



SPECIAL EDITION ON THE 6TH NATIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the
President



A defining moment for the ANC and for our country

■ OPENING ADDRESS BY **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**
TO THE 6TH ANC POLICY CONFERENCE

LESS than two weeks have passed since we laid to eternal rest the Deputy Secretary General of our movement, Comrade Yasmin 'Jessie' Duarte.

We once again bow our heads in sorrow and respect at the pass-

ing of such a great leader of our movement and our people.

As we undertake the important work of this Conference, let us apply ourselves with the humility, the dignity and the determination of our beloved DSG. Let us honour her life and her contri-

bution through our commitment to achieve the free, united and equal South Africa to which she dedicated her life.

This 6th National Policy Conference takes place in the year that we have declared *'The Year of Unity and Renewal to Defend*

Dear Mr President
**Policy Conference: Let a
hundred flowers bloom**

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**A call for an inclusive approach
to economic development**

and Advance South Africa's Democratic Gains'.

This Conference is held in compliance with the ANC Constitution, which says that *"the NEC may convene a Policy Conference, as a recommendation-making body on any matter of policy, whenever it deems it necessary, but the NEC shall convene a National Policy Conference at least six months before the National Conference to review policies of the ANC and to recommend any new or to amend any present policy for consideration by the National Conference"*.

This Policy Conference was supposed to be preceded by the National General Council, for which our Constitution provides.

The COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible for us not only to hold the NGC, but for the ANC to function as it should, which negatively affected the strength of our various structures.

Notwithstanding a number of challenges, including the lack of sufficient resources to hold a Policy Conference of the size to which we are accustomed, we are nonetheless gathered here to discuss critical issues that concern the execution of the National Democratic Revolution.

This in many ways is a defining moment for the African National Congress and for our country.

Our deliberations over the next few days, the resolutions we will adopt at our 55th National Conference, and the actions that we then take, will determine the fate of our movement and indeed the direction of our country.

The delegates to this Policy Conference carry with them the views



of ANC branches and other structures on the most critical issues facing our country today.

They carry the responsibility to shape policy proposals that will deepen the renewal of our movement and hasten the transformation of our society.

As delegates to this Conference you bring here the outcomes of the more than 3,200 branch meetings you held in preparation for this Conference.

The proposals we will deal with here at this conference were discussed at some 40 regional conferences, 6 provincial conferences, and Provincial General Councils that were called to discuss the proposed policies that will be recommended to our 55th National Conference in December.

These processes show the depth and the robustness of our organisation's democratic culture.

This Policy Conference should be seen as a festival of ideas, where the ANC lives up to its role as the leader of society by developing policies that relate to the lived experience of our people where they live to shape the trajectory of our country.

We have exhibited revolutionary discipline in our discussions and our exchanges at branch, regional and provincial level in preparation for this conference. This should underpin our approach to discussions and exchanges at this conference.

Many in the media expect this to be a conference where we will fight amongst ourselves and differ widely on a variety of matters of politics and ideology.

We will demonstrate, in accordance with ANC tradition, that where we might have different views and approaches on various matters, we are always able to build consensus and emerge with coherent policy positions.

This conference needs to send a clear and positive message about our determination to address the challenges that face our people and country.

The National Democratic Revolution currently faces a number of challenges and perils.

Our movement, the ANC, has been weakened on a number of fronts.

The weakened state of our

branches has increased the distance between the ANC and our people.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused untold damage to our economy and society, affecting every part of the world and the way we all live.

The pandemic – together with state capture, service delivery failures and energy insecurity – have contributed to the deepening of poverty, unemployment and inequality in our country.

And now, our people are faced with immediate challenges such as a huge increase in the cost of living brought about by international events that are beyond our control.

We have seen a rise in violent crime, including the recent spate of shootings in public spaces, and criminal syndicates targeting our economic infrastructure and business operations.

Our struggle to overcome the devastating economic and social legacy of apartheid and colonialism – a struggle in which much progress has been made – has been set back many years by these events.

Despite the severe challenges we now confront, we have the ability, as the African National Congress, to turn things around.

We should recall what President Oliver Reginald Tambo said, reflecting on the adversity that our movement has faced. He said: *“We did not tear ourselves apart because of lack of progress at times. We were always ready to accept our mistakes and to correct them. Above all we succeeded to foster and defend the*



unity of the ANC and the unity of our people in general. Even in bleak moments, we were never in doubt regarding the winning of freedom. We have never been in doubt that the people's cause shall triumph.”

The future of the National Democratic Revolution will depend on the decisions and actions we take in this Conference year.

The future of the NDR will also depend on whether we are able to accept our mistakes and correct them.

Above all, it will depend on the unity of the African National Congress.

We are therefore called upon to complete the fundamental renewal and rebuilding of the ANC.

We are also called upon to end corruption, strengthen the state at all levels, grow the economy and create jobs.

The central, defining task of this 6th National Policy Conference is to lay the basis for the restoration of the ANC and the National Democratic Revolution.

To fulfil these tasks, we need to understand the moment we are in.

It is nearly 30 years since we achieved the democratic breakthrough of 1994.

Since then, as a country, we have made important progress in giving effect to the vision of our guiding lodestar document, the Freedom Charter.

While this Conference must recognise and detail the progress we have made, its central purpose is to determine how we can do better and what we must do differently.

It must outline those measures we must undertake to make a dramatic and lasting change in the lives of our people.

Through our Constitution, we have affirmed the fundamental principle that South Africa belongs to all who live in it and that the authority of government must be based on the will of the people.

We have removed many discriminatory and exploitative practices of the past, enacted many of the rights demanded in the Freedom Charter and put in place policies and programmes to meet the basic needs of all South Africans.

But while South Africans have equal rights, we need to deepen, extend and broaden these rights and improve the access of our people to courts, the institutions of state, schools, hospitals and other public facilities.

Since the advent of democracy, government has transferred over 4 million hectares of land through restitution and over 5 million hectares through redistribution, accounting for nearly 11% of commercial farm land.

Laws have been put in place to

provide security of tenure for labour tenants and to prevent arbitrary removals, and government has several support programmes in place for emerging farmers.

Yet, we are still far from where we need to be.

We need to accelerate the distribution of land to all those who work it and all those who need it, and we need to accompany the provision of land with sustainable and effective forms of support.

Despite the setback to our efforts to amend Section 25 of the Constitution, we will continue to pursue all available options, including through legislation like the Expropriation Bill, to implement the resolution of our 54th National Conference on land redistribution without compensation.

We see this as just one of the instruments we have to drive meaningful land reform, not only to correct a historical injustice. It behoves on us to use our land more effectively for growth and transformation.

We remain steadfast in protecting the separation of powers between the executive, legislature and the judiciary.

A key cornerstone of any democracy is an effective, independent, impartial and accessible justice system.

We have enshrined in the Constitution the right of workers to form and belong to trade unions.

The ANC has put in place a range of policy interventions, which have been turned into laws such as the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the Employment Equity Act

and other mechanisms to protect workers' rights and to bring about equality in the workplace.

A national minimum wage has been introduced, in furtherance of the demand in the Freedom Charter, to address the huge wage gap in our economy.

We have put in place a comprehensive and integrated education system. Access to primary education is universal for every single young person.

Through NSFAS, government provides financial support to students from poor and working class backgrounds for tertiary study.

In the past 28 years we have made unprecedented progress in delivering water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal to millions who were denied these services.

Children under the age of six, pregnant women and the indigent are entitled to free medical care at public health facilities. The ANC government also provides nutrition at public schools.

The National Health Insurance is being introduced to ensure that everyone has access to quality health care regardless of their ability to pay.

Despite opposition from a number of quarters there is now broad acceptance for the implementation of the NHI.

Almost 46% of South Africans, including the elderly, children and persons with disabilities, receive social grants.

South Africa is an active member of the Southern African Develop-

ment Community, African Union, United Nations, BRICS, G20 and many other international organisations.

South Africa has been involved in peace initiatives and peace-keeping missions across the African continent.

We continue to campaign for reform of the UN, WTO and other multilateral bodies to ensure that they are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of developing economies.

We continue to mobilise for the right to self-determination for the people of Palestine and Western Sahara.

Despite progress in these and a number of other areas our greatest challenge over the years of our democracy has been to give effect to the demand of the Freedom Charter that 'The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth'.

It is undeniably true that, when compared to the apartheid years, the overwhelming majority of our people live today in conditions that are mostly improved.

More people have access to housing and basic services, more households have been electrified, there have been enormous advances in health care and education and economic opportunities have been opened to millions of black and women South Africans.

We have competition policies and other measures in place to tackle the concentration of ownership and market dominance, and we have a range of measures to support emerging industrialists and other businesses.

We cannot accept that the ownership and control of the economy remains in the hands of the few. Not only is this situation fundamentally unjust, but it stifles the growth and development of our economy.

Our policies on broad-based black economic empowerment, preferential procurement and employment equity have done much to begin to change the racial and gender composition of our economy.

However, as with land reform, we are still very far from where we need to be.

We still have much work to do to overcome the challenge of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The glaring reality is that there are nearly 12 million South Africans of working age who are unemployed, including discouraged work-seekers.

Unemployment not only deepens poverty and inequality, but it also contributes to several other social ills, such as crime, substance abuse and other destructive behaviour.

Youth unemployment is our greatest concern.

Two-thirds of the more than one million young people who enter the labour market each year are not being absorbed in any form of employment, education or training.

The number of work-seekers is growing significantly faster than the number of jobs.

With millions of people excluded from the productive economy, and despite significant progress in expanding the social safety net

and increasing the reach of basic services, poverty has increased.

Almost one-in-five households reported going hungry on a regular basis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since we last met, at the 54th National Conference, our country and the world has endured the most devastating health crisis in more than a century.

This severely damaged our economy and led to the loss of some 2 million jobs within a short space of time as businesses buckled under the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The cost in human lives has been staggering. Over 100,000 South Africans are reported to have died from COVID-19, with many other COVID deaths not reported.

Over the last 18 months, we have focused on accelerating our vaccine rollout. So far, we have administered 37 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

More than half of all adults in South Africa have been vaccinated and 65 per cent of everyone over 50 is fully vaccinated.



While the economic and social cost of this pandemic has exceeded any natural disaster we have experienced before, South Africans responded to this crisis with determination, resilience, compassion and solidarity.

As a nation, we owe so much to the health care workers and other frontline staff that provided medical care, essential services and security throughout this difficult time.

As an organisation, we must commend our members, who went out into communities to create awareness about the disease and to encourage vaccination.

As we worked to contain the spread of the virus, we also had to take extraordinary measures to support ordinary South Africans, assist businesses in distress and protect people's livelihoods.

As the ANC government, we put in place a massive social and economic relief package to provide cash directly to the poorest households, to provide wage support to workers and to provide various forms of relief to struggling businesses.

A total of 18 million people, or close to one-third of the population, received additional grant payments through these relief measures.

More than 5.7 million workers received wage support through the special UIF scheme.

Over R70 billion in tax relief was extended to businesses in distress, around 13,000 businesses were helped through the loan guarantee scheme, and various forms of support and relief were provided to thousands of small-

and medium-sized businesses.

Had it not been for these interventions, the impact of the pandemic on businesses, workers and families would have been even worse.

In October 2020, we introduced the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan to restore the economy in the wake of the pandemic.

The ANC and its Alliance partners played a key role in developing the framework for the recovery, which was developed further based on contributions from social partners in NEDLAC.

As we continue to implement the plan, we have seen signs of recovery in the economy. The growth experienced in recent quarters has brought the economy to pre-pandemic levels much sooner than analysts expected.

The most recent figures show that the number of unemployed people in the country dropped in the first three months of 2022.

This translates to 370,000 jobs created between the last quarter of 2021 and the first quarter of this year.

As we meet here, we need to recognise that our recovery remains fragile, and we should expect that growth and employment will be affected by global instability, rising fuel and food costs, and the recent load shedding.

Despite the pandemic, we have been able to mobilise significant investment commitments in pursuit of the target we set in 2018 to raise R1.2 trillion over five years.

The 4th South Africa Investment

Conference, which was held in March, raised investment pledges to the value of R332 billion.

This brings the total value of investment commitments to over R1.1 trillion.

Of the committed investments, around R330 billion has already flowed into the economy.

This investment drive is supported by efforts to improve the overall business operating environment and to improve our country's competitiveness as an investment destination.

Earlier this, for example, government introduced the bounce-back loan scheme, which gives additional funding to businesses.

In March, the employee tax incentive was expanded to make it easier for employers to hire more young people.

As part of our drive to create a new generation of black industrialists, last year government approved further funding in new support to about 180 black industrialists in the form of loans and grants.

The Infrastructure Office in the Presidency continues with its work of oversight and coordination over a number of catalytic infrastructure projects.

These include the Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme, the rural roads programme, social infrastructure, bulk water and others.

To address onerous bureaucracy that impedes business growth, a red tape reduction team is working across government to identify priority interventions and remove obstacles to growth.

An important part of our growth strategy are bold and far-reaching economic reforms.

These reforms aim to achieve an affordable and reliable supply of electricity and ensure efficient freight transport.

They aim to achieve long-term water security, cheaper mobile data for all South Africans and a visa regime that facilitates tourism and investment.

Progress is being made in all these areas. For example, in March this year, the long-awaited spectrum auction was completed to expand access to the internet and reduce the cost of data.

The revival of the renewable energy programme and the increase in the licensing threshold for embedded generation have opened the door to significant investment in new generation capacity.

Transnet is taking measures to enable private rail operators access to some of the country's freight lines and to mobilise investment in our ports. This initiative is aimed at addressing Transnet's investment challenges.

This will also enable greater efficiency and support our export industries.

In another example of progress, the backlog of water use license applications has been cleared, and the turnaround time has been significantly reduced.

Earlier this week, government announced additional measures to tackle the electricity crisis and end load shedding for good.

These measures will help to fix Eskom and improve the availabil-

ity of existing supply, accelerate investment by Eskom and private operators in generation capacity, accelerate procurement of new capacity from renewables, gas and battery storage, and enable businesses and households to invest in rooftop solar.

Together, these reforms will expand the capacity of our economic infrastructure, reduce the cost of doing business and make our economy more competitive.

As these reforms are implemented, as new opportunities arise, we call on the private sector to undertake its own investment drive – to match the commitment of government with a similar commitment to develop the productive capacity of our economy.

During the past two years, we have overseen an expansion of public employment that is unprecedented in speed, scale and innovation.

This has been achieved through the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has created 879,000 opportunities.

Of the participants in the programme, 84 per cent are youth and 62 per cent are women.

There is no greater crisis facing our country, our continent and the world than climate change.

The world needs to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions if we are to prevent catastrophic destruction and widespread suffering.

The devastating floods in parts of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and North West earlier this year have shown how urgent this action is.

As a country, we have started to define a pathway towards a low emissions economy in a way that enables us to industrialise and create jobs.

We need to reduce emissions not only for the sake of the health, well-being and security of our people, but to ensure that our products and services remain competitive in a changing global economy.

A major development in this area is the finalisation of the Just Transition Framework, which will guide our transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and inclusive society.

We are working with international partners to mobilise climate finance to enable our transition while supporting affected workers and communities.

If we are to turn the climate crisis into an opportunity, we need to construct a new industrial landscape based on environmentally sustainable technology, processes and energy sources.

And we need to ensure that this sustainable economy empowers black South Africans, women and young people.

A significant challenge facing our country today is crime and violence. Communities across the country live in fear, worried about gangsterism, armed robberies, rape and murder.

Women and children are particularly vulnerable to the violence perpetrated against them by men.

The economy is being held back by damage to infrastructure, extortion at construction sites, corruption and the high cost of se-

curing businesses and insuring assets.

These problems have been made worse by deepening poverty and inequality and by the impact of state capture on law enforcement agencies and security services.

Since the 54th National Conference, we have prioritised building capacity within our law enforcement system.

We have done much to restore the capabilities and credibility of the National Prosecuting Authority, the South African Police Service, the Hawks and the State Security Agency.

We are recruiting significant numbers of new police personnel, strengthening the Public Order Policing Unit and working to re-establish community policing forums.

The SAPS has established multi-disciplinary units to address crimes of economic sabotage and extortion at construction sites by so-called business forums.

A stronger, better capacitated South African Police Service is key to combating crimes of violence against women and children.

As the ANC government, we have passed three new Acts to strengthen the fight against GBV and afford greater protection for survivors.

Yet, if we are to end this scourge, we need a society-wide effort that fights gender-based violence on several fronts.

The development of the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide was

therefore a milestone, bringing together all sections of society to undertake this task.

We must commend, in particular, the ANC Women's League for mobilising communities and being an integral part of the fight against on gender-based violence. Community based organisations have an important role to play, including in the development and implementation of programmes around GBV, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, mental health, LGBTQI+ advocacy and other issues.

One of the clearest instructions from the 54th National Conference was to end state capture and tackle corruption within our ranks, within government and across society.

Since then, we have taken decisive measures to end state capture, restore state-owned enterprises, rebuild public institutions and enable the criminal justice system to pursue the perpetrators of corruption.

Since then, we have seen important progress by the Hawks, NPA, Special Investigating Unit, Financial Intelligence Centre, SA Revenue Service and others in tackling corruption.

The most significant development in the fight against corruption was the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry on State Capture.

The Commission finalised its work last month and government has embarked on a process to consider all the Commission's findings and recommendations.

As the ANC, we have consistently maintained that the Commission is a necessary part of the broader social effort to end all forms of state capture and corruption.

We are therefore engaging with the findings and recommendations of the Commission to determine how these can help to enhance the process of fundamental renewal and rebuilding within our movement.

We must ensure that we use the work of the State Capture Commission to make a decisive break with the era of state capture, and that we adopt a comprehensive set of actions to prevent corruption and end state capture.

A necessary condition for the advancement of the National Democratic Revolution is the establishment of a democratic, capable developmental state to

drive growth and transformation.

That is why the 54th National Congress directed us to rebuild the public service and the culture of Batho Pele. This is happening across government departments, in municipalities, state-owned enterprises and other organs of our state.

Public servants are being trained on a range of subjects, including ethical conduct, economic governance and planning.

Government will soon finalise a national framework on the professionalisation of the public sector. This framework proposes a stronger emphasis on merit-based recruitment and appointments, integrity testing for all recruits to the public service, and curriculum development for on-going learning of public servants.

Another part of our drive to build a capable developmental state is the District Development Model.

The District Development Model represents a whole of government approach to planning, budgeting and implementation. It aims to eliminate wastage and duplication of resources and requires leaders and public servants at all levels to work as a single unit within specific districts.

Local government is the sphere of government where the State is at its weakest. Five years ago, in June 2017, eight municipalities were under the administration of national or provincial government.

By June 2021, 23 municipalities were under administration, and by February 2022, this number had further increased to 33 municipalities.



As we have recognised before, many of these challenges arise from poor management of the political-administrative interface.

There is weak oversight, poor accountability and inadequate consequence management systems.

There is a shortage of skilled leadership and management, and widespread fraud and corruption. This situation has contributed to declining levels of voter participation in elections and diminishing support for the ANC.

This resulted in the loss of several key municipalities in last year's local elections and the emergence of coalition governments in several places. Our experience since then has demonstrated that coalition governments are ill-suited to effectively drive development, provide quality services or ensure proper accountability.

As the ANC, we have taken several steps to address these problems. In preparations for the local government elections, for example, we involved community members in the candidate selection process, so that ANC candidates had the support and confidence of the communities they are expected to serve.

All mayors in ANC-led municipalities underwent a thorough vetting and interview process.

We launched the ANC Local Government Barometer to track whether we are keeping to the commitments that we made in our manifesto and to monitor the effectiveness of councillors.

We amended the Local Government Municipal Structures Act to promote ethical conduct by councillors and impose harsher con-

sequences for wrongdoing.

One of the most significant developments on the African continent since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 was the coming into effect of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area in January last year.

This will create a market of 1.2 billion people, which is expected to grow to 2.5 billion by 2050. By increasing trade among African countries, the AfCFTA will drive production in areas like manufacturing, agro-processing and other activities across the continent.

It will contribute to the growth of the industrial capacity and infrastructure of African countries that are now able to reach a far larger market.

If Africa is to realise the full potential of this development, we will need to bring peace and stability to all parts of the continent. We will need to promote democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

As the ANC, we have continued to engage with fraternal parties on a common approach to peace and development on the continent. The opportunity presented by the AfCFTA means that we need to intensify our efforts, particularly in the area of economic cooperation.

While South Africa was integrally involved in the operationalisation of the AfCFTA during our term as African Union Chair in 2020, we were also occupied with the coordination of Africa's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The continent's swift and decisive response demonstrated what is possible when African countries

work together, under the auspices of the African Union, to confront a common crisis.

Africa was able to mobilise vital medical supplies, vaccines and funding on a continental scale to ensure that no country was left behind. African countries have worked together with international partners, especially the WHO, to build the continent's vaccine manufacturing capacity and enhance its health security.

Our task now is to apply these approaches to the other common challenges the continent faces, such as climate change, armed conflict, food insecurity, among others.

While we can point to significant progress on the continent, the broader international environment has deteriorated over the last few years.

As the COVID pandemic took its toll on the global economy, geo-political tensions between the major powers have worsened, threatening the principles of multilateralism and a rules-based world order.

The conflict in Ukraine has deepened the crisis, contributing to rising fuel prices and fears of global food shortages.

These events have demonstrated the weaknesses of international institutions like the United Nations, and have made the case for their reform even stronger.

In the face of these challenges, we need to be more assertive in advocating a global political and economic architecture that is democratic, fair and inclusive, and which prioritises the needs and the interests of the poor.



The fulfillment of the task of fundamental transformation depends on the unity, cohesion and strength of our movement.

The ANC is today at its weakest and its most vulnerable since the advent of democracy.

Our weaknesses are evident in the distrust, disillusionment and frustration that is expressed by many people towards our movement and our government.

They are reflected in our support in the local government elections in November last year, where for the first time, we fell below 50 per cent of the national vote.

Our weaknesses are reflected in many of our branches, which are not involved in the lives of their communities, but are activated only for the purpose of electing delegates for conferences or nominating candidates for public office.

Our weaknesses are evident in the distance between our public representatives and the people they are meant to serve.

Perhaps most strikingly, our weaknesses are evident in the divisions within our ranks.

These are not divisions about policies or ideology, but are driven by the competition for positions, the contestation of structures and the pursuit of access to public resources.

These divisions manifest themselves in patronage, gatekeeping, vote buying and manipulation of organisational processes.

These divisions are driven by corruption and the need by those responsible for corruption to avoid detection and accountability.

The weaknesses in our organisation are felt beyond our structures. We can see the impact of our divisions and faults in our Alliance partners and formations of the broader democratic movement. We can see how our divisions have weakened governance in many areas, undermined public institutions and hampered the maintenance of infrastructure and the provision of services.

These were among the challeng-

es identified at the 54th National Congress, and which informed the firm decision of that Conference to embark on a programme of fundamental renewal and re-building.

Despite trying circumstances, the ANC is showing signs of renewal and we are continuing to forge unity around several issues.

We have been able to make progress around the process of organisational rebuilding, where our branches were able to hold BGMs in the midst of the pandemic and undertake campaigns in communities.

It is significant that, as we prepared for this Policy Conference, around 4,000 branches held BBGMs and many regions and provinces have held successful conferences.

The Letsema Campaign has seen our members move out of meetings and into the communities. Letsema is about grounding our movement among the people, ensuring the people can once again trust us to be a champion of the poor and vulnerable, who work with them to improve their lives.

We have also seen progress in rooting out corruption and ill-discipline within our ranks, and beginning the process, difficult as it is, in tackling factionalism.

We have implemented several of the Conference resolutions on corruption and wrongdoing within the ANC. As we have done this, we have witnessed concerted attempts to sow division and destabilise our organisation by forces intent on pursuing narrow interests.

This has taken many forms, including the distortion of organi-

sational processes, serious acts of social instability and criminality and sustained propaganda campaigns.

This is the work of forces, both within our ranks and outside our movement, that are threatened by the process of renewal and rebuilding.

We have said that the delegates to this Policy Conference carry the weight of history. That is because from this Conference must emerge policy proposals to put the National Democratic Revolution back on track.

From this Conference must emerge policy proposals that will drive forward the radical economic and social transformation that is required to achieve a better life for all.

Our first task must be to complete the fundamental renewal of the ANC and to reposition it as a united, principled, disciplined popular and effective agent of change.

The renewal of the ANC requires that we build ANC branches as agents of change. The renewal of our movement must be centred around our branches, our members and the communities that our branches serve.

That is where change will be most visible and meaningful.

Structures must be rooted in their communities and their activities and campaigns must respond to the concerns of the area.

We are already seeing the return of these practices through the Letsema Campaign, which has been taken up by many branches across the country.

The ANC must earn the position of leader of society through its actions. If the leadership of the ANC is not respected, we cannot say we lead society.

Leadership is earned by showing the people that we respect them, respect the laws of the country and conduct ourselves with humility and integrity.

To renew the ANC, we must end corruption and patronage. This requires, among other things, that we fully implement the resolutions of our 54th National Conference on dealing with corruption.

On this, there can be no going back. There can be no compromise. We cannot abandon our principled positions on corruption in pursuit of a false unity.

Our movement must be united around our values and our mission. It must be united against corruption, against patronage and against factionalism.

The people of South Africa will not forgive us if we abandon the correct positions that we have taken on confronting wrongdoing within our ranks.

History will not forgive us.

As we chart the way forward, we must clarify our positions on the declaration of financial interests by ANC leaders, the conduct of lifestyle audits and our policy on ANC leaders and their family members doing business with the state.

To renew our organisation, we must develop capable and committed cadres. Recruitment of members must be accompanied by effective induction, political education and the involvement of new members in local pro-

grammes that advance the interests of our people.

We must build a more youthful organisation. The ANC needs to replenish itself, drawing more young people into its ranks and into its leadership structures. The revival of the ANC Youth League is critical for our movement. We must have a cohort of young people to take over leadership of the movement and country.

At the same time, we must strive for and achieve gender equality. The ANC needs to address patriarchal attitudes and practices within its structures, and needs to identify and address other social and economic factors that limit women's participation.

As we look at rebuilding our movement, we must conclude our discussions on the reconfiguration of the Alliance.

This cannot be an abstract discussion, but must be informed by our common responsibility to address the many complex challenges that confront the South African people and the peoples of our continent and the world.

We need to defend and deepen our commitment to non-racialism. Non-racialism is a fundamental principle of the ANC that lies at the heart of our objective to build a South African nation with a common patriotism and loyalty.

We must build non-racialism with our movement if we are to build in society.

Our second task in advancing the National Democratic Revolution is to accelerate far-reaching economic reforms to stimulate growth and job creation.

Our focus must be on reducing unemployment, which is a necessary condition for economic growth and prosperity

Each person who is unemployed could be contributing productively to the economy, earning an income and consuming goods.

Addressing unemployment and poverty will improve social and political stability, allow individuals to achieve their potential and enable economic growth.

We need to appreciate the extent of the economic crisis that confronts us, and develop policies and programmes that are appropriate to the extraordinary challenges that we face.

Our third task is to build and implement a durable social compact for growth and transformation.

This was a clear directive from the 54th National Conference and was identified in our January 8th Statement as one of the foremost tasks of this year.

We are continuing, despite delays, to make every effort to build a broad social consensus on specific actions to grow the economy and create jobs. We will not be able to emerge from this crisis unless all parts of society are involved in developing and implementing these actions.

We have several examples in the recent past where we have agreed on common programmes to address common challenges. These include our response to COVID-19, addressing the crisis at Eskom, tackling gender-based violence, and developing the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

Our history tells us that we can come together to solve our problems, that we can achieve consensus, and that we can make a difference.

The third task we have is to break the cycle of poverty.

Our immediate task is to relieve the hunger and hardship that many people are faced with because of the COVID pandemic and the rising cost of living.

The extension of the R350 Social Relief of Distress grant beyond the State of Disaster has provided much-needed support at a difficult time.

Other measures, such as the temporary reduction in the fuel levy has limited the impact of rising global fuel prices on consumers and businesses.

Discussions on further measures to contain the effects of rising food and fuel costs are currently underway in Nedlac.

This Policy Conference needs to look beyond these short term measures towards forms of social protection that reach the most vulnerable in society, that are affordable and that are sustainable.

The Conference needs to focus on the work we are doing to develop the skills and capabilities of our people. It is through a quality education, with appropriate skills and suitable experience, that young people can defy the circumstances of their birth and rise out of the poverty that has been passed down from generation to generation.

It needs to review our progress towards the achievement of uni-

versal health coverage, paying particular attention to the implementation of the National Health Insurance and the state of our public health facilities.

We need to focus on land reform as an instrument to create jobs and provide livelihoods, to increase the contribution of agriculture to the economy, and to provide people with productive assets that they can use to build a better future.

Our fourth task is to deepen our efforts to empower the women of South Africa and to achieve gender equality in every part of our national life.

A critical part of this work is to advance women's economic and financial inclusion.

This should be pursued through preferential procurement in both government and the private sector, targeted financial and technical support to women-owned businesses, and rigorous implementation of employment equity plans.

We must remove all the impediments to the development of the girl child, including social attitudes towards domestic responsibilities and access to education and health care.

Our fifth task is to build a capable, ethical, developmental state.

We are painfully aware of the risks inherent in having a state machinery that does not respond effectively to the needs of the citizenry.

It is incontrovertible that this government has begun to make improvements to several state insti-

tutions, such as SARS, the NPA and other critical services such as the health and education sectors. We intend to continue these rebuilding efforts.

Committed, diligent, capable and ethical public servants are at the heart of any developmental state. We need to continue with efforts to professionalise the public service to serve citizens with distinction.

Our sixth task is to contribute to peace, stability and development on the African continent.

We must seize the opportunity presented by the Africa Continental Free Trade Area to pursue greater integration at a political, economic and social level between African countries.

We should draw on our country's experience as Chair of the African Union, particularly in coordinating the response to COVID-19 and in establishing the basis for a new health order in Africa.

We need to strengthen ties with our fellow liberation movements and other parties and formations on the continent, so that we can develop a common approach to the many challenges that confront our people.

We need to intensify our international work more broadly, so that we can play a more meaningful role in seeking the resolution of conflict and in advancing the struggles of oppressed people across the world.

We cannot rest while a part of the African continent – Western Sahara – remains under colonial occupation. Nor can we accept that occupation and oppression is to be the fate of the Palestinian people into perpetuity.



From this gathering, we must make a call on all ANC members and leaders to take personal responsibility for rebuilding the ANC and restoring its values.



These are among the struggles that we need to take up with greater vigour if we are to contribute to the building of a better world.

Another task we have is to protect our country and people from COVID-19. While we have adjusted to a new way of living with the disease, the COVID-19 pandemic is not over.

We are faced with the ever-present threat of the emergence of new variants that are transmitted more easily and cause more severe illness.

If we are to protect our country from a possible resurgence of the virus and the illness and deaths that it could cause – not to mention the economic damage – then we need to ensure that as many South Africans as possible are vaccinated against COVID.

After 18 months of vaccines, we can now clearly see that vaccines are safe, effective and protect people against severe illness and death. This may not seem a priority now that infections are so low, but mass vaccination is still our most effective defence against the pandemic in the months and years to come.

This 6th Policy Conference has a clear responsibility – to debate and develop policy proposals that can be considered and adopted by our 55th National Conference in December.

But that is not all that we should expect from this Policy Conference.

From this gathering, we need to send out a clear message of intent from our movement. A clear message that we are committed to the renewal and revitalisation of the African National Congress.

That we will allow nothing and no-one to stand in the way of the restoration of our values and principles and the pursuit of our mission.

A clear message that our foremost priority now is to create jobs for our people, to grow our economy and to tackle poverty and hunger.

From this gathering, we must make a call on all ANC members and leaders to take personal responsibility for rebuilding the ANC and restoring its values.

We must call on all ANC branches, structures, public representatives and deployees to dedicate themselves to the fundamental task of economic and social transformation.

And we must call on broader society to work with the ANC and its Alliance partners to deepen transformation and build a united nation.

Let this 6th Policy Conference provide the direction that our country needs and let it instill the confidence and the hope that our people seek.

Policy Conference: Let a hundred flowers bloom

Dear Mr President

THE African National Congress delegates returned to the Nasrec conference centre in Johannesburg this week, reminiscent of five years ago when we held the 54th national conference. The much-awaited 6th policy conference could not have come at a more auspicious time since gatherings were banned for two years during the raging coronavirus pandemic. Be that as it may, it has been a sight to behold to once again see the representatives of our communities under one roof to chart the way forward in the transformation of our country.

The media fraternity has predictably taken a huge interest in the trajectory and outcomes of our discussions since it is well known that as a governing party, the decisions taken at the policy conference will feed and translate into national legislation. This interest is to be welcomed even as some members of the media have narrowed into an inimitable way of feeding sensational headlines by narrowing into the step-aside rule at the expense of other items on the agenda.

Others have termed the policy conference as a proxy battleground for the governing party's elective conference towards the end of the year. While we can-



Comrade Pule Mabe

not dictate the news angle of the newsroom, this demonstrates a shallow look at the processes that guide the ANC as the oldest liberation movement on the African continent.

As a matter of fact, a policy conference sets the tone for the kind of country we want to live in and determine the direction we need to take to get there. The policy conference feeds into the December national conference the adoption of policies that will steer our country towards prosperity.

Mr President, the policy conference also happens in the wake

of several successful provincial conferences where our delegates made their preferences known. Those conferences were a dress-rehearsal for the policy conference and the national elective conference later this year. As the ANC, we are pleased to have managed those processes with aplomb during these uncertain and turbulent times.

Indeed, when we were restricted from holding mass gatherings, it impacted on the work that we do in terms of engaging with our people as had been the tradition except when the ANC was banned during apartheid times.

For the record, our colleagues in the media will do well to acquaint themselves with our policies in order to transmit the correct picture to their audiences. The step-aside rule, which has elicited much heat across society, was adopted by the 54th national conference in 2017 and remains a pillar of the renewal of the ANC.

As has been the tradition, the ANC released policy documents in May already to guide discussions ahead of the policy conference and those documents are important as they give an indication of the future direction of the party and the country as a whole. We said then that *“our focus has to be the improvement of the quality of lives of our people,*

rather than an often narrow, internal party focus”.

The policy conference takes place in a ‘different country’ following the debilitating effects of the pandemic that wreaked havoc across the world.

Our economy has taken a beating as a result of the mitigating factors to safeguard lives and livelihoods.

Jobs have been lost and the cost of living has skyrocketed and reversed the gains made on the path to transform our country.

The virus exposed the chasms between the haves and the have-nots in terms of the standard of living, the digital divide, education opportunities, access to universal healthcare and other aspects of daily existence.

However, the virus also united us as a people when the private and public sectors rolled up their sleeves in the face of a health threat. During the early period of the pandemic, we witnessed an overwhelming sense of ubuntu wherein the haves reached out to the poor in kind as we navigated the treacherous impact of COVID-19. Science took centre stage and guided us towards safety when our lives were threatened.

The policy conference will immerse itself in the kind of society we hope to build in the aftermath of the pandemic.

The ANC Women’s league has made a cogent input to combat the scourge of rape in our society for the chemical castration of the perpetrators of rape and this is a discussion whose time has come.



Gender-based violence has blighted our country for a long time and continues unabated even as the government puts up measures to mitigate and eradicate it.

Our delegates will do well to butt their heads together on this second pandemic of GBV.

We expect robust discussions at the conference and expect nothing less than intellectual inputs from across the board because we are at a juncture where the ephemeral will not assist us as we seek to build a better society.

Land reform is another contentious matter flowing from the last conference wherein delegates resolved that land should be expropriated without compensation where there is national interest.

This issue is an unfinished business flowing from our struggle and requires focused attention as it hinders the full realisation of the transition to democracy and equality among the races. Unfortunately, opposition parties stymied our proposal to reform our land for the betterment of our

society when the bill came before parliament but we must never take our eyes off the ball and succumb to the forces that seek to reverse the gains we have made.

The policy conference is a theatre of ideas that coalesces in a dynamism that will fulfil what the Freedom Charter proposed more than 50 years ago. It is also a platform to look inward and gauge the advances we made in implementing policies adopted in the last conference.

We have no doubt that our delegates have their hands in the pulse of the communities they represent and therefore are up to their mandate to put their points across.

As Chairman Mao once said: **“Let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend”.**

Yours sincerely

Pule Mabe

National Spokesperson and Head of the Department of Information and Publicity



The ANC Women's League has a history of good service to women

Opening Remarks to the Inaugural Meeting of the ANC Women's League NTT

■ By **Baleka Mbete**

THE task team assumes its work at the most difficult time for our movement. The dismal performance in the November local elections is evidence of this.

It is said that a woman holds the knife at its sharpest end! When there's nothing to eat in a home it's the woman who finds something, goes all out, scrapes things together to ensure that the family eats.

What I'm saying is actually histor-

ic. The late ANC Treasurer General, Thomas Nkobi used to attest to how it was the ANC women through whom – for stretches of time – the ANC was kept alive, in terms of its daily supplies for survival of its members all over in its communities, including camps around the globe. The women had gone out to mobilize contributions from women, men and children of the world including our continent Africa.

What I'm saying continues to be true of women in current times

as recently attested to by the former Chairperson of the ANC in Gauteng, Cde David Makhura. At the worst of times our women will stick their necks out. They grab the bull by its horns, whatever crisis people face. It is on record that decades before the actual formation of the Women's League of the ANC, on the ground in village life as the colonization process was wreaking havoc on socio-economic conditions on the daily lives of the colonized, when the African men were drawn in large numbers to

the emerging urban centers like Kimberly, Johannesburg etc. the women remained and carried the burden of family lives back where life had to continue, where single headedly they'd been left to hold the fort. We dare not forget this background.

We have to draw on this background as we face the task we have been given, to make sure that within the next twelve months – at the most – the ANC Women's League is on its feet, able to be a full part of the historic movement forward to a future of a non-sexist society. We live in a society where gender-based violence and femicide are the stark evidence of social ills of our times requiring the ANC Women's League to give strategic leadership as our women are victims of this bloodbath in society.

I believe there are two other key issues on the agenda of the world and in a priority list for women on which the league is called upon to – as soon as possible – give critical leadership. FOOD is a matter of family survival and

therefore, of crucial concern to us. I suggest we agree today that Cde Thoko Didiza will be invited to address gatherings of women on pressing matters relating to this subject especially in a world where food has become a football in a world of capitalist greed and contestation. For us food is a right every human being should enjoy. It's a matter of daily reality in our homes where women are managers.

PEACE and stability for women is like water to a fish. We do not believe in loss of life. We don't carry life in our bodies for nine months so as to donate them to war or violent crime. It is in that context also that we must take a view or positions relating to our communities in this regard.

We must always seek to inculcate a culture of conflict resolution between children at home or at school, including women and men no matter what is at the center of any dispute. This goes for disputes at all levels – kids, couples, organizations in the communities, politics etc.

We have our home-grown ANC Women's League veterans who've been part of international work towards our future, when we would have silenced the guns. Cde Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma is one of us; Minister Thandi Modise who participated at UN level toward the compilation of a book on women in Armed Conflicts; and Speaker Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula is part of an IPU delegation as we speak to pursue a perspective on negotiations of peace building and peace keeping in the military conflict in Ukraine; they are in Poland.

In times of peace people talk, even if they differ. Towards that end, stability sets in. We start to focus on DEVELOPMENT in our families when there's peace and stability. Let's arrange for our panel of the three above-mentioned comrades to workshop women and youth on these matters as our contribution to a stable future.

My last point is in response to the following question: Is there anything in our history, which



should form the basis of pride and inspiration? My answer is YES. The evidence does not have to be searched for any further than from the ANC Women's League Presidents in living memory, in the post-apartheid era. Do not look for the evidence in the newspaper reports or media in general as the main source of research. Go to the reports of the work of our structures on the ground. Look into the rich stories of women and people in the villages and townships. Check the records of many structures of the movement before, during and after the era of the three decades of the ANC's external mission. Rummage through the records of the underground work, the international work, the mass mobilization work and the work of Umkhonto weSizwe.

The records will speak of the ANC Women's section President, Mama Gertrude Shope who led us home and presided jointly with MaSisulu over the re-launch of the ANC Women's League after the unbanning.

They will speak of President Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela whose courage is legendary. Nothing could bend her determination at the height of apartheid crimes. The records of history will tell of President Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula who took this office after serving as National Organiser and as Secretary General, having earlier kept an eye on umzana in the military camps. It will go on and take you to President Angie Motshekga, one of the women who crafted and oversaw the birth of the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa, an instrument we must still fine tune as our democratic dispensation must use it to help address current day gender based



social challenges of the day. This is a non-partisan tool that can be very helpful for women in communities.

You will then remember the young activist from the fires of the Natal Midlands, Cde Bathabile Dlamini, who kept the league headquar-

ters going as Secretary General for fifteen years at a stretch, before being President, and deservedly so.

We choose to highlight these memories because they fill us with pride in this legacy. As the league, we choose them because they are the source of good lessons and examples from which our younger generation must be informed.

This is a different story, a story that doesn't dispute any evidence based accounts needing corrective measures, years back or in current times. All we say however, is that the ANC Women's League, South Africa's largest women's organization, has a good history of service to women. Today, we are here to commit to facing the current challenge head on. The Women's League National Task Team will get this instrument on its feet! We promise the people of our country.

Malibongwe! Amandla!



The ANC 6th National Policy Conference: A call for an inclusive approach to economic development

■ By **Maite Nkoana Mashabane**

Introduction: The year of Unity and Renewal to Defend and Advance South Africa's Democratic Gains

The ANC's National Executive Committee declared 2022 as *"The year of Unity and Renewal to Defend and Advance South Africa's Democratic Gains"* in the statement delivered by ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa on the occasion of the 110th Anniversary of the organization.

The declaration comes at a turbulent time for the organization and broader society where we reimagine what a renewed South Africa can look like. The past two years have been difficult for us all. The COVID-19 pandemic started off as a global health crisis and has since turned into an economic nightmare that has deepened existing inequalities, leaving millions at the brink of poverty. The declining quality of livelihoods is escalated by the increasing food and fuel prices, high dependency on substances and alcohol, increasing mental distress, climate change, unemployment and high levels of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).

The ANC 6th National Policy Conference and 55th National Con-



ference offer us an opportunity to take stock of the relevance, implementation and impact of the policy resolutions of the 54th National Conference.

Let us reject the reductionist perspectives to our politics and livelihoods. We need to use a gendered lens in assessing the performance of our Movement towards the process of organizational renewal and unification. Failure to do so reinforces a problematic narrative that women are merely passive receivers of aid which in turn perpetuates gender inequalities. Instead, part of the renewal project of the ANC must

be deliberate in the disruption of patriarchal organizing and rationale if we are to fully defend and advance the democratic gains of all people.

This year's Women's Month which will be commemorated under the theme **"Women's Socio-Economic Rights and Empowerment- Building Back Better for Women's Resilience"**. It has been 28 years since the dawn of our country's democracy and as part of assessing the development of our country we must take accountability and ask; Has the ANC-led government improved the socioeconomic positionality

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of women in South Africa?

Unfortunately for women, particularly black women who find themselves at the nexuses of inequality, poverty and unemployment; meaningful participation in the economy remains a fallacy.

We find ourselves at a crossroads where we need radical shifts in the formation, participation, ownership, and control of our economy. Ultimately, we are calling for an economic system that rids itself of the residues of colonialism and apartheid by ensuring the black majority are beneficiaries of political, social and economic freedoms.

The ANC must locate its solutions in the founding mandate of the organization as articulated in the preamble of the ANC Constitution of 2017:

The historic April 1994 election has placed the African National Congress in a position of responsibility for leading the process of reconstruction and development aimed at eradicating the problems of poverty and inequality created by apartheid and creating a just and equitable economic and social order.

Contextual analysis: The Role of the ANC in advancing Gender Equality

The 50th Conference of the ANC in 1997 was prophetic in articulating the current crisis of the organization which is complex and multifaceted in nature. The crisis finds expression in the growing mistrust of the state, declining electoral support, organizational decay and an apparent shift from the battle of ideas to the battle of titles. To begin the process of renewal and unity of the ANC, we

must be prepared to admit that the organization is in a state of decay characterized by generalized and systemic ineffectiveness. The decay is further entrenched by the rise of slate politics and populist leadership.

A silent crisis within the organization is the lack of equitable women's representation in leadership across all levels of the organization. This is further entrenched in how the experiences, expertise and needs of women do not find definitive expression in key thematic areas of the organization's policy documents. The current positionality of women in the organization is an attack on the 50/50 gender quota resolutions of the 52nd ANC National Conference in Polokwane in 2007.

Grounded on the Freedom Charter and the National Democratic Revolution amongst other foundational documents, the ANC recognizes the fundamental role of economic emancipation as a critical tenet to achieving and building a strong ethical devel-

opmental state. However, the economic trajectory of our country and expression of the organization's macroeconomic policies are still built around the 'working man' often alienating the experiences, needs and aspirations of women in the economy. Our call for 50/50 representation transcends leadership positions. We are in fact calling for an overhaul in how the state apparatus functions, particularly the economy.

What is representation without access, control, participation and ownership of the means of production? How do we practically ensure The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth as articulated in the Freedom Charter of 1955, if more than 50% of the country's population remains on the periphery of economic development?

The South African Gender Assessment Report was launched by the World Bank and the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in May 2022. The report consists of as-



“As we move towards this year’s Policy and National Conferences, we need to take decisive action to address the structural drivers of inequality.”



assessments against key policy documents including the 25 Year Review on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality in South Africa, the Beijing +25 Review Report, the National Development Plan 2030 and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019 – 2024 (MTSF).

The report demonstrates that there’s been considerable gains in the advancement of gender equality across a number of sectors including increased access to basic education for girls, improved representation of women in leadership roles, increased access to social protection interventions including social grants, and the development of progressive legislation and policies that seek to protect the rights of women and other marginalized groups.

Equally, the report depicts an unavoidable crisis. Women have made little progress in economic advancement or participation

since the dawn of democracy, and this reality exists alongside the persistence of GBVF in our communities, homes, schools and places of work. Consequently, there is an unavoidable correlation between women’s economic exclusion and the high prevalence of GBVF.

As we move towards this year’s Policy and National Conferences, we need to take decisive action to address the structural drivers of inequality. We must respond with urgency to the increasing population that is at the age of economic activity, yet they are not economically active. The slow implementation of economic transformation contributes to macroeconomic challenges, including low economic growth, growing inflation and unprecedented unemployment figures.

As the vanguard organization of the National Democratic Revolution, the ANC has an obligation

to ensure economic transformation includes the people’s popular control over vital sectors of the economy while ensuring the continual strengthening of the state sector in mining, heavy industry, banks and other monopoly industries. Therefore, the ANC’s Macroeconomic Policy Framework as proposed in the 54th conference must define the general parameters of economic transformation and activity.

About the author:

Maite Nkoana-Mashabane is the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. She is a member of the ANCWL National Task Team and the former Treasurer General of the ANCWL. She is a member of the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC), and is the convenor of the Subcommittee on International Relations of the ANC.

She has served in several structures of the United Democratic Front, Mass Democratic Movement and the African National Congress’ (ANC)

A Dignified Migration Discussion at the ANC NPC

■ By **Bishop JM Moshodi**

MIGRATION is an important feature of South Africa's history. Empirically, South Africa is a country built on migration. Whether it is migrants within the country moving from rural to urban and industrialised areas or those from neighbouring countries that ventured into South Africa as contract labourers, in search for work and better life for themselves and their families. Centrally, three centuries of white migrants, of white settlement – phased by colonial wars, expropriations of communal lands, slavery, forced labour and industrialisation – had produced a variety of human types. The current discourse on migration has been elevated by the ANC NEC to be the subject of discussion at the ANC National Policy Conference.

Usually towards its National Conference, the ANC is obliged to take all its members, structures and the broad public through a policy formulation process periodically. This is preceded by a robust discussion and debate on key policy areas. The relevant platform to this regard is the ANC National Policy Conference whose objective is to discuss ANC policies assigned to various sub committees, with inputs from various stakeholders. Recently, the ANC Statement On The Out-

comes Of The National Executive Committee Meeting held on 2 – 4 July 2022, on a title Policy Discussion on Migration received many reports from its sub-committees, among them Peace and Stability. Migration became a subject for discussion. The ANC NEC statement indicates that an “urgent need for review and reform” within “the national and global” context, especially on the prevalent prescripts of migration is imperative. The statement further says “we must immediately take concrete action” on what I coin the four (4) migration framework areas as outlined hereunder:

- Improving border security through the Border Management Agency, which is in the

process of being operationalised.

- Institute legislative reform to address contradictory regulations.
- Improve the capacity of Home Affairs to process applications and implement the regulatory environment in a manner which does not undermine the economy or abuse human rights and which prevents abuse of the immigration system.
- Law enforcement authorities to crack down on human trafficking and other forms of abuse of immigrants.

With regard to the above migration framework programmatic areas, by March 2012 the subject



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on the same areas could not find a rest. The Peace and Stability policy discussion maintained that South Africa “*should not abdicate its international obligations and its humanist approach*”.

The argument here anchored on developing a policy that “*seeks to balance the need for economic, cultural and social development of the country against its security needs and the integrity*” of “*state and country*”. The same subject resurfaced at the 2015 ANC NGC – Mid Term Report of the Peace and Stability document. The key issue tabled was under the heading Immigration Policy. This time around a call out was for the public to debate. The document had said “*the review of international migration policy has reached a state where the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) can launch a broad public discussion aimed at building a consensus around the main policy principles and outlook that South Africa as a nation will adopt*”.

In the 2017, 5th National Policy Conference discussion document, amongst the five question raised, one was “*building the capacity of the state to effectively manage identify and international migration is expensive*”. At the recent NEC the matter could not be renounced rather, the ANC NEC statement (2022) states “*the issue of migration will be on the agenda of the ANC National Policy Conference*”. This debate is dynamic and touches on the livelihood of the poor, especially during an epoch when there is an unabated increase of petrol price that also impact on food prices. And also, to overcome partly the current triple challenges facing South Africa poverty, unemployment and inequality. However, for its immediate review, there has



been enduring issue of politics, and an eminent political topic, over the past decade. This went in so far as politicizing migration, especially the advanced Western countries (ANC NEC Statement 2022, Peace & Stability Policy Discussion Document (2012:4, 2017:12), NGC 2015: 203, World Migration Report. 2020:8).

Why Do People Migrate?

Nevertheless, it is significant to briefly start somewhere. From the onset, the potential migrant considers “*intervening obstacles*”. Basically, people migrate for a varied of reasons. People around the world find themselves displaced from countries of their origin that would be voluntarily or involuntarily or legally or illegally.

In the main there is minimal answer as to why people migrate. However, there could be several reasons. Since the earliest time, humanity has been on the move. Some people move in search of work for economic opportunities due to sheer poverty and are referred to as “*economic migrants*.”

Though, others move to escape the effects of climates change, natural disasters and environmental factors. And others move

mainly to escape violence associated with armed conflict, political instability, the denial of human rights and lack of government protection in their home countries. Some migrate to join their family members abroad, while some are due to tribal and religious repression. Another factor to migrate is to obtain better education, whereas migrants choose to leave because they perceive that their aspirations are more likely to be fulfilled and satisfied somewhere other than their local area. Today, more people than ever before live in a country other than the one in which they were born. The UN Migration Agency defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his or her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person’s legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what length of the stay would be (Gebre. 2007:2, Gema. 2001:4, UN. 2020, World Migration Report. 2020).

Bishop JM Moshodi is a Member of ANC Mangaung, Fidel Castro Branch in ward 27 and Free State Elections Manager. He writes in his personal capacity

SCRAPPING STEP-ASIDE RULE IS A BETRAYAL OF THE RENEWAL AGENDA

■ By **Orapeleng Vanilla Matshediso**

THE renewal of the ANC must among others mean to reposition the ANC as a true Parliament of the people. In the past, the society would wait and look with keen interest to any gathering of the ANC, for they knew that out of any conference of the ANC, comrades would emerge armed with a clearer theory and understanding of the revolution and critical issues of national importance.

Society would know that members and leaders of the ANC would, after emerging out of conferences enter the battle of ideas with clarity of thoughts that could influence the society and its discourse.

This week the ANC would be holding a policy conference. The fundamental question is, are the people waiting and looking forward to the conference like they used to in the past? If not so, what are the fundamental reasons?

The ANC must ask itself an uncomfortable question: What does it mean to be called a leader of society? Does it really provide much-needed leadership to the society?



We can't say we are in charge or leader of a society if we only have a ward councillor in a branch and members of the ANC are not found providing leadership or leading in societal organisations. This title of being a leader of society must be earned not claimed.

In 2017, the ANC at its national conference resolved to lead the moral regeneration of the South African society. The strategy and tactics as adopted at the same 54th National Conference underscores integrity as one of the profound values that must guide our

characters and behavior throughout the renewal of the ANC.

Unfortunately, an opportunity to reassert the ANC as a leader of society might be missed as some amongst the rank and file of the movement want to turn the policy conference into a step aside conversation.

I hear comrades who call for a review of the step aside policy on the basis of the experience gained through its implementation and its legal implications. But I don't hear and agree with those who just call for its scrapping. Such a position does not assist the ANC in a battle against corruption and its endeavour to reassert its moral standing in a society.

As members of the ANC, we must take this moment to pause, analyse and try to appreciate and accept that the movement is deeply troubled and facing huge prospect of losing state power through the ballot paper. This would be a serious betrayal to many generations of the mass democratic movement who paid the highest price of their lives for us to be enjoying this freedom.

Focus on the Education Laws Amendment Bill (BELA Bill)

■ By **Muhammad Khalid Sayed (MPL)**



AT the beginning of this year, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill (BELA Bill) was introduced in our national parliament, bringing it a step closer to being signed into law, and after following an eight year journey of widespread consultations between the Department of Basic Education, communities and various education stakeholders.

Approximately 5 000 comments on the bill were received in the last five years.

A substantial amount of com-

ments were received from parents who, in the main, raised concerns around the amendments to home education. Yet submissions were also made by an array of civil society organisations.

In total, the BELA Bill proposes 27 amendments to the South African Schools Act, some of which one personally opposes but others which one welcomes.

For example, there is the clause which now seeks to provide for or create conditions under which alcohol may be possessed, consumed or sold on school premises

or during school activities.

Following the recent Enyobeni tragedy, our national government should be well aware of the harmful effects of alcohol in society, to youth in general and learners in particular. Our schools should remain alcohol-free zones and this sentiment has been raised by myself in the presence of the national minister. There should be little doubt that it will continue to be raised until this specific amendment is discarded.

On the other hand, the BELA Bill makes a number of other pro-

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gressive proposals such as permitting the admission of learners to grade R at the age of four and who will be turning five by 30 June in the year of admission. It further makes six years the compulsory school going age.

There is also a clause in the bill which seeks to mitigate the high learner dropout rate by placing an obligation on educators, principals and School Governing Bodies (SGBs) as well as parents in loco, to take responsibility and accountability for learners who are within their school community by ascertaining the whereabouts



of a learner who is absent for a period of more than three days without a valid reason.

Our education system is arguably one of the most untransformed, characterized by overcrowded classrooms and dilapidated infrastructure in most schools. It is an education system that continues to perpetuate widespread inequalities.

In this context and in order to maintain the status quo, a number of former model C schools have used admission and language policies for discriminatory purposes thereby purposefully excluding poor and predominantly African, Coloured and Indian learners from being admitted to

these schools.

Annually in the Western Cape, the ANC deals with complaints of thousands of learners, across the board, who apply correctly and timeously, yet they are rejected without being provided with reasons.

A number of SGBs at former model C schools currently conduct themselves as if they have unlimited powers and no one is holding them to account. This is a situation also highlighted by organisations such as Equal Education, Equal Education Law Centre, Section27, and other

NGOs in their written submissions on BELA Bill.

These organisations believe that the proposed changes provide greater opportunity to identify and mitigate discriminatory practices at schools while emphasising the role played by SGBs in these processes. This is in line with calls the ANC has been making repeatedly since 2019, both in legislature and in the public domain, for a transformed and uniform admissions policy for all schools in the Western Cape.

At the same time, Section27 and the other organisations have also welcomed the amendments on admissions and go on to point out the role the provincial head of

the education department (HOD) plays in having the authority to admit a learner to a public school.

The amendments however need to be crafted in a way that doesn't allow HODs to impose big intakes of learners to already overcrowded public schools, particularly in poor and working class communities. If not approached with the necessary nuance, inequalities in our education system could be entrenched. This concern has been raised by the NGO, Parents for Equal Education SA.

The HOD now also has the power to approve and provide oversight on the decisions of SGBs in respect of language policies. Yet despite these positive reforms, there still remains the potential for schools to continue using language policies that lend themselves to racism, by turning learners away on the basis of language.

In contrast to these civil society organisations and not surprisingly, apartheid apologists such as Solidarity and AfriForum, aided by their parliamentary bedfellows the DA and FF+, are rejecting the BELA Bill in its entirety precisely because the bill seeks to do away with discriminatory admission and language policies.

One can only but welcome some of the progressive recommendations made by some civil society organisations on the BELA Bill and hope that this would be the first step in bringing about equal but quality education for all our learners.

Muhammad Khalid Sayed is the ANC spokesperson for Education in the Western Cape Provincial Legislature and the Deputy Chief Whip of the Official Opposition

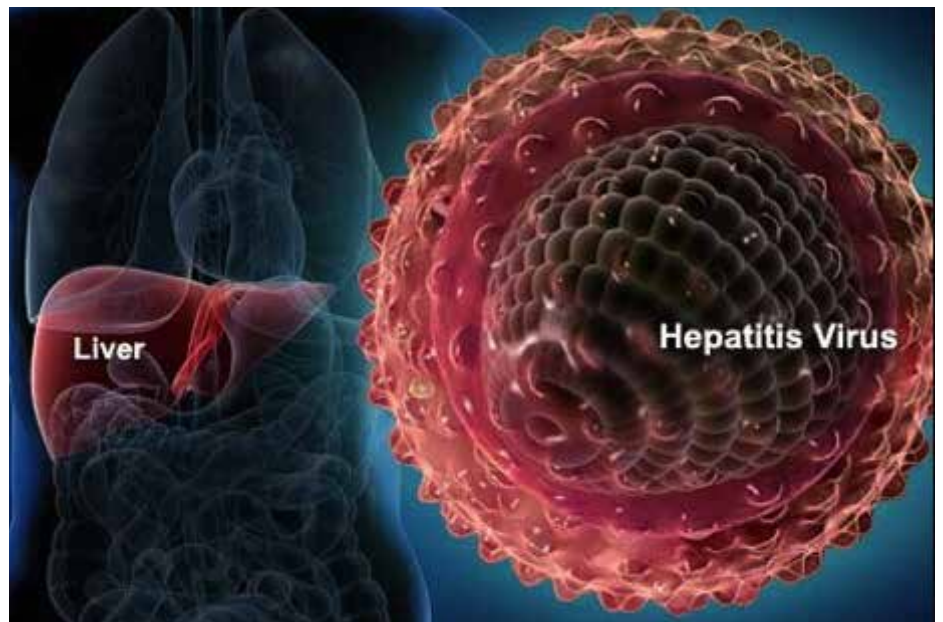
Scientific Clinical Analysis on Hepatitis

■ By **Tshilidzi Munyai, MP**

THE World Health Director General's opening remarks at the World Hepatitis Summit under the theme **"achieving the elimination of viral hepatitis within the evolving health systems"** on 07 June 2022 assert that: *"hepatitis is one of most devastating diseases on earth, but it's also one the most preventable and treatable, with services that can be delivered easily and cheaply at the primary health care level"*. In this the irony is true due to the fact that the etiology of this disease is still unknown, will be complex and hinders the prevention and control of the spread of

"A new variant of an unknown virus is causing acute hepatitis in children."

This demands Comprehensive Global Public Health Response on ever dynamic and changing health systems, as we commemorate World Hepatitis Day on 28 July 2022



the diseases. The link of SARS-CoV-2 infection, followed by adenovirus or other viruses cannot be ruled out at this stage

World Hepatitis Day on 28 July 2022, coinciding with President Nelson Mandela's United Nations month. Inspired and encouraged by Madiba's legacy on health care to children, at the current conjuncture, the core related fundamental plight of a *"new variant of a known virus causing acute hepatitis in children"* demands global humanity for practical and urgent collective action!

After the outbreak of COVID-19, acute hepatitis of unknown aetiology swept across Europe and America.

In April 2022, the United Kingdom informed WHO that more than a dozen children with unexplained severe hepatitis had been found in Scotland. On 15 April 2022, WHO issued a document advising countries to identify, investigate and report cases of unexplained acute hepatitis in children that meet the definition. Since then, France, Israel, the United States, Japan, Spain and other countries have reported that acute hepatitis in children with unknown causes has gradually spread.

On 27 May 2022, WHO said that 650 suspected cases of unexplained acute hepatitis in children had been reported in 33 countries and regions. It is noteworthy that compared with the previous

reports of unexplained acute hepatitis in children, the clinical symptoms of those cases were more serious and the proportion of acute liver failure was higher. However, due to many factors, the etiology of this disease was still unknown, which hinders the prevention and control of the spread of the disease.

At present, health departments in various countries are actively studying the causes of the disease. Presently, there are the following conjectures:

Firstly, a new variant of a known virus caused acute hepatitis in children. It may be adenovirus, but the possibility of other pathogens cannot be ruled out, such as variants of coronavirus, rhinovirus, enterovirus and parainfluenza virus. The British health and safety authority listed adenovirus

as the first hypothesis for children with unexplained acute hepatitis because, through the etiological investigation of British cases, it was found that many patients were positive for adenovirus. At present, the data shows that 68% of the testers are positive. The main sample comes from blood, and the most common one is type 41F. However, adenovirus infection is usually self-limiting, leading to only minor diseases or symptoms. Acute hepatitis caused by adenovirus infection is uncommon, especially in children with normal immune function.

Secondly, epidemic prevention and control during the epidemic of coronavirus disease in 2019 may reduce the contact between some young children and common pathogens, resulting in the development of their immune system different from that of chil-


dren of the same age before the epidemic of coronavirus disease in 2019. When children are subsequently infected with common pathogens such as adenovirus, they have different immune responses or disease manifestations from their peers in the past.

It is also possible that SARS-CoV-2 infection is followed by adenovirus or other viruses, or SARS-CoV-2 co-infection with adenovirus or other viruses produce an unusual immune response or disease manifestations.

On 10 June 2022, researchers in the pediatrics intensive care unit of King's College Hospital London (KCH) published an article in Intensive Care Medicine with the title "**Outbreak of hepatitis in children: clinical cause of children with acute liver failure admitted to the intensive care unit**", the article mentioned that among 8 children with severe hepatitis of unknown cause, 6 cases had been infected with COVID-19 and there was no adenovirus in their liver.

On the same day, JPGN, an international journal of gastroenterology and hepatology, published a study on hepatitis on acute hepatitis of unknown aetiology from Israel. After a thorough examination, the study excluded other known causes, classified children's cases with common clinical, radiological and histopathological features, and reported two distinct patterns of potentially long COVID-19 liver manifestations in children, suggesting the relationship between children's acute hepatitis and COVID-19.

Academic and clinical analysis shows that Covid-19 plays an important role in children's acute hepatitis. To suppress the

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY | JULY 28th 

KNOW HEPATITIS ACT NOW

WHAT IS HEPATITIS ?

Hepatitis virus causes infection and inflammation of the liver

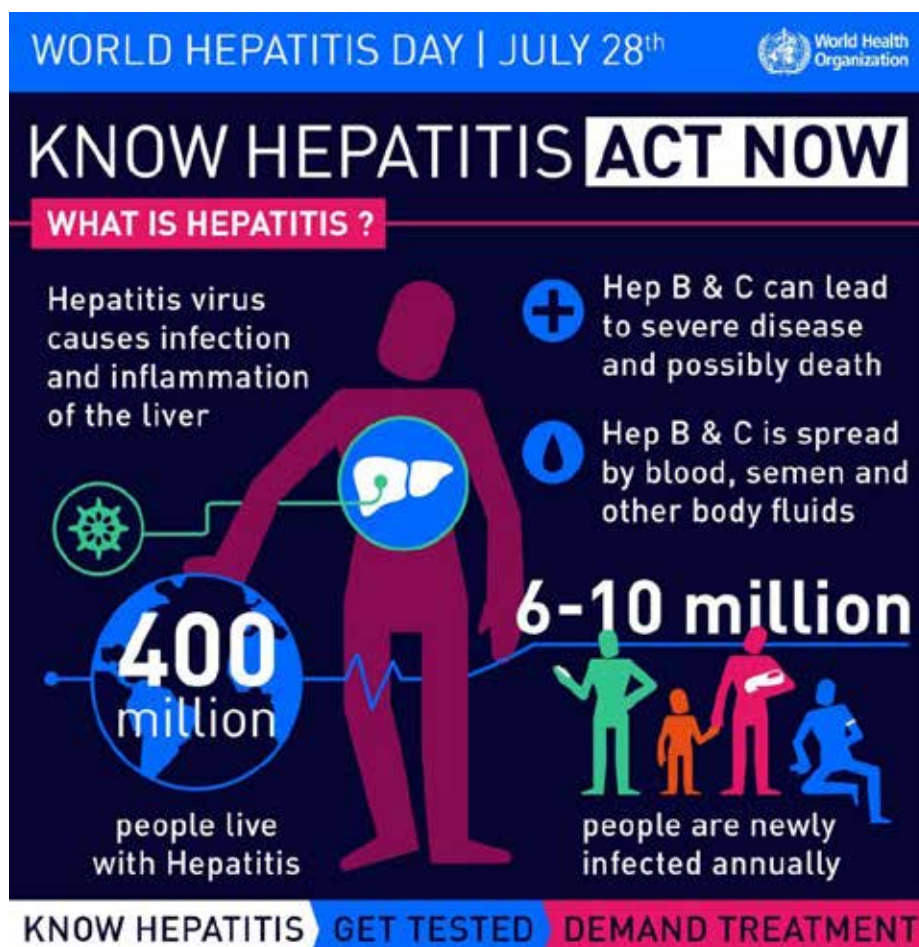
+ Hep B & C can lead to severe disease and possibly death

• Hep B & C is spread by blood, semen and other body fluids

400 million people live with Hepatitis

6-10 million people are newly infected annually

KNOW HEPATITIS GET TESTED DEMAND TREATMENT



PERSPECTIVE

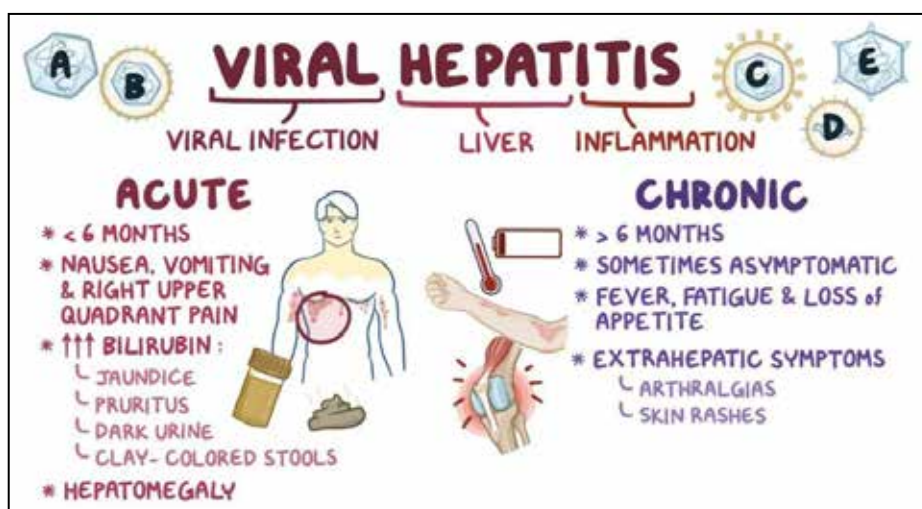
occurrence of acute hepatitis in children, we must first stop the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic at the source. At present, in the international community, there are two completely different ways to deal with the COVID-19 epidemic. One is a group immunization strategy led by European and American countries, which forms immunity to viruses through the popularization of vaccines and natural infection.

However, many variations in Covid-19, insufficient vaccination rate and other factors make the traditional group immunization strategy ineffective, and the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Europe and America is still high. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, more than one million Americans have lost their lives, 200,000 children have become “COVID-19 orphans”, and countless American families have been fragmented.

The root cause of this human tragedy is that the epidemic prevention and control in the United States have always served “capital first” and “political self-interest first”. Faced with the failure of the anti-epidemic, California took the lead in February 2022 to announce that it had entered the stage of “coexistence with the virus”. In March 2022, all states in the United States lifted the mask order, which led to a sharp increase in the number of confirmed and hospitalized cases of COVID-19.

America’s “lying down” anti-epidemic is essentially the extreme disregard for life and the inaction of policymakers.

On the other hand, in China, although there are occasional outbreaks due to virus mutation, the



Chinese government has always adhered to the principle of “people first, life first” and “dynamic clearing”, and found and put out an epidemic, so as to prevent it from rebounding on a large scale. The purpose is to achieve the maximum prevention and control effect at the lowest cost and to maximize the protection of people’s life and health and normal production and living order.

Compared with the group immunization strategy of the United States, the number of infected people, the number of deaths and the trend of virus mutation in COVID-19 have decreased. Based on this strict anti-epidemic measure, China’s economy has been rapidly rejuvenated, the resumption of work and production has been steadily advanced, effectively filling the global supply and demand gap, stabilizing the global industrial chain, and making its own contribution to the international community. Going forward other countries must draw lessons from China’s solid anti-epidemic policy

Although no cases of acute hepatitis in children have been reported in South Africa, in view of the current situation, we still need to take precautions. South Africa as a leading expert country

on communicable disease surveillance, through The National Institute For Communicable Diseases of South Africa should take measures to detect and respond to public health threats in order to prevent communicable and non-communicable disease outbreaks and, through protocol will, report to the Minister of health and other policymakers and notify the WHO, as the multilateral body concerned.

Residents who need to leave the country in the near future should consider avoiding going to any epidemic-ridden place as much as possible, and should avoid getting children going to crowded public places which are poor in air circulation, cutting off droplet contact and faecal transmission, ensuring children’s adequate sleep and nutrition, regularly cleaning children’s clothes and articles that are often in contact, washing hands frequently, wearing masks, and keeping social distance. If children have hepatitis symptoms such as jaundice and digestive tract symptoms, they should seek medical attention in time.

Tshilidzi Munyai is ANC WHIP on the Portfolio Committee of Health. He writes in his personal capacity.



TRIBUTE TO OUR LATE DSG JESSIE DUARTE

This is how far we women have come

■ By **Baby Penny Tyawa**

WHILE I wished that some reflections on how far we as women have come, when I was asked to say something about Comrade Jessie and the rebuilding of women's structures in the 80s, I researched a bit and found out this interesting context.

In the height of apartheid, the Tricameral Parliament, with three houses – one for white people, one for Indian people and one for Coloured people, Black people were excluded from any political

involvement. Instead, the Koornhof Bills allowed for Black people to vote for town councillors who were meant to look after their interests.

This opened the gap which activists who were underground or banned took. In the same year the space was created to access and rebuild struggle cells and underground networks of comrades we would not have known, across races. It was time to reorganise and rebuild women structures, an assignment that became criti-

cal. Cde Jessie emerged with the energy, the conviction, vigour, and commitment that most have spoken about today and in some days past.

In all of this, Comrade Jessie was actively involved, reaching out to the women stalwarts who were banned and restricted to their homes, women who, if you were found visiting, you would be arrested and put away for a long time under the state of emergency.

Our establishment of the Fed-

eration of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW) brought together close to 200 women from all over the Transvaal, (now known as Gauteng/Limpopo/). The formation of FEDTRAW was based on the celebration of the formation of its mother body Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW). We noted that the Federation of South African Women, was not outlawed, so, we used this base in commemoration of Women's Day, August 9th.

The Federation was regarded to be a necessary link that allowed women in the Transvaal to work together on issues such as high food prices; high rents, conscription of men into the army - in this case white males and mostly students, our values, principles and virtues were underpinned by the those of the ANC.

Fedtraw intervened on the inadequate child-care facilities and used the little they had to devote it to needs of the community. It also focused on the plight of rural women and resolved to organise rural women around local issues.

The Federation resolved to expand its support to families of detainees, to support the youth in their fight for democratic Student Representative Councils, to fight against sexual and racial harassment at schools, to establish women's groups where they did not exist and to popularise the Freedom Charter.

Under the tutelage of our stalwarts, Albertina Sisulu, Francis Baard, Helen Joseph, Winnie Mandela, Maniben Sita, Ma Rita Ndzanga, Cde Jessie and many of the young women then, were able to expand beyond the Transvaal, work with more women in the various provinces, some of whom were banned but



still strong and resolved to re-establish women formation in their provinces.

This led to the formation of UWCO, NAWO, and other chapters of women structures, which was a result of selfless work, unrelenting commitment and deep desire to achieve a free and democratic South Africa. At all times Cde Jessie pulled in women of all races and all classes together.

In the years that followed we spent most of our times receiving instructions and moving banned ANC literature, including the African Communist and Voice of the Women, within South Africa and the frontline states. What remains edged on our memories is when some of us joined the queue in MaSisulu's Shanty Clinic where we pretended to be patients while pursuing our underground work for our glorious movement. We were indeed MaSisulu's girls, and took pride in that.

It is these virtues of selflessness that we need today, first from ourselves, and from the younger women. We must become the beacon of hope for these young women, drive and sustain Cde Jessie's spirit of no surrender to consolidate the gains of democracy that are at risk of being

squandered.

Her selflessness predisposition to life and activism must remind us where we come from. Let us not forget that it was only by learning and listening to the matriarchs of the 50's that we are who we are today;

Just after the easter weekend Cde Jessie sent a text that some of us should write 800 words by 30 April, 2022, mapping the path we took to reignite and rebuild women structures in the 1980s.

She send a similar message to many women she could reach, to those who had taken up the liberation struggle and the baton from formidable leaders such as Ma Sisulu, Ma Winnie, MaNgcapayi, Mam Baard, Ma Helen Josephs, Ray Alexander, Ma Silinga, Ngoyi, Nyembe – our matriarchs.

Noticing that there were some of us who did not meet the deadline, on the 3 May 2022, she put up whatsapp group and pulled together a zoom meeting for the 10th of May. In that meeting she set out a formidable programme and left it to the 22 of us who she invited and who responded accordingly. She further kept the invitation open for women who

TRIBUTE

would love to contribute to this historic project, telling our own story while we live and challenging distortions and misrepresentations of our stories.

She knew that if we do not rise up as she did in the 80s, especially those who have the wherewithal to do so, then someone would fill that gap, but it would be to our detriment.

Indeed her call to us was to tell our story of struggle and leadership and not to leave it to some tumultuous incorrect and distorted history, like what some say about the formation of COSAS.

Henceforth, the group of 22 must jealously guard and indeed commit to complete the project, as per her text and her meeting of May 10, 2022, so that we protect the gains of democracy, non-sexism, non-racialism and a free country that we have today.

Cde Jessie, these 22 women, and I dare to say, more of these women, have committed to doing exactly that, this will evolve into a tapestry of experiences that affirm non-racialism non-sexism – virtues of the ANC that most of us sacrificed for and grew up under. To rebuild our ANC we need to go back to those principles, while simultaneously cleansing ourselves from corruption, greed and fatalistic and crass materialism.

The message is: if we know better, which we do, we must do better, that our lives and existence have been paid for – we are duty bound to pay for the next generation (Maya Angelou).

Jessie, the project is on course my comrade.

**Cde Jessie awulalengoxolo.
Kudaluzabalalaza sisi wam.**

Tribute by Mueen and Ameera Duarte – grandchildren of Jessie Duarte

(only grandson and oldest granddaughter)

GOOD afternoon, my name is Mueen Duarte and I will be speaking on behalf of my sister Ameera and I as she would prefer not to be on stage at this time

We know that for the world and South Africa Jessie Duarte was an activist, leading movements in South Africa and around the world. We attended a memorial last night hosted by the ANC Sonya Bunting Branch and heard from so many about how humble our grandmother was, a force that never held back, someone that was always doing for others and impacted many. But for us she was just our grandma. Our grandma was the one who taught me to make real South African stew, sent us care packs to Toronto filled with flings, eat sum more, chocolate pronutro and romany creams and when we were with her, we would lie on the couch and watch movies together, go for walks or just simple outings for ice cream.

Ameera has spent hours talking to our grandma about our grandma's past and we realized we still didn't know all of it so thank you to all the tributes this week which has allowed us to learn more about her. Her activism and her life was part of the passion that drives Ameera to fight for social



justice issues which continue to rise in the U.S. and Canada. She feels like this part of our grandma's legacy will continue to live in her.

We miss grandma every day, walking into her home this week after arriving from Toronto was not easy. And even as we have been there this week you can feel there is a presence missing, it doesn't feel the same. We don't know that coming to South Africa will ever feel the same without our grandma here. But we have the best memories with her and will keep these close to our heart.

Thank you to everyone who have shown us so much support as Jessie's grandchildren. We hope that the paths we choose in life will honour the person she was to all of you and to us.

TRIBUTE

Rest peacefully Grandma

Tribute by Monique Whitley

WARM Greetings to you all in the spirit of my amazing Grandma.

My name is Monique Whitley and I am the 3rd eldest grandchild of this amazing soul, MY GRANDMA.

There is so much good memories that I would like to thank my Grandma Jessie for and the clip you just saw is but a moment in time as we shared one of a very few holidays together as family given her commitment to the people of our beautiful country

and world.

Thank you, Grandma, for teaching us to be humble, strong, committed, non-racial, kind, disciplined, funny, resourceful, and good human beings to others.

Thank you for guiding us in all that we had to go through and always doing this with love and respect for us.

Thank you for taking us into the kitchen and teaching us to do the basics for cooking and baking even though today we rebel and

gladly allow others to do that.

Thank you for the values you lived and taught us. This will accompany us in our life, and we know you will always continue to guide and protect us.

Thank you for raising my awesome mother Zoe to be strong and amazing in every sense.

We see you in her always.

Rest peacefully Grandma, we will continue your good works and live a good, honest life.



I LOVE YOU GRANDMA

Poem by Kristen Whitley



GOOD evening in the spirit and respect of my awesome Grandma Jessie.

My name is Kristen Whitley, the youngest granddaughter of Grandma Jessie and the one she always asked when I was on top form: “*You know... where do you come from?*”

I would like to read a poem I came across and adapted for today.

The title is: **I LOVE YOU GRANDMA**

The way I feel, I can't explain
The gratitude inside
For all the days, weekends, and sleepovers
You spent on your couch or at my house, right by my side.

For every hug and every kiss
To send me on my way,
For always guiding me and teaching me to be humble, respectful, kind, courageous and a good human being to others,
To prepare me for a better world ahead.

For loving me through the hurt

And pain that's come my way.
For holding on to me so tight yet gentle enough to know that you are there for me and that it will all be alright.

For never letting go
Of the hope you hold for my life.
For keeping it so close to your heart
All this time.

For softly yelling at me when I'm out of place
For always telling me the truth in simple English.
For teaching me forgiveness
and forgiving me and others for what is said
Cause I know it sometimes hurt.

So now I say what I know and feel
At this time and day, I can proudly say:

“GRANDMA, I AM IN AWE LOOKING AT YOUR LIFE, I ETERNALLY LOVE YOU AND PROMISE TO LIVE MY LIFE IN YOUR FOOTSTEPS AS A YOUNG LIONESSE, ALL THE TIME.

REST SWEETLY IN HEAVENLY PEACE AND ENJOY THE COMPANY OF THOSE WHO WALKED BESIDE YOU.

TRIBUTE



A Letter from Home

■ By **Sikhumbuzo Thomo**

I don't know why saying good bye to you feels like I am burying a part of my soul. I feel like I have fell into a deep empty hole, lost into endless solitude of realising that our organisation and I has to get through the worst storms with our spiritual beacon shuttered into many pieces.

Maybe because after saying good bye every other word sounds empty. What is true is that ahead of us the future looks painfully hostile and uncertain. And I ask myself; why?

Why has the devil conspired against us? But life goes on and we will find a new path to go on living. If you can call having to live with a broken heart can be called living.

Losing our mother, someone

we love is very painful and agonising. The Japanese call it the *takotsubo*, a grieving surge of abnormal electrical waves that causes the heart to deflate, and contour until it resembles a fishing pod, hallowed and cold, an empty vessel, at the bottom of a fathomless sea. It's how I feel.

Our DGS was so many different things. A truly great teacher. She was a lot more than a mother. There is one thing she was not. She was not afraid. She was never afraid of an impossible task. She was not afraid of danger no matter how hard or unfair life was to her. She loved our people equally. A non-racist activist, she was and loved the ANC to the end of her life.

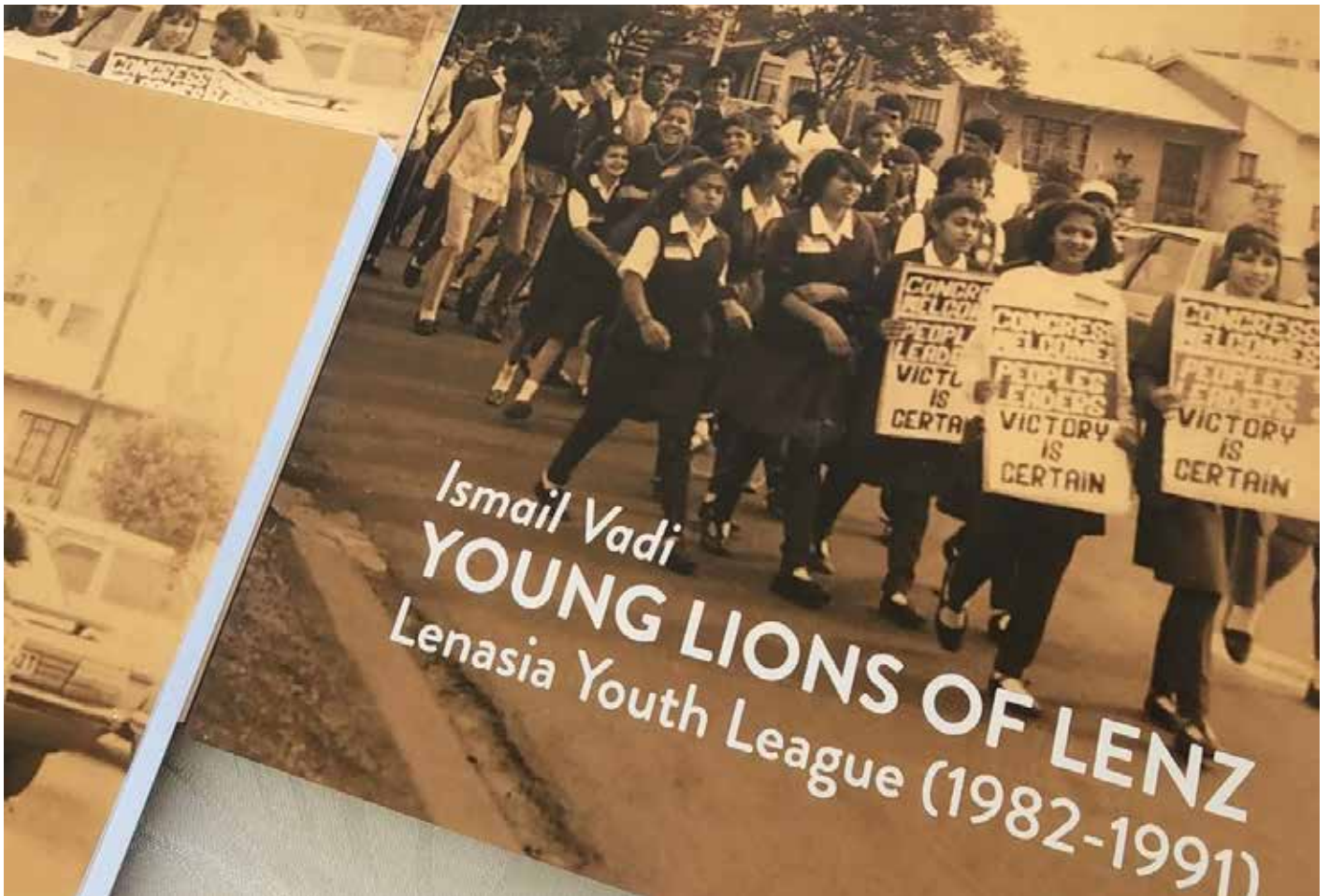
She embraced non-racism and non-sexism without reservations, regret or remorse. That is rare.

I wish more leaders were not afraid, like her.

It's not until someone passes away that you know what really mattered to them, what they really cared about, what they've sacrificed for and what they would die for.

Sikhumbuzo Thomo is member of the Messaging and Content Team of the ANC DIP.





Young lions of Lenz: Lenasia Youth League (1982-1991)

by Ismail Vadi

MANY have threatened to write about the contributions of young people in the 1980s to South Africa's liberation struggle, but few have lived up to the promise.

Cde Ismail Vadi, a prominent ANC politician, took the time to extensively document the history of resistance in Lenasia, thereby portraying the dynamism and

power of young people during that era. His meticulously recorded works enhance awareness of a generation of youth, who driven by the slogan, "*Freedom or death, victory is certain*", played an instrumental role in collapsing the apartheid government.

The book's title is inspired by the militant President of the then South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), Peter Mokaba, who

used to chant the slogan, "*Roar young lions, roar*", as a tribute to their bravery. Vadi vividly illustrates this bravery by acknowledging key activists in the area at the time, and through collating first-hand stories of their activities and campaigns.

In so-doing, the book adduces the various grassroots-based methods of mass mobilisation, which at the time served as important

tools of resistance and enabled the building of consciousness around racial, gender and class oppression. The book highlights the key demands that were made, and demonstrates the link between politics and the concrete problems that confronted youth in the classroom, the workplace, and in society.

Vadi writes extensively about the activities of the Lenasia Youth League. This allows for an appreciation of the functioning and programmes of similar youth leagues and congresses that existed across the country at the time. These, primarily community-based, anti-apartheid youth formations ultimately united under the banner of SAYCO in 1987. The youth congresses transformed into branches of the ANC Youth League in 1991, after the ANC was unbanned by the apartheid regime.

Vadi also expatiates on the Lenasia Students' Congress. This detail too provides invaluable insight on student structures that existed throughout the country as part of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), an organ which continues to exist even today, as well as progressive student organisations at institutions of higher learning.

The narrations by the former youth activists of Lenasia bring home the ruthlessness of the apartheid regime. Despite the harrowing revelations made during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, many South Africans still struggle to comprehend that such evilness happened. By sharing the experi-



ences of survivors of apartheid brutality, Vadi aids to remind the reader that freedom came at a high price.

Within this context, Vadi expounds on operations performed by the underground in Lenasia. He accentuates missions of the ANC's Ahmed Kathrada Unit, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK's) Ahmed Timol Unit and MK's Special Operations: Dolphin Unit. The conditions that necessitated the highly calculated and strategically placed forms of armed struggle are clearly depicted. It becomes understandable why similar activities occurred throughout the country, particularly in the 1980s.

The book has a general, localised focus. It however also provides a sense of the strong coordination that existed between the various sectors of the United Democratic Front in a given area. By understanding how the various organs of resistance worked in Lenasia, one gets a glimpse of the interconnectedness of resistance within the broader mass democratic movement in the country. The seamless alignment across generations, between the ANC,

MK and the UDF, and local and national acts of resistance are also clarified.

The book subtly showcases the power of progressive, constructive, united, non-racial, grassroots driven activism. It is a record of our past, which in usual Vadi style, reminds South Africans of our ability to collectively effect change. Unpacking the functioning of former organs of peoples' power, presents lessons on how to conduct community-based reconstruction and development, as well as to strengthen public accountability.

Copies of the '**Young lions of Lenz**' can be obtained from: ismailvadi60@gmail.com

Reneva Fourie was the Secretary of the Cape Youth Congress in the Southern Suburbs Region and served on the planning committee for the launch of SAYCO Western Cape in the 1980s. She is currently a member of the 15th Congress Central Committee of the SACP and the ANC, Ward 4/ AKASO Branch.

LENASIA YOUTH LEAGUE

JUNE 16



SOUTH
AFRICAN
YOUTH
DAY

R A L L Y

Friday, 16 June
Patidar Hall
2: 30 pm.