of the South African security police, and seven other policemen, claimed responsibility and applied for amnesty before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Coetzee's accomplices were Craig Williamson, John McPherson, Roger Raven, Wybrand du Toit, John Adam, James Taylor and Eugene de Kock.

14 March 1984**Koeberg nuclear power station becomes operational**

Located on the West Coast, Koeberg provides Western Cape with electricity, contributing at some 6.5% of South Africa's electricity supply (in 2018 down to 4%). According to Eskom (owner), it is the only nuclear power station in Africa, with the largest turbine generators in the Southern Hemisphere, and the most southerly-situated nuclear power station in the world. The power station is surrounded by a 3 000-ha nature reserve owned by Eskom, with over 150 different species of birds. The power plant's original lifespan was until 2024, but recent upgrade puts it in commission until 2044.

15 March 1954**Ghetto Act passed**

The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act (Act 28 of 1946) was introduced on 15 March 1946 and passed in June 1946. This prevented Indians from occupying land outside certain exempted areas and forced them to live in certain restricted areas. In return for restrictions on land ownership, Indians were offered a limited form of parliamentary representation, mainly through White representatives. This act, labelled the 'Ghetto Act' caused an outcry in the Indian community. Following it, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, with other younger leaders like G.M. Naiker, formed an anti-segregationist lobby,

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

which soon ousted the older leadership. Naiker became the chairman of the Natal Indian Congress and Dadoo of the Transvaal Indian Congress.

15 March 1961**South African withdraws from the Commonwealth**

The Union of South Africa of 1910 was still a British colony, but in October 1960 a referendum amongst whites were held on whether the country should become a republic, distancing itself from the British monarchy. 52% voted yes, and then Prime Minister Verwoerd informed the British, but still wanted to remain a member of the Commonwealth (an association for British colonies). African member states, as well as India and Canada objected because of the apartheid policy. Verwoerd on this day announced that South Africa will therefore leave the Commonwealth. South Africa was invited to rejoin the Commonwealth with effect from January 1994.

15 March 2015**Collins Chabane dies in car accident**

At the time of his passing on this day, Ohm Collins Chabane (15 April 1960 – 15 March 2015) was a member of the National Executive Committee since 2007, a Member of Parliament and Minister in the Presidency for Monitoring and Evaluation. Cde Collins was born in Xikundu, village, Limpopo, matriculated from Shingwedzi High School and registered for a B.Sc degree at Turfloop University. His commitment to freedom of his people took precedent and he joined ANC underground activities at the age of seventeen (17), went into exile in May 1980 where he joined Umkhonto we Sizwe, received military training in Angola and on his return worked in the underground, until his arrest and sentence to Robben Island from 1984 to 1990. In prison, he resumed formal studies, obtaining a Diploma in Electrical Engineering from Technikon South Africa, started studying aviation, and later completed a Diploma in Management from Arusha in Tanzania. After his release from prison, he served as Provincial Secretary of the ANC in the Northern Province from 1990 to 1998 and was instrumental in the re-establishment of ANC structures in Limpopo Province. After the dawn of democracy, he was a Member of Parliament, served as MEC in the Limpopo Provincial Government in 1998. As NEC member he served in the Constitutional committee

16 March 1892**Dr JS Maroka born**

Dr James Sebe Moroka, medical doctor, landowner and politician who was elected president-general of the African National Congress (ANC) from 1949 to 1952, was born in Thaba Nchu, Orange Free State. He was a great grandson of Chief Moroka I of the Barolong Boo Moroka at Thaba Nchu.

16 March 1984**SA and Mozambique sign Nkomati Accord**

Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord with apartheid South Africa, a non-aggression pact where the. South African government undertook no longer to support the RENAMO rebel group and the Mozambique government undertook to no longer provide harbor to the liberation movements (ANC and PAC). President Samora Machel signed this accord under great pressure, with RENAMO engaged in a civil war and the SADF incursions into Mozambique. The Nkomati accord did not last long, with further invasions by SADF.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

16 March 1994

New Flag and National Anthem Unveiled



The Transitional Executive Council unveiled South Africa's new "interim" national flag and Die Stem and Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika as joint national anthems, and the flag was first flown on 27 April 1994, when all South Africans went to the polls to elect a government, for the first time in the country's history. The flag and anthem were adopted as national symbols.

17 March 1820

British Settlers arrive in South Africa

After the Napoleonic wars, Britain experienced a serious unemployment problem; to solve this problem, it started sending settlers to its colonies. The first British Settlers arrived in South Africa on 17 March 1820, in Table Bay on board the Nautilus and the Chapman till then a Dutch colony, and started the process of the British takeover of South Africa, especially the Cape colony and Natal. This first group was sent to Algoa Bay, later Port Elizabeth and now Gqeberha. The settlers were sent to settle

in the Eastern Cape, as a buffer against the amaXhosa and to boost the English-speaking population. The settlers were given farms and equipment to support them, near Bathurst. Others continued on to Natal (now KwaZulu Natal). This period saw one of the largest stages of British settlement in Africa, and approximately 4,000 Settlers arrived in the Cape, in around 60 different parties, between April and June 1820.

17 March 1992

Whites-only referendum vote Yes for end to Apartheid

On this day in 1992, nearly 69 percent of white South African voters backed FW De Klerk's referendum - which included the repeal of racially discriminatory laws - and effectively endorsed the dismantling of apartheid.

17 March 2000

Fire at Domsday Cult headquarters in Uganda led to discovery of bodies

A fire broke out at the headquarters of the doomsday cult Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God in Kanungu, Uganda, when their church was burned, in what was alternately called a mass suicide or a homicide perpetrated by the movement's leaders. Following this incident, in which more than 300 people were killed, including 78 children, mass

graves in various locations were discovered, containing the remains of people believed to be murdered (most of them stabbed). This raised the death toll to 780 and possibly more, the largest such incident in recent history at that time. The MRTCG was an ultra-conservative Catholic group, registered in Uganda in 1994 and started a boarding school in 1998, which was deregistered because it was in conflict with the country's constitution. They predicted that the end of the world will be on 17 March 2000, and when this did not happen, the mass suicide, homicide took place.

17 March 2000.

First National Lottery begins



The first national lottery started in South Africa, with its slogan Thatha maChance, Thatha maMillions. A percentage of proceeds of the Lottery goes towards arts, sports, culture and community development, and it is regulated by the National Lottery Commission.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

18 March 1950

University of Free State founded



The University of the Free State was founded on 18 March 1950. The institution began as a small college in what was then the Orange River Colony, called the Grey College School in 1904. By 1907, the college had 29 students and ten lecturers and in 1910 the college was declared an official educational institution in Arts and Sciences. In 2001, the University was renamed the University of the Free States. Today the University boasts over 30 000 students in seven faculties and a satellite campus in QwaQwa.

18 March 1963

Guinea-Bissau gains Independence



Guinea-Bissau, the home of Amílcar Cabral, launched its war of independence against Portugal (joined by Cabo Verde). Guinea-Bissau is in West Africa, and borders Senegal and Guinea, with a population of just under 2 million people. Historically, the territory was part of the Kaaba/Ngabou Empire (1537–1867), part of the Mali Empire, until being colonised by the Portuguese from the 16th century. Cabral and others formed the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), which conducted an armed liberation struggle against colonisation.

18 March 1979

Government claims responsibility for Mdluli's death in detention



The South African government admitted responsibility for the death of the African National Congress (ANC) member,

Joseph Mdluli (50), on 19 March 1976 and agreed to pay damages to his family. A claim for loss of support by Mdluli's widow against the minister of justice and police was settled out of court. She received the amount of R28 616. Joseph Mdluli died of an injury to his neck while being detained in Durban security headquarters. His death occurred just a day after his arrest in connection with the 1976 Gwala treason trial. Four security policemen were charged with culpable homicide, namely Mr Frederick Van Zyl, Col. A.R.C. Taylor, Mr Mandlakayise Patrick Makhanya and Mr Zabulon Ngobese. During their trial they claimed that Mdluli had tried to escape and had fallen over a chair. A pathologist presented evidence disputing the police version. All four accused were acquitted on 25 October 1976, the fifth day of the trial. The

presiding judge said there was insufficient evidence to connect them directly to the death. He called for further investigation ■

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

12 - 16 March 2022

Sources: www.un.org, www.au.int and The Africa Fact Book (2020)

12 March

Plant a Flower Day 2021

This day aims to plant flowers in your house and garden. Planting is the process to place a seed or plant in soil or another substrate so that it may live and grow. There are about 400,000 different species of flowers on the planet.

12 March

Mauritius National Day

The African island state of Mauritius, located in the Indian Ocean celebrates this day, when in 1968 it gained independence from Britain, and on the same day in 1992 when it became a Republic.

14 March

International Day of Mathematics

Mathematics plays an important role in such areas as artificial intelligence, climate change, energy, economics, business, social and sustainable development, and to improving the quality of life in both the developed and the developing worlds. The day is also celebrated as World Pi Day, which refers to Pi, a symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant. It is the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter which is approx. 3.14.

14 March

International Day for Action for Rivers

Rivers provide water for irrigation, domestic supply, power generation and industry as well as a range of other ecosystem services and biodiversity. Wikipedia lists over 200 rivers in South Africa, although some of them are really spruite, which is what "small, often dry tributary streams" are called. A report by government in 2019 indicated that only 15% of our rivers are ecologically healthy.

14-20 March

South African Library Week

South African Library Week was originated by the Library and Information Sciences Association of South Africa (LIASA) to raise awareness about the importance of public libraries in communities. The theme for 2022 is "ReImagine, RePurpose, Rediscover Libraries!" Despite the role they play, public libraries face an increasingly difficult environment; more people use them (especially learners), but face tightening budgets. According to Nazeem Hardy, president of LIASA is quoted in the Daily Maverick (7/3/2022): "I think we should never discount the role that the library plays in providing people access to reading material in a country where the literacy rates are appalling, where books are expensive."

15 March

World Consumer Rights Day

The day raises awareness about the rights of consumers, in the face of often powerful companies and brands, which need to be held accountable. This often requires government regulations, for example through the SA Bureau of Standards and/or specific legislation around labeling of products and more generally, the Consumer Protection Act of 2008, in order to "promote a fair, accessible and sustainable marketplace for consumer products and services." The theme for 2021 - #BetterDigitalWorld - focuses on access to digital products which protects the information and privacy of consumers that act against cyber-bullying, fake news and protect minors.

16 March

World Social Work Day

World Social Work Day advocates for the important role this plays in ensuring that the needs of vulnerable individuals, families and communities are met. The theme for 2022 is "Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind".

18 March

World Sleep Day

With the 2022 theme of Quality Sleep, Sound Mind, Happy World, the day focusses on the importance of sleep to our physical and emotional well-being, and on various sleeping disorders ■

International Women's Day



2022

Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow

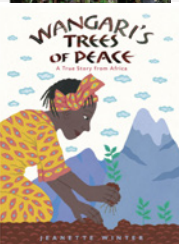
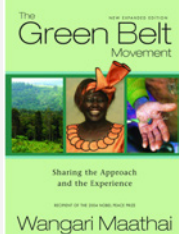
This year's International Women's Day focused on the theme "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow," under the hashtag #BreaktheBias. Although the focus on women and climate change was somewhat overshadowed by the drums of war, it nonetheless provided an opportunity to reflect on how climate change impacts on women and women's agency against environmental degradation.

Regarded as one of 'the greatest challenges facing humanity today, the increase in global warming due to human activities has reached critical points, and increasingly are being seen in climate changes and the frequency of extreme weather conditions.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2017), 80% of people who are displaced by climate change are women and children. At the same time, of all regions of the world, Africa contributed and contributes the least to the emissions that cause global warming, yet it's peoples are most at risk from the damaging consequences. Agriculture in Africa contributes around 60% of employment in the continent, whilst women represent over 46% of the agricultural workforce (AfDB, 2011). Apart from the impact of climate change on agriculture and therefore food security, it also impacts on the means of subsistence for women, due to their gendered social positions, notably food, water and energy supply.

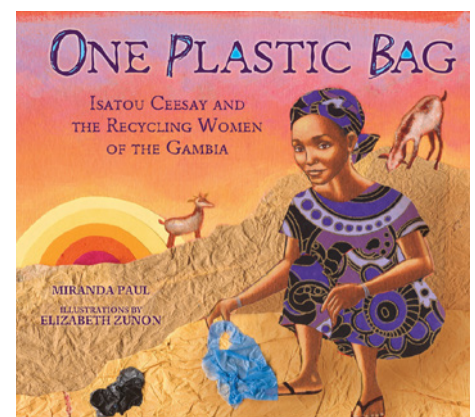
Books that #BreaktheBias

Women, however, have not been passive victims of these circumstances, but have used their agency to work in communities to improve the environment and fight against climate change. The books featured here celebrate some of these remarkable women:

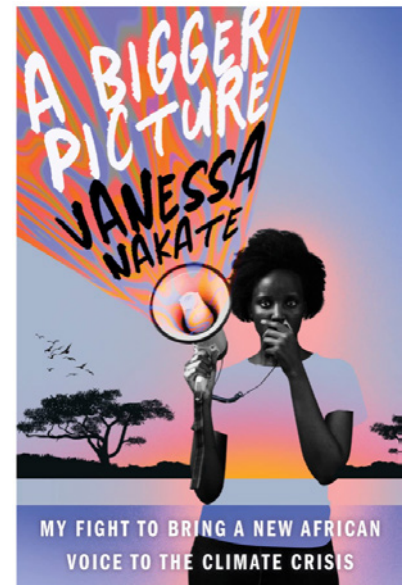


Wangari Maathai (1940-2011), founder of the Kenyan Greenbelt Movement and Nobel Peace Laureate is probably the most famous amongst these women. Realising the impact of environmental degradation on the livelihoods of rural communities, and women in particular, she started the Greenbelt movement in Kenya, building tree nurseries and eventually planting millions of trees all over Kenya. A number of books have been written by and about her, most notably: *The Greenbelt Movement. Sharing its Approach and Experience* (2003), *Unbowed. A Memoir* (2006) and *The Challenge for Africa*, by Wangari Maathai (2009). Books for children: *Mama Miti. Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya*, by Donna Jo Napoli (2010), *Wangari Maathai's Trees of Peace* (2008) by Jeanette Winter; and *Environmental Activist Wangari Maathai* (STEM Trailblazer Bios, 2018), by Jennifer Swanson.

Isatou Ceesay, from The Gambia in West Africa started a movement against plastic, especially plastic bags which were littered everywhere, and transformed her community. Her story is told in *One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia* (2015) by Miranda Paul



Vanessa Nakate, started joining the global student based movement Future for Fridays in Uganda and went on to become a global voice for African young people in the climate change movement. However, Vanessa, like many other African activists in global movement suffered from the culture of erasure. In 2020, she was cut out of a picture with four fellow (white) climate change activists, and again at the UN COP26, was cut out of a picture on Sky News with a Scottish Minister and fellow Swedish activist Greta Thunberg. Vanessa Nakate recounts her experiences of activism, and incidents such as these, in her book *A Bigger Picture. My Fight to Bring a New African Voice to the Climate Crisis* (2021).



Tasneem Essop, former SAYCO activist, Cosatu trade unionist and MEC for Environment, for the last few years have been active in the environmental civil society and social justice movement, and currently serves as the Executive Director of Climate Action Network, described on its website as the world's largest climate network made up of over 1,500 civil society organisations in over 130 countries, together fighting the climate crisis. She has a history of grassroots activism, and also serves on the South African National Planning Commission and the board of SANPARKS. Tasneem story, 'We have to use the R word' is told in *Her Story. Daughters of Modjaji* (2018) by Natasha Alie, Baba-Tamana Gqubule and Thandiwe Matthews.

Her Story | Lead and Make a Positive Difference

We Have to Use the "R" Word

Imagine a world without bees, flowers, trees, elephants and penguins. A world where the weather changes dramatically - sometimes no rain for years, or heavy storms, massive floods, and heatwaves. A world where the poor are left on their own to try to find water, energy for cooking, lighting for their homes, and transport to travel to work.

These changes are already happening and human beings are the main reason why. We made our planet hotter than ever before because we chop down trees until we have no forests. People in rich and middle-income countries eat too much and waste food, and we burn too much fuel with our cars, trucks, planes, in mining, and factories. These activities have harmed our environment.

Tasneem Essop believes this is a social justice issue, and that we need to use "the R word" - revolution - to make a change. She started organising people to fight against injustice at a young age. Tasneem grew up in Cape Town, where her family was forcefully removed from their home in District Six. This experience inspired her to become involved in politics and fight apartheid. She united young artists in her community, creating a group that made T-shirts to help raise awareness about social justice.

Tasneem is also known for her leadership in organising people to protect the environment from destruction. She believes that "You do not need to be in an official position to be a leader. Everyone can be a leader, wherever they find themselves, whether at school, at work, in a community etc. A good leader recognises their own abilities and those of others and together...

Tasneem Essop

they build each other's power to change the things that must be changed in order to improve the lives of people."

Tasneem started her own organisation - the Energy Democracy Initiative - to help the revolution, making sure everyone has energy that does not damage our planet.

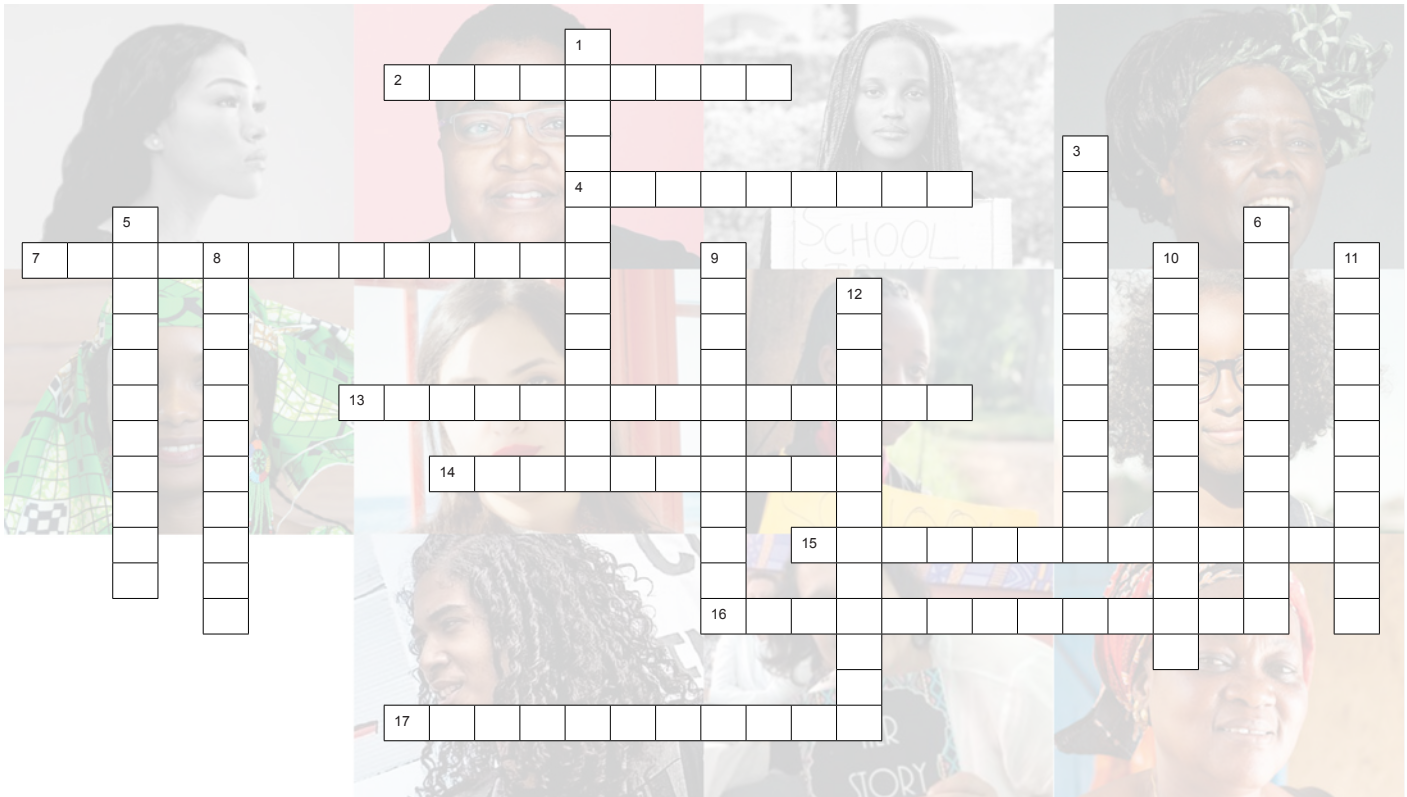
What can you do in your community and at home to reuse, reduce, recycle and take better care of our communities and planet?

Sources

African Development Bank (2011). *Climate Change, Gender and Development in Africa.* Vol. 1, Issue 1, November 2011 UNDP (2017). "Gender, climate change and food security". April 2017, <https://www.undp.org/publications/gender-climate-change-and-food-security>

X-WORD

Women's History Month: Environmentalists



Across

- 2. Young Fridays for Future Activist from India
- 4. Co-founder of US Youth Climate Strike
- 7. Libyan media personality, climate activist, ae founder of Project Mulan
- 13. Founder of Kenya's Green Belt movement planting millions of trees, Nobel Laurette
- 14. President women fish processors, Senegal
- 15. Canadian young activist, fighting for safe drinking water for Indigenous peoples since age 8
- 16. Uganda climate activist faced media erasure
- 17. Started movement to recycle plastic in The Gambia

Down

- 1. Poet, activist, campaigner for decolonization of Hawaii
- 3. Former MEC for Environment, now SANPARK board member, Climate Action director
- 5. Kenyan conservationist, blogger, climate activist, volunteer,
- 6. Feminist, human rights activist, fighter for climate justice, South Africa
- 8. Global icon, activist and author, critique of mega dam projects
- 9. Alternative Nobel Prize in 1993 for challenging large food multi-nationals
- 10. Young South African climate activist, advocating for rights of BIPOC and LGBTQ+
- 11. Chad climate activist for women of the Sahel
- 12. 16-year old campaigner against plastic, founder of Friday for Future Uganda

WORD BANK

Isatou Ceesay
Wangari Maathai
Disha Ravia
Arundhati Roy
Autumn Peltier

Isra Hirsi
Leah Namugerwa
Vandana Shiva
Jamaica Osorio
Vanessa Nakate

Tasneem Essop
Winnie Cheche
Gabriel Klaasen
Anisa Bek Derna
Hindou Ibrahim

Steve Letsike
Fatou Samba

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ANC GALLERY

ANC Regional workshops held country wide by the NEC to analyse 2021 Local government elections results and impact, as well as ANC POA for 2022. Workshops held 26-27 February and 6 March

