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Special Edition



# 2024: THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY!

Address by **President Cyril Ramaphosa** on the occasion of the  
112<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the African National Congress, 13 January 2024

**T**HIS year marks the 112<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the African National Congress, the people's movement that led the struggle for freedom and continues to spearhead the tireless national effort to transform South Africa into a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

The birthday of the African National Congress is an occasion to celebrate the distinct legacy, proud heritage, achievements and best attributes of the South African nation as a whole.

We honour all patriotic South Africans, men and women, urban and rural, young and old, and successive generations of freedom fighters, who served our nation selflessly and unconditionally during the different phases of the National Democratic Revolution, our country's struggle for freedom and self-determination.

We gather in the city of Mbombela, in the beautiful province of Mpumalanga, the place of the rising sun, to celebrate our past, chart the future and outline the tasks for the period ahead.

In the diverse cultures and traditions of our nation, sunrise represents a moment of hope: the advent of a new day with opportunities for rejuvenation, reconstruction and renewal.

We are mindful that we meet in complex and difficult times, both globally and at home. At a global level the world is facing serious risks and multiple crises. These include rising inequality and poverty, the rising cost of living, economic instability and trade wars. The world is confronted by increasing geo-political tensions, the unfolding genocide against

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the Palestinian people, the devastating effects of climate change and the risks posed by technological developments such as Artificial Intelligence, .

Thus, in 2024, we will focus, working together with the Alliance and all sectors of society, to accelerate the reconstruction of our economy, deliver quality basic services and infrastructure, renew the ANC and society, fight crime and corruption, rejuvenate our nation and contribute towards a better Africa and world.

All these tasks will gain greater momentum as our country marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of freedom and democracy.

### **CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FREEDOM**

Working together, we made significant progress over the last 30 years to put in place the building blocks of a National Democratic Society as set out in the Freedom Charter.

The gains of freedom and achievements of our young democracy include:

- The adoption of a transformative Constitution

that guarantees fundamental freedoms and human rights to all South Africans;

- Expansion of basic services and infrastructure to millions of people who now have access to housing, roads, education, health, water, energy and income support through a social security net;
- Launching the first phase of economic transformation by introducing laws and policies on worker rights, employment equity and broad-based black empowerment, investment in infrastructure, public employment programmes and achieving higher levels of economic growth;
- The establishment of democratic state institutions in accordance with the Constitution, such as the Auditor-General, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Pan South African Languages Board, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Public Protector and others to protect our democracy and freedoms.
- Taking our place amongst the community of nations,

advancing the African agenda, multilateralism, solidarity and a peaceful and just world order.

The democratic South Africa of today is very different from the lived experiences of apartheid South Africa 30 years ago.

Over the last 30 years, the ANC-led government has made tremendous strides in empowering women. It is largely due to the ANC's decision that women must be equally represented in all public institutions that currently more than 45% of the seats in parliament are held by women. In apartheid South Africa, fewer than 3% of MPs were women.

The ANC has given effect to its policy to have no less than 50% women representation in all decision-making structures. Our task now is to ensure that representation translates into meaningful and positive change in the lives of all women.

In a democratic South Africa, women are no longer second class citizens.

Over the last 30 years, South Africa's young people have benefited from our transformative programmes, a vital part of our work to build a nation of skilled, informed and resilient young people. Young people have played a vital role in shaping the democratic social order we have today.

Our nation has benefitted immensely from the creative energies of the youth. Their campaigns and advocacy on issues such as education, entrepreneurship, health, economic development, disability, research and innovation,

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democratisation, environment, LGBTQI+, international solidarity and governance, have repeatedly pushed us to rethink our policies and ways of doing things.

The social agency of the youth also finds dramatic expression in sport, the arts and cultural industries. From the rise of Kwaito music in the early 1990s as the foremost platform of youthful social expression to the prominence of Amapiano on the global music scene today. Our artists have also excelled in film, sports, writing and literature, performance arts, comedy, videography and other genres of art.

Our country will continue to rely on the youth to reimagine the future and rejuvenate our nation.

The ANC-led government is investing enormous effort and resources to stimulate, transform and grow our economy so that it can create jobs, grow new and old industries, and create business opportunities for millions of young men and women who are hardest hit by the scourge of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The provision of housing to millions of South Africans is one of the great achievements of our nation. Through the provision of houses, subsidies and serviced sites, government has managed to provide 4.7 million homes. Nearly two million women are now the proud owners of state houses. Under apartheid, all women were denied the right to benefit from state housing and black women could not own land or houses.

Eighty nine percent of households now have access to water, while 85% of South African homes



have access to mains electricity. This reduces the household burden on women and girls, who no longer spend hours fetching wood and water.

The ANC has done a lot to tackle poverty head-on. Over the last 30 years, our approach has been two-pronged: firstly, through the social wage, which involves a range of social and economic interventions, including expanding access to quality basic services, and, secondly, through direct transfers to households in the form of social grants.

One of the most direct actions by our government has been the provision of an effective social security net. In 1999 only 2.5 million people had access to social relief. Today, more than 18 million people in our country receive grants. The Social Relief of Distress Grant, introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide relief to unemployed people, lays the basis for a future Basic Income Grant.

The ANC-led government has dramatically improved access to education, from early childhood right through to post-school education. Nearly every young person aged 15-24 years is literate, and adult literacy now stands at 85%, up from only 64% in 1996.

Under apartheid, the law prevented black people from entering skilled occupations. Today we have a growing black and skilled professional sector.

Many interventions have been introduced, including school fee exemption, the school nutrition programme and scholar transport, to ensure poverty does not stand in the way of children's access to quality education.

Our work in promoting universal access to quality healthcare has made a tremendous impact. This includes free access to health care for pregnant women and children under 5 years to reduce infant and maternal mortality, and sustained investment in the building of healthcare facilities in even the most remote areas of our country.

Accordingly, life expectancy has progressively improved. This improvement is related to advances we made in, among others, the rollout of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS programme, with more than 5.8 million people on antiretroviral treatment, and steady progress in the fight against TB. Similarly, the success in curbing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, together with our child support grants, has helped reduce the rate of infant mortality.

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As part of the achievement of universal and equitable access to healthcare we spent significant time and effort over the past three decades to establish for a system of universal health insurance. This work has culminated in the passing by Parliament in 2023 of the National Health Insurance Bill as the surest way to equitably distribute access to healthcare in our country.

Despite persistent challenges, the South African economy has expanded over the past 30 years.

The number of South Africans in employment increased from 8 million in 1994 to 16.7 million now.

The ANC-led government put in place policies and laws that have enabled farmers and agribusinesses to build a resilient, competitive and inclusive agriculture and food system. South Africa's agriculture and food strategy has been premised on bringing new aspirant black farmers to create an inclusive and stable sector; securing new trade agreements to expand production and generate foreign earnings; and balancing the introduction of technologies with job creation to safeguard employment. Because

of these strategic interventions in agriculture, the value of South African agricultural output more than doubled between 1994 and 2023, and employment in the sector is currently at its highest level since 1994.

Dispossession, exclusion and marginalisation of the black majority was the key feature of the South African economy for more than 350 years. The ANC is determined to change the economy to ensure that reconstruction, growth and recovery leads to shared prosperity. The economic empowerment of the people through increased black participation in the ownership, management and control of the economy will be enhanced through deliberate interventions.

Since 1994 we have introduced the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the minimum wage and legislation that entrenches collective bargaining and the rights of workers and trade unions.

Across the world, there are few governments that have done as much as the ANC-led government in extending basic services and providing social protection and a

social wage to the working class, women and youth, the urban and rural masses, as well as the middle strata.

We must celebrate these achievements and ensure that the gains of freedom realised through our progressive social policy are defended and advanced further in the decade ahead.

The ANC has remained loyal to the pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution and the agenda for Africa's Renaissance. There have been missteps and mistakes, as is the case in any complex social transformation process, but all our programmes, initiatives and actions are aimed at transforming South Africa to eradicate the stubborn legacy of apartheid, patriarchy and colonialism.

We shall never betray the vision espoused in the Freedom Charter.

### **THE ONSLAUGHT AGAINST THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION**

The fundamental question for this year, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our freedom, is whether South Africa's transformation from an apartheid, colonial, patriarchal and divided past may be halted or reversed, or whether the democratic renewal, national rejuvenation and socio-economic transformation agenda shall gain new impetus.

We know that there are social and political forces that are working hard to undermine the gains of freedom made over the last three decades. They want to stop the march towards a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic



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and prosperous country that truly belongs to all.

The anti-transformation forces are converging into pacts, while at the same time seeking to fragment the forces for change through splinter groups and small parties that will contest the ANC.

Another anti-transformation tactic is to ensure that the ANC is locked up in internal struggles that will weaken and destroy it from within. They actively encourage rebel break-away groupings to erode the support base of the ANC. Often these start as factional conflicts within the ANC, but when the movement pushes ahead with its renewal, they mutate into opposition parties that are as opposed to the ANC as the right-wing opponents of transformation.

Some of these parties masquerade as more radical than the ANC, but their revolutionary-sounding rhetoric cannot hide the reality that they have common cause with the forces opposing transformation.

The shared goal of all these forces is to deprive the ANC of the ability to use state power to effect change.

The ANC-led Alliance and the broad progressive movement remains the only reliable force that is capable, and that has a tradition, of uniting and working with various social forces to advance the national democratic agenda. Unique among political formation in South Africa, the ANC has been able to work with workers, women, youth, progressive professionals, intellectuals, business people, middle-strata, faith-based organisations, cultural activists,



traditional leaders, and various community-based and non-governmental organisations to achieve social and economic change.

This is not the first time in our history that parties representing seemingly contradictory interests have united in common cause to impose or defend racial privilege. A century ago the National Party and the South African Labour Party came together in the Pact Government after the 1924 general election. This resulted in, among others, the Native Representation, Native Trust and Land and the Native Urban Areas Amendment Bills – respectively abolishing the Cape qualified franchise, introducing native reserves, and prohibiting black people from acquiring land in urban areas.

The onslaught against transformation should make us more determined this year to succeed in building a better life for all and to be more deliberate and resolute about the renewal of the ANC, the broad democratic forces and our society.

### TASKS FOR 2024

The National Executive Committee has decided that

the six tasks announced in the 2023 January 8<sup>th</sup> Statement should remain the focus of our movement in 2024.

Given that our country will hold its seventh National and Provincial Elections in 2024, our over-arching priority is to work for a decisive ANC election victory so that it may to obtain a clear mandate to continue the transformation of our country.

### Winning a decisive victory in 2024 Elections

The ANC is ready to launch a formidable campaign that will engage with citizens and every sector of society to seek a decisive mandate from the people to continue advancing the transformation project.

The ANC's role in working with the people to liberate South Africa from the yoke of apartheid and to vastly improve the lives of millions over the last 30 years cannot be matched by any other party. No other party has both a clear vision for a better more equal society and the capability to achieve it.

The ANC remains the party of choice for all who seek to build



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a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

The frustrating experience of dysfunctional coalition governments has shown that they don't work for the people but for the political deal-makers intent on advancing their own personal interests. Service delivery suffers while the development agenda grinds to a halt. Replicating this bitter experience of chaos, instability and dysfunctionality at national and provincial levels will be a disaster that our country cannot afford.

It is therefore imperative that the progressive forces, led by the ANC, campaign for a clear majority to ensure stability and sustained progress in our country.

We call on all ANC members and supporters to go to every farm, village and township, to every town, city and suburb to account to the people as we seek a renewed democratic mandate to defend and advance the gains of three decades of freedom.

The ANC will launch its Election Manifesto next month setting out in detail our vision and programme for taking our country forward during the next five years, and beyond.

The immediate task of all members and supporters of the ANC, our Alliance partners, the mass democratic movement and progressive civil society is to mobilise all South Africans, especially the youth, to register to vote so they can exercise their hard-won right to shape the future of our country. The IEC will hold the next voter registration weekend on 3 and 4 February 2024.

### **Intensifying the renewal of the ANC**

Our 53<sup>rd</sup> National Conference defined the principle objective of renewal as *“building the ANC’s resilience, enhancing its transformative and governance capacity and its ability to adapt to changing situations so that it can continue to serve and lead the people”*.

For this reason, the 54<sup>th</sup> National Conference concluded that organisational renewal is *“an absolute and urgent priority, and we may go as far as to say, to the survival of our great movement”*.

The 55<sup>th</sup> National Conference also said that renewal must include the renewal of the Alliance, the broad progressive movement and the democratic state, to advance the interests of the working class and other motive forces, through targeted programmes focused on health, education, social security, human settlements and land reform.

Our 2017 Strategy and Tactics demands constant vigilance to ensure that our internal weaknesses do not result in a situation where the masses of the people, by omission or commission, precipitate electoral outcomes that place in power those forces who seek stealthily and deceitfully to undermine the progressive realisation of a National Democratic Society.

Central to our renewal project is building the capacity of the ANC to lead meaningful social and economic transformation. The ownership, management and control of our economy and the distribution of economic opportunities continue to retain a racial, gender and geographic concentration.

The NEC has directed the newly-established ANC Renewal Commission to develop a comprehensive renewal programme of action in 2024.

The five key elements of our renewal programme are:

Firstly, renewal is about the quality of an organisation: the calibre of its membership, cadreship and leadership. This was stressed President Oliver Tambo in the 1985 January 8<sup>th</sup> Statement: *“The strength of any organisation lies in the calibre of its individual members and units. In order to advance in keeping with the momentum of our struggle we must improve the quality of and expand the quantity of our membership. We need cadres of unquestionable loyalty, dedication and understanding of our struggle”*.

Accordingly, the NEC has decided that, from 2024, all ANC members, including those in leadership structures such as the NEC, PECs, RECs and BECs, will be required to complete a comprehensive Foundation Course as part of the revival of a nation-wide political education programme.

In addition, the NEC has directed that a comprehensive Branch Functionality Audit guide the building of strong and vibrant ANC branches that are dynamically connected to the social life and developmental aspirations of their communities.

We call upon the ANC Women's League, Youth League and Veterans Leagues, who held successful national conferences last year, to make a meaningful contribution to the life of the ANC and address issues affecting women and young people.

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We commit ourselves working with our Alliance partners, the SA Communist Party (SACP), Congress of SA Trade Unions (COSATU) and the SA National Civic Organisation (SANCO), to ensure the strategic repositioning of the Alliance.

We also look forward to the contribution of a united and renewed civic movement following SANCO's successful national conference at the end of last year.

The second element of renewal deals with the ANC member. Effective renewal means that we must raise the intellectual capacity and enhance the moral and ethical orientation of the membership. The living embodiment of a renewed ANC will be members who show exemplary conduct in society by upholding the core values and principles of the ANC.

We call on ANC members to also in their own capacity to engage in the battle of ideas and espouse progressive ideas and values, consistent with our vision of a better and more just society and world.

We call upon ANC structures to mobilise all South Africans in a campaign to combat the demons of racism, tribalism, ethnic chauvinism and related intolerances in our country and organisation. In line with the warning by one of our founding fathers and ANC President , Pixley ka Isaka Seme, that *"these divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today"*.

The third element of renewal is about instilling discipline



and respect for organisational processes and principles.

The ANC is committed to developing and, where necessary, correcting its members and leaders. However, as renewal gains momentum those whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles - the criminals, the corrupt, the careerists and factionalists, and those who actively work against the organisation – will find themselves outside the ANC.

There will be no compromise on the fundamental matters of organisational discipline and integrity.

The fourth element of renewal deals with the quality of our leaders and public representatives. The NEC has appointed an ANC Electoral Committee and adopted stringent and transparent rules and guidelines for electing leaders and selecting candidates to be public representatives. All leaders and public representatives, once elected, must be held accountable through the rigorous monitoring and evaluation system adopted by the NEC.

### **Reconstructing our economy to create more jobs and growth**

A prosperous society is one where people's lives are better, where they flourish and are happy. Whilst prosperity is often

measured in economic terms, the ANC sees it in broader terms.

A prosperous people are free from poverty and the ANC government has done tremendous work over the last 30 years to promote economic empowerment and worker rights to a decent wage and collective bargaining.

The ANC remains committed to protecting collective bargaining and all worker rights.

The prosperity we seek requires that we transform the structure of the economy to ensure a more equitable distribution of wealth and control of our national economic assets.

Laws such as the Employment Equity Act and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act have enabled both women and men greater access to employment, business and investment opportunities.

Land dispossession, exclusion and marginalisation of the black majority was the central characteristic of the South African economy for more than 350 years.

What the ANC government has done over the last 30 years to transform and rebuild the economy is significant.

But more must still be done.



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This ANC-government will continue our work to ensure that social and economic advancement of women is deepened and becomes an even more deliberate feature of all our work – from the redistribution of land to the provision of housing, from access to public employment programmes to the provision of higher education funding.

We must do more to change sexist attitudes and end all forms of harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

We call on the private sector to ensure that women receive equal pay for work of equal value and adopt policies to advance women-owned businesses through their supply chains and through all their training and enterprise development programmes.

We welcome the fact that the Preferential Procurement Bill with set asides for women, youth and persons with disabilities has now been passed by the National Assembly.

Despite the progress made in rebuilding and transforming the economy in the wake of apartheid, for more than a decade the economy has been characterised by low growth and higher levels of unemployment. This has been compounded by the effects of the most severe global pandemic in more than a century. Within the space of just a few months in 2020, our economy lost around 2 million jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet in the midst of severe load shedding and increased global volatility, the economy has been resilient and is now larger than it was before the pandemic. Over the last two years, the number of

people with jobs has increased, bringing the level of employment to its pre-pandemic level and creating an additional 300,000 jobs.

Every family wants their daughters and sons to look forward to productive and prosperous lives. Today, there are 5.7 million young people under the age of 34 years in employment. However, too many young people are not in employment, education or training.

The Presidential Employment Stimulus has created over 1.2 million work and livelihood opportunities since its establishment, representing the largest expansion of public employment in South Africa's history.

In addition, over 4 million young people have registered on the SAYouth online platform, and more than 1 million of these have been able to access opportunities for learning and earning.

But there is still more we can and must do. South Africa is blessed with rich natural resources. Yet too many of our natural resources are still exported in raw form, and then imported back into South Africa as manufactured goods.

The jobs and profits involved in manufacturing these goods are passed on to other countries, yet we need these here in South Africa. Our manifesto will outline industrial policy measures to ensure more of what is consumed by us is produced by us, and enable us to benefit from new growth areas such as the fourth industrial revolution and the green economy.

The African Continental Free

Trade Area (AfCFTA) can be a game-changer for industrialisation and development across the continent. By promoting industrialisation and trade among African countries, more of what is consumed on the continent can be produced on the continent. The AfCFTA also opens significant opportunities for South African entrepreneurs to expand their exports of manufactured goods to other African countries.

None of these growth measures can become a reality as long as our logistics infrastructure constrains trade. The ANC welcomes measures to bring new investors to upgrade our ports and rail network and the adoption of the Freight Logistics Roadmap late last year.

The establishment of the National Logistics Crisis Committee enables all role players, including state owned enterprises and the private sector, to focus on resolving the immediate problem of port, rail and road congestion.

The ANC directs our deployees in government to spare no effort in managing a speedy resolution to this crisis and communicating on progress to the public.

### **Improving Basic Services and Infrastructure**

The implementation of infrastructure projects is stimulating economic activity and providing the infrastructure necessary for the growth of our economy and meeting the needs of the people, including in areas such as human settlements, road and rail, rural bridges, water and sanitation.

At the same time, the inherited backlog, a growing and urbanising





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population, corruption and poor state capacity and coordination has led to many communities suffering sewer spillages, lack of water, power cuts, refuse not being removed and other service delivery challenges.

In 2023, we put in place a monitoring, evaluation and intervention system to ensure swift and responsive attention to the issues raised by communities, as well as addressing the challenges faced by local government.

In 2024, we must continue to address service delivery and infrastructure challenges.

This means that every ANC branch must continue to work in its community, and with School Governing Bodies, ward committees, Community Policing Forums and community organisations to ensure problems of service delivery are attended to swiftly and sustainably.

Government departments at all levels must plan, budget and implement together through the District Development Model to ensure coordinated action and sustained interventions, and that service delivery and infrastructure challenges are addressed.

Every ANC branch must mobilise to protect public institutions like schools, libraries and clinics, electricity infrastructure, railways, roads and bridges from vandalism and destruction.

Every public servant must, in the spirit of Batho Pele, work hard, be ethical and competent and put the people first so that we enhance the performance of state institutions. We will engage public service unions to

work together so that we build a developmental and ethical state.

The ANC government will ensure that competent and ethical professionals be appointed to the public service on merit, be given space to do their job and account on transformation and developmental objectives.

Our local governments will focus on their key responsibility of providing services to promote social and economic development and create a safe and healthy environment in partnership with communities, local businesses and civil society.

### **Combating gender-based violence and building the family**

To defend and advance our freedom and successfully build a cohesive nation this year we must combat gender-based violence and promote the family as a basic unit of society.

Every ANC member must take every opportunity to speak out against a toxic masculinity that enables men to abuse women and children and abandon their family responsibilities.

ANC branches must work with community-based organisations to ensure no family turns a blind eye to gender-based violence.

All ANC structures must emulate the ANC Women's League in their excellent campaign to ensure culprits of femicide, child abuse and rape are arrested, denied bail and face the full might of the law.

In schools, clinics, in faith based organisations and in society at large, we must work to prevent

young women becoming mothers before they have finished their own education and childhoods.

We call on both ANC branches and our government institutions to actively strengthen the role of the family in supporting both young and old. Special attention must be given to ensuring parents understand their roles and responsibilities in raising their children.

ANC branches must work with every household to ensure all children attend schooling from pre-school, and actively work with the education system and parents to prevent school drop-outs.

As part of a caring organisation that respects the fundamental human rights of all people, ANC members should always be in the forefront of advocating for the rights of persons with disability, persons living with albinism the LGBTQI+ community and other groups subjected to prejudice and discrimination.

### **Resolving the energy crisis and ending loadshedding**

The work that has been done over the last year in implementing the Energy Action Plan has given us greater confidence that we will bring load shedding to an end.

Although we still experience interruptions in electricity supply, the overall trend is towards less severe load shedding and better management and communication of outages. The regulatory reforms we have initiated have enabled a massive increase in investment in electricity generation. Attention is now being given to expansion of investment in additional transmission grid capacity.

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In the short term, we continue to call upon all South Africans to use electricity sparingly and to reduce their overall consumption of electricity.

ANC branches must also campaign to ensure communities pay for services used, and support programmes to introduce pay-as-you-go meters and disconnect illegal electricity and water connections.

### **Strengthening the fight against crime and corruption**

Crime undermines and erodes the gains of freedom and shared prosperity. Recognising the severity of the problem is the first step. Crime in South Africa is well organised and deeply entrenched across a range of social and economic sectors. Effective crime fighting requires integration between crime intelligence, detective work, law enforcement, community mobilisation and public prosecution.

The ANC welcomes steps that have already been taken to put 20 000 more police personnel on the streets and to improve the capacity of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and courts to ensure perpetrators are brought to justice.

We also welcome the establishment of specialised units and the recent work of Operation Shanela to target illegal mining and other priority crimes.

Empowering communities through Community Policing Forums (CPF) is fundamentally important if we are to succeed to defeat crime and corruption. By fostering collaboration between citizens and law enforcement agencies, these forums play a

vital role in preventing crime, promoting public safety and building trust in the justice system.

The NEC has instructed our deployees in government to ensure the police service is more responsive to crime issues in communities raised by CPFs so that we avoid vigilante actions by disgruntled residents. ANC branches must continue to play a leadership role in establishing and supporting CPFs.

To ensure that our government has a more integrated approach to crime fighting, which includes the effective use of crime intelligence, law enforcement and successful public prosecution, the ANC manifesto will focus on the necessary measures to combat lawlessness and criminality.

We will also focus on cross-border security issues, such as human trafficking, drug smuggling and other illicit trade. We have continued with initiatives to improve our border security and to strictly enforce immigration law.

The Border Management Agency, working with other law enforcement and intelligence agencies, is seized with the task of monitoring our borders to

ensure security and the lawful passage of documented persons in and out of South Africa. Government has put out for public comment the White Paper on Immigration to improve the legal instruments we have at our disposal to respond to problems of illegal immigration.

Corruption in government, business and society is criminal activity. It detracts from government's ability to improve the conditions of those living in poverty and to transform society. Corruption is counter-revolutionary. We disassociate ourselves from those who are corrupt, commit serious crimes, abuse women and children and are involved in sexual harassment.

The ANC welcomes progress in renewing anti-corruption agencies. More effort must be made by prosecuting authorities to ensure that in cases presented to the courts evidence is properly prepared in advance.

### **Building a better Africa and a just, equitable and more humane world**

Today progressive people across the world stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine. We



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condemn in the strongest terms the appalling slaughter by the Israeli government of more than 22 000 Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

The ANC has always stood side by side with the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination because, like we were before 1994, they too are faced with a brutal apartheid regime. President Nelson Mandela famously declared that our own freedom as South Africa was incomplete without the freedom of Palestine.

As South Africans living in a free and democratic society we tremble with indignation as we witness the injustice against the people of Palestine.

The ongoing genocide in Palestine has led us to take the extraordinary step of submitting a case to the International Court of Justice.

We recall that 30 years ago, in 1994 as South Africa was preparing to hold our first democratic elections, one million Africans were killed in the genocide that unfolded in Rwanda while the world looked on with indifference. In the words of President Mandela, “never, never and never again” must this be allowed to happen.

Today we reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire in the assault on Gaza; the opening of corridors so that humanitarian assistance can reach those in dire need; the release of hostages and political prisoners; and the settlement of the conflict based on the two- state solution, in terms of the 1967 borders.

We remain vocal on matters pertaining to those oppressed



and marginalised throughout the world. Accordingly we have solidly continued to support the peoples of Cuba and Western Sahara in their struggles.

The multiple global crises and risks we spoke of earlier cannot be resolved through a unipolar world dominated by the Global North or by armed conflict.

Developing countries and progressive forces, through platforms such as the Non-Aligned Movement, BRICS, the G77 plus China and other global platforms, are pushing for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced global order that will guarantee humanity’s collective survival and success, buttressed by strong multilateral collaboration and international solidarity.

South Africa participated with sister African countries in a peace mission to Ukraine and Russia, informed by our conviction that all conflicts should be resolved through dialogue.

We will continue to play an active role in Africa’s renewal and development agenda. We are a trusted partner in conflict resolution and peace missions across the continent, in countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, the DRC and Mozambique.

Working with other national

liberation movements and progressive parties in the continent, the ANC will continue to make its contribution towards peace and development of the African Continent.

At COP 28 in Dubai last year, South Africa, together with other countries on the African continent, contributed to a balanced consensus which will assist our continent build climate resilience and benefit from the move towards a low carbon economy at a pace our country can afford and in a manner that is just and leaves no one behind.

During 2024, progressive and peace-loving South Africans must therefore continue to stand in solidarity with the peoples of Palestine, Cuba, Western Sahara and Eswatini. ANC branches and structures must educate and activate members and communities on the importance of solidarity.

We remain resolute in advancing the African Agenda 2063 to build a peaceful, united and prosperous continent. We will continue to work to advance industrialisation, intra-African trade, food and water security, and infrastructural development. In the words of former President Thabo Mbeki:

*“Whatever the setbacks of the*

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*moment, nothing can stop us now! Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace! However improbable it may sound to the sceptics, Africa will prosper!"*

### ANNIVERSARIES

During 2024, we will commemorate the centenary of the birth of Elias Mathope Motsoaledi (26 July 1924 – 9 May 1994). An embodiment of the different pillars and components of our struggle, he was active in the Communist Party and the ANC, a founding member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and Umkhonto we Sizwe. He was sentenced to life imprisonment at the Rivonia Trial in 1964, released in 1989 and elected to the ANC NEC in 1991.

It is important for the renewal of our movement to be grounded in its history, traditions and values. We draw lessons and inspiration from the following significant anniversaries taking place this year:

- 80 years since the formation of the ANC Youth League on 2 April 1944 by amongst others Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Ashby Mda and Oliver Tambo. Successive generations have carried out the twin tasks of the League: to unite and lead young men and women in confronting and dealing with the problems that face the youth and to

ensure that the youth make a full and rich contribution to the work of the ANC and the life of the nation.

- 70 years since the formation of the Federation of South African Women (Fedsaw) on 17 April 1954 by amongst others Ray Alexander, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Amina Cachalia and the adoption of the 1954 Women's Charter.
- 65 years since the 1959 potato boycott against against slave-like conditions of potato labourers in Bethal, Mpumalanga. Leaders of the movement included Gert Sibande ("The Lion of the East") and Ruth First.
- 60 years since Nelson Mandela delivered his speech from the dock at the Rivonia Trial on 20 April 1964 in which he stated: *"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal for which I hope to live and to see realised. But, My Lord, if it needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."*
- 60 years since the execution of Vuyisile Mini, Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mhlaba, members of the ANC, SACTU and the Eastern Cape Command of Umkhonto we Sizwe, on 6 November 1964.
- 55 years since the historic ANC Consultative Conference in Morogoro, which played a crucial role in the renewal of the ANC, which adopted the 1969 Strategy and Tactics and which opened membership of the ANC to all races.
- 45 years since the formation of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) on 31 May 1979, mobilising students under the slogan "Each One, Teach One".
- 40 years since the assassination of Jeanette Schoon and her daughter Katryn, on 28 June 1984 in Lubango, Angola by a parcel bomb sent by the apartheid regime.
- 40 years since United Democratic Front mobilised the people against attempts by the apartheid regime to divide and rule by co-opting coloured and Indian voters through the Tricameral Parliament Elections held on 22 August 1984.
- 35 years since the release of Rivonia Trialists Ahmed Kathrada, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi and Walter Sisulu along with Wilton Mkwayi and Oscar Mpetha.
- 35 years since the Conference for a Democratic Future on 10 November 1989 brought together the Mass Democratic Movement in support for the strategic perspectives contained in the Harare Declaration.
- 30 years since one million Africans were killed in the genocide that unfolded in

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Rwanda while the world looked on with indifference.

- 30 years since our first democratic elections on 27 April 1994.

During 2023 we dipped our revolutionary banner in honour of the memory of Comrades Mosie Moola, Pule Thathe, Stephanie Kemp, Mbulelo Musi, Lawrence Khuzwayo, Tiego Moseneke, Chris Matlhako, Blanche La Guma, Essop Pahad, Marhooma Khatija Cachalia, Noganiwe “Antie” Nyathela, Junaid Pahad, Sally Motlana, Tina Joemat-Pettersson, Amos and Betty Gumede, Sello Molibeli, Zoliswa Funiselo, Mluleki Aubrey Mali, Ntombizodwa Dorris Sikhosana, Billy Masetha, Joe Mpsisi, David Niddrie, Blanco Mabaso, Mogolodi “Corra” Dikgacwi, Klaas de Jonge, Buyiswa Nomngcayi-Bulawa, Harry Belafonte, Kiernan “AKA” Forbes, Matshidiso Segale, Paul Lekgwape, Regina Pelonomi Mahne, Sally Keboneope Khono Senna, Nombulelo Tyawa, Teboho Moseling Mahlatsi, Micere Githae Mugo, Dikago Pule, Themba Wilson Sidima, Thabo Mabasa, Farooq Meer, Kallie Hanekom, Mfanelo Ndlela, Thembi Mmoko, Mabhungu Mkhize, Jick Kgoleng, Vuyisile Skei, Amy Thornton, Zeph Makgetla, Important Mkhize, Matshidiso Segale, Paul Lekgwape, Regina Pelonomi Mahne, Julian Bahula, Aziz Pahad, Zoleka Mandela, Andrew Ragavaloo, Lydia Komape Ngwenya, Herbert “Tau” Bhoya, Shadrack Gutto, Lesibana Mpepele, Ina Cronje, Ndoyisile (Mandoyi) Tshandu, Joshua “Joe” Dikeme Makgothlo, Thandeka Gule, Luwellan Landers, Ruskin Nkondo, Bulelwa “Zahara” Mkutukana, Alice Mthembu, Peter Magubane, Mxolisi Faku, Mbongeni Ngema and Sipiwe Doctor Msibi.

### THEME OF THE YEAR

The achievement of freedom and the democratic gains made should neither be taken for granted nor diminished. There was “no easy walk to freedom” and “freedom was not free”. Millions of people suffered, struggled and sacrificed enormously so that our country can achieve freedom, peace and democracy.

It is for this reason that today we echo the words of Nelson Mandela, the founding President of democratic South Africa, who boldly pronounced during his inauguration in 1994: *“Let freedom reign. The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement”*.

Deepening democracy and fast-tracking fundamental socio-economic transformation is the best way to defend and advance freedom.

Accordingly, we dedicate the 112<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ANC to the defence and advancement of the gains of freedom and to the intensification of the struggle for a better life for all. We therefore declare 2024 to be:

**THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY!**

**JANUARY 8<sup>TH</sup> STATEMENT 2024**

**THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY!**

# ANC VETERANS LEAGUE CONGRATULATES THE ANC ON ITS 112<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

■ By **SNUKI ZIKALALA, ANC Veterans League President**

**O**N behalf of the Veteran's League of the ANC, I stand here today to congratulate the ANC on its 112th birthday. I bring greetings from veterans across the country who last year organised into branches and provinces and in July 2023 held our third national conference.

We are now a properly constituted structure – ready, able and willing to contribute to the renewal of the ANC, a better South Africa for all and a decisive victory in the national and provincial elections later this year.

What is this political moment that the ANC faces as it enters its 112th year?

We recognise that our economy is improving now after impact of COVID, while high interest rates and inflation especially food inflation intensify the poverty and hunger faced by too many South Africans. In 2022 according to the International Labour Organisation, ILO, South Africa had the highest unemployment rate and the lowest proportion of informal employment globally.

The splintering of political parties and the rise of new small parties



and individual candidates standing for election is both an expression and a threat to our vibrant democracy. Most of these new formations don't have clear policy positions and espouse populist views, merely seeking power for their own interests. We must ensure that we clear up any confusion that is being spread about Umkhonto we Sizwe... which was the armed wing of the ANC and whose identity is now being stolen.

In South Africa, the challenge of the political moment is to preserve our human rights and democratic values while achieving economic growth and transformation. The ANC is the only political party

with solid and sustainable policies and a track record of delivering on them, despite the recent setbacks because of Covid and slow economic growth.

In implementing these policies, we must always be guided by the imperative to serve the people and build a better life for all. We have to refute through our actions, that the ANC as a political party is self-serving.

Mr President, an ANC that leads, is an ANC that can reflect and have foresight. The Manifesto Review process allowed us to reflect, the forthcoming ANC Election Manifesto allows us to exercise foresight. At the ANC

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55th National Conference, we outlined the priorities of the ANC for the next five years, including addressing economic reconstruction, service delivery, crime and corruption. As the ANC VL we believe that the ANC Election Manifesto must focus on these priorities and the promises we make need to be principled but practical, ambitious but humble, and above all, we must not over-promise.

In addition to a quality election manifesto and grassroots campaigning, it is the strong belief of the VL that a credible National and Provincial candidate list is our best chance of winning an outright majority. We are all aware that the ANC Constitution makes it clear that “engaging in any unethical or immoral conduct which detracts from the character, values and integrity of the ANC” is an act of misconduct as it brings the organisation into disrepute.

The appointment of ANC members to higher office even though such members have allegations of corruption or unethical behaviour against them will undermine the support of the ANC. We must be certain that those implicated by the Zondo, VBS and other commissions appear before the Integrity Commission as instructed by the ANC NEC way back in April 2023. If not, they must be processed by the National Disciplinary Committee of the ANC before the nomination lists are finalised. We repeat that this must be done before the nomination lists are finalised. If we achieve this, we will certainly regain the confidence of the electorate once again, and we will go well beyond the 51%.

We welcome the changes that have happened so far including

the screening of potential candidates to ensure they have no criminal records nor allegations of financial mismanagement, malfeasance or gender-based violence against them.

We as the VL have been on this journey with you and want to continue to do so. Currently, we are part of developing an intense political programme by the OR Tambo School of Leadership focusing on the values, principles, and ethical leadership of ANC members.

As the Veteran’s League, we are an integral part of the ANC. Veterans embody the organisational experience and institutional memory of the movement and the people’s struggle for freedom and democracy and are required as per the Preamble of our Constitution to “*play an important role in reinforcing the traditions, history, values and unity of the movement*”.

At our recent Conference, we re-committed ourselves to ensuring that every veteran of the movement belongs to a VL and ANC branch and thereby in all structures of the ANC. Since then, we have been active in key areas of

work of the ANC NEC including political education, the local government intervention task team and were part of a team that developed the ANC political frame on coalitions at local governments. Mr President, the ANCVL is committed to driving the implementation of the ANC renewal programme and actively participating in the election programme for victory on election day.

We should not feel threatened by those who are leaving our ranks because either they have been subject to our disciplinary processes or fear them. Let us remind each other of the words of our revered leader, OR Tambo: “*Beware the wedge driver. Watch his poisonous tongue*”. Comrades, to continue to live and to lead, we need to intensify the renewal of the ANC. In addition to weeding opportunists and thieves from our ranks, we need to rebuild ANC structures from branch to national level so that we can more effectively connect with our people, listen to them and take forward their aspirations.

Internationally, we are witnessing tragic conflicts. Genocide committed by the Israeli govern-



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ment against the Palestinians. The Ukraine war and Sudan amongst others. And we are seeing the devastation to lives and livelihoods as a result of climate change.

When we look beyond our borders, we should be grateful that South Africans are led by an ANC government which observes human rights and has taken the matter of genocide in Gaza to the International Court of Justice. We commend the general public for the solidarity it has and continues to show, for the Palestinian People.

We also applaud the leading role South Africa has played in addressing climate change and leading the way at Cop28 to ensure that more is done by developed countries to address the loss and damage they have caused in developing countries. This is the principled role that we should continue to play in the international arena, honouring our long history of reciprocal international solidarity.

Mr President, in your January 8th statement in Mangaung last year, you said, and I quote:

*“Central to the ANC Roadmap, is the understanding that the ANC will only succeed in realising its strategic objectives when it confronts its subjective weaknesses and successfully transforms itself into a renewed, responsive, modernised, well-governed, well-resourced, ethical, caring and effective political formation.”*

On this 112th anniversary, we commit the Veterans League to continue to join hands with the ANC to intensify our efforts to achieve a non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous country.

***The ANC Lives, the ANC Leads!***



# SACP congratulates the ANC on its 112th anniversary

**T**HE South African Communist Party (SACP) extends its warmest congratulations to the African National Congress (ANC), the oldest liberation organisation in Africa, on the occasion of its 112th founding anniversary on 8 January 2024.

We express our profound appreciation to the ANC for spearheading our liberation struggle following its founding in 1912. The SACP, as the second oldest political organisation in South Africa, formed nine years after the ANC, played a crucial role as a reliable partner throughout the complex, difficult, and challenging journey of our liberation struggle.

Established in 1921 as the Communist Party of South Africa, committed to the liberation of the racially oppressed black majority, gender equality and the empowerment of women by dismantling patriarchal domination, the establishment of South Africa as a non-racial and non-sexist democratic republic, and ending capitalist exploitation of the working-class, regardless of race and gender, through a socialist struggle, the SACP forged its alliance with the ANC following the adoption of the Resolution on the South African Question by the Communist International in 1928 based on extensive discussions with South African Communists.





During its annual conference held in Johannesburg in December 1928 and January 1929, the Communist Party formally ratified the resolution. The Party went on to establish the alliance with the ANC, and the Alliance includes the progressive trade union movement, which also played a pivotal role in our liberation struggle.

The history of our victory against the apartheid regime in April 1994, rooted in the mobilisation and overwhelming support of our people, would be incomplete without a recognition of the leading role played by the ANC in our liberation struggle. Likewise, the history of our hard-won democratic rights, enshrined in our constitution, would be incomplete without acknowledging the pivotal role played by the ANC.

The SACP further recognises the role played by the ANC as the governing party since our April 1994 democratic breakthrough in ensuring the delivery of the massive social advances that benefit millions of our people.

The commendable democratic gains include the homes provided free of charge to the workers and poor, who were and are still excluded by the capitalist property market due to their inability to afford homes as commodities – an exclusive preserve for those who can afford or are eligible for mortgage bonds. There has been a significant expansion of access to education at all levels, ranging from the foundation phase to secondary schools – with school feeding schemes for children from poor households – and to post-school education and training at colleges and universities.

There has also been a rise in the

number of clinics and expansion of access to healthcare covering the formerly oppressed. Furthermore, there has been an extension of access to water, electricity, and roads, particularly in rural areas that were overlooked during racist oppression – whose beneficiaries are notably concentrated in political parties led overwhelmingly by white leaders, like the DA, underscoring the enduring legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

Our Alliance needs to undergo a reconfiguration and, together with the entire democratic national-revolutionary landscape and constituencies of our liberation struggle, must unite more than ever before to safeguard the achievements of our democratic transition and further advance the national democratic revolution. This becomes imperative as beneficiaries of apartheid and the so-called homelands, established by the apartheid regime, and backed by imperialist forces, re-unite post-1994 under the reactionary agenda termed a “multi-party charter”, originally the DA’s so-called moonshot pact.

To ensure a successful reconfiguration, our Alliance must unite behind a change in policy direction, encompassing a new macroeconomic framework and an adequately funded high impact industrial policy, to drive beneficiation, industrialisation and large-scale employment creation to resolve the unemployment crisis currently affecting over 11 million active and discouraged work-seekers.

The new policy direction should include transforming the Social Relief of Distress Grant into a universal basic income grant and

improving it as we move forward. This will contribute to poverty alleviation and should form part of a wider poverty eradication strategy as an apex priority in the new policy direction.

Furthermore, the new policy direction should advance a public pathway to overcome the electricity crisis and stop load shedding sustainably. As part of this effort, the government must prioritise building new state-owned power generation stations, with greater attention to carbon capture and sequestration and renewable energy sources. The public pathway should extend to the imperative to rebuild and expand the passenger and freight rail networks, greater trade ports and both inward and outward logistics capacity.

The new policy direction should encompass a more decisive approach and greater capacity to prevent, combat and investigate crime and corruption, including gender-based violence.

Three decades into our democratic dispensation, progress toward realising the economic clauses outlined in the Freedom Charter, particularly regarding state ownership in the economy, generally, and a central role in the banking sector, remains elusive. To propel our democratic transformation and development, our nation requires accelerated transformation of the financial sector, with the establishment of a developmental state banking sector as an immediate priority.

Our people expect greater progress. This requires a renewed ANC within the framework of a reconfigured Alliance anchored by the widest possible patriotic unity.



# ANC 112<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY: COSATU MESSAGE OF SUPPORT

**W**E are pleased to celebrate the ANC's 112th anniversary. No matter the challenges facing the ANC, its place in history as the leader of the struggle to free South Africa and build a non-racial and non-sexist democracy is assured.

Since coming to office, the ANC has made major strides in breaking down the legacies of apartheid and colonialism and ensuring public services are available for all communities. Today 60% of state expenditure is spent on poor communities.

Whilst some say these are yesterday's victories, the ANC under President Cyril Ramaphosa, passed the National Minimum Wage uplifting six million workers' wages.

Government worked tirelessly with Labour and Business at Nedlac to manage the COVID-19 pandemic and oversee a massive roll-out of relief to the poor, including the SRD grant benefiting 8 million unemployed and the UIF helping 6 million workers.

Progress is being made to expand workers' rights, pass the National Health Insurance Bill, extend workplace insurance for domestic workers, increase maternity and parental leave benefits and allow struggling workers early access to their pensions.



Our challenges are immense, from unemployment to loadshedding, the crises affecting Transnet, Prasa, other SOEs and municipalities, crime and corruption. It is natural to feel despondent but there has been real progress. Unemployment fell by 5% over the past year and strides have been made in reducing loadshedding.

As we prepare for the State of the Nation Address and the Budget, government needs to be bold and aggressive; and extend relief for the unemployed, protect workers, tackle corruption and crime, invest in public services and stimulate the economy.

Government needs to:

- Raise the SRD Grant to the food poverty line.
- Extend the Presidential Em-

ployment Programme to provide 2 million jobs.

- Ensure the implementation of the 2 Pot Pension Reforms on 1 September 2024.
- Remove delays in the rollout of the public infrastructure programme.
- Intervene in the 36 municipalities routinely failing to pay workers.
- Provide additional support for Eskom to end loadshedding.
- Urgently stabilise and modernise Transnet and Metro Rail.
- Prevent the collapse of the Post Office and Postbank.
- Allocate additional resources to ensure the law enforcement agencies and courts so



they can win the war against crime and corruption.

- Empower SARS to tackle tax evasion and customs fraud.
- Fill all public sector vacancies by April 2024.
- Ensure Parliament passes the remaining critical Bills before the elections.
- Draft legislation for non-trading holidays and extending election voting hours.

We are engaging government and employers to address workers' frustrations, including healing the wounds of the 2018 public service wage agreement and ensuring collective bargaining is respected at all times by all employers.

The ANC is not perfect. It makes mistakes, but it has also worked over many years to champion and deliver working class demands. It is the product of workers' struggles.

We dare not give up when the challenges facing workers are immense. We must not abandon our many hard-won victories.

Let us mobilise workers in our numbers to ensure the ANC is returned to office on election day and continue to work to improve the lives of all South Africans.

Thank you. Amandla!



## SANCO MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO THE ANC

**W**ARM revolutionary greetings to the president of the African National Congress (ANC) and the entire leadership of the movement. Secretary General of SACP, president of COSATU and more importantly the masses of our movement.

We, the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) join thousands and millions of South Africans in celebrating the 112 years of the existence of the ANC. The one and the only reliable and dependable national liberation movement that brought us out of the apartheid shackles, to a democratic South Africa. The only movement that exists to improve the lives and living condition of our masses.

We stand here today before the masses of our people and other international communities to reaffirm our unwavering support to the African National Congress in the upcoming 2024 general elections.

SANCO campaigns for the ANC!

SANCO votes for the ANC!

It is our resolution and our resolutions are binding. Failure to adhere will be dealt with. We don't tolerate shenanigans.

We are committed to bringing back the long lost 25% in the alliance, through SANCO Khuluma Mhlali programmes. Our masses said they are ANC and they will vote for the ANC.

Their major challenges are, high unemployment rate with its human made barriers, age limit “BARE LE BONA KE BATHO”, they too have needs and responsibilities.

Secondly, the small and emerging black industrialists find it difficult to take part in the economic stream of their country, due to countless red tape that relegates them to be spectators. Most importantly, parents have urged schools to make inter-school sports compulsory, so that it keeps our children away from criminal and mischief making.

As SANCO we see and acknowledge the good work of the ANC-led government in our society. We have strong faith in the introduction of National Health Insurance (NHI).

We say Happy 112th Birthday to the ANC, communities remain behind you and will vote for you in droves.

Viva ANC Viva!

Long Live Our Revolutionary Alliance, Long Live



# THE TEACHINGS OF PRESIDENT DUBE

■ By **BHEKI MTOLO**

*(This is an abridged version of a presentation by Comrade Mtololo)*

**A**S KZN, we will be re-enacting the journey that President John Langalibalele Dube took a century ago – as we, ourselves approach the general elections.

As all of you are aware, President Dube is not only one of the most revered icons of our movement but his principles, teachings and values continue to be the guiding light of our movement long after he joined a glittering array of other icons.

Through the teachings of President Dube we must unite and build a united, strong and accountable ANC.

Let us hold hands and march to victory in the elections.

This statement is informed by the fact that the founding of the ANC was driven by intellectuals such President John Langalibalele Dube, OR Tambo, Nelson Mandela Pixley ka Seme and so many others. President Dube went on to establish Ohlange Institute in Inanda.

The school emphasized intellectual development, skills development, the ethos of Ubuntu and the creation of a fully developed individual.



## Political Climate

Comrades, let us turn our focus to the issue of political developments. In as much as we want to be frank, we also want to give you a proper historical context. On December 18, we had a meeting of the Mass Democratic Movements.

It was robust, frank and attended by representatives of the following structures:

- ANC Provincial Executive Committee;
- ANC Regional Executive committee members;
- South Africa Communist Party;
- Congress of South African Trade Union;

- South African National Civics Organisation;
- ANC Women's League
- ANC Youth League;
- South African Students Congress;
- Young Communist League of South Africa and
- Congress of South African Students.

In our meeting we reflected on the Press Briefing held by Jacob Zuma on December 16 last year. For this presentation allow me to refer to him as JZ.

JZ announced through his personal Press Briefing without utilizing internal processes, that he

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will vote for a new party called Umkhonto Wesizwe Party (his fake so-called MK Party).

By doing so, he de-campaigned the ANC and effectively mobilized for a new political party established with his blessings and knowledge.

The party was established in September and according to JZ – the main purpose of the organization is to remove the ANC from power. And essentially collapse the entire alliance.

We admitted in that meeting of the mass democratic movement that leaders of the ANC, especially former presidents, have in the past voiced their concerns about weaknesses in the ANC.

Former and current leaders of the ANC have publicly raised concerns about the shortcomings of ANC leaders across all levels. There have been concerns as well about the quality of membership.

In our statement that we issued after the meeting, we pointed out that it is for the first time in 111 years of the ANC's existence that a former President announces publicly his decision to vote for another political party.

### **Blatant Lies Peddled by JZ against the ANC in his Personal Briefing**

JZ accused the ANC of, *“expelling members without implementing proper processes to establish if such action was appropriate.”*

This is false. Even when JZ was a leader, the ANC expelled many members including prominent members of the ANC.

We wish to remind him that when



Former ANC President Jacob Zuma at a meeting of the fake MK party

Bantu Holomisa was expelled on the 30th September 1996 from the ANC, JZ was its National Chairperson.

When Julius Malema a President of the ANCYL then was expelled, JZ was the President of the ANC. The same as November 2016 when Fransman, the then Western Cape Provincial Chairperson who was suspended for five years and removed as Provincial Chairperson.

Further, true to his character – to never take any responsibility for wrong doing, he accuses the current leadership. And he alleges that, *“some of the foreign behaviour and displays have led to the public losing confidence in the capabilities of the organisation and losing faith and respect for its leadership.”*

As the conveyers of truth, we wish to remind JZ that the ANC started to lose support under him as President of the ANC.

This decline started from 2009 taking the ANC away from two thirds majority it gained in 2004 elections. Then, this declining has been there – including 2016

Local Government Elections when he was still the President of the ANC. We lost many Metros under him.

JZ further alleged that *“ANC democratically elected structures are dead due to the influence of money and link that with the so called CR17 funding of the 54th National Conference.”*

Once again it shows how selective JZ can be to serve his personal convenience.

The issue of the use of money in the ANC did not start in the 2017 54th National Conference. In our 50th Conference, President Mandela does caution the ANC about this dangerous phenomenon.

As a result, emanating from that Conference the ANC convened its first National General Council in the year 2000 in Gqeberha (then Port Elizabeth) and developed a document titled ***“Through the Eye of a Needle”***.

In that document the use of money is explained in detail. The 2000 NGC observed that, there were new negative challenges in the new terrain.



Having analysed these negative tendencies, the 2000 NGC also appreciated that the process to transform our country from apartheid Colonialism to a just Prosperous country won't be easy as our wishes. It then said: *"The process of social transformation is a difficult one, with possibilities of committing mistakes from time to time and with the speed of change not totally dependent on our will. Some individuals exploit these weaknesses by creating an impression that they could do what the ANC leadership as a whole is unable to do. Thus, is born populism"*.

The accusation of the current leadership as the one that invented the use of money in the ANC in the 2017 Conference is not backed by evidence. In fact this is what the movement has observed far before our 54th National Conference.

Therefore, as the movement collectively we are duty bound to dismiss these lies that are peddled to achieve narrow selfish interests.

What does Strategy and Tactics (S&T) say about the Character of the National Democratic Revolution when it comes to the economy?

We shall remember that our S&T provides that we inspire as the ANC to create a National Democratic Society.

The S&T provides that, *"a national democratic society will have a mixed economy, with state, cooperative and other forms of social ownership, and private capital."*

*"On Monopoly Capital the S&T tells us that, "the relationship between the national democratic*

*state and all private capital, including monopoly capital, is one of 'unity and struggle', co-operation and contestation."*

*"On the one hand, the democratic state seeks to create an environment conducive for private investments from which investors can make reasonable returns, and through which employment and technological progress can be derived. On the other hand, through state-owned enterprises, licensing and regulation, taxation, procurement, activism by competition authorities, combating of illicit financial flows and other means, the state seeks to attain a variety of transformative objectives."*

*"These include redistribution of income; further changing the structure of ownership in favour of Black people, workers, women and communities; directing investments into areas that promote national development; and provision of public goods primarily by the state."*

*"The balance between 'unity' and 'struggle' will be dictated to by the overall strategic imperatives of the NDR and requirements of specific phases of transition to a National Democratic Society."*

Clearly JZ was our former President but he did not understand the Strategy and Tactics. This shows the danger of electing people out of anger. It produces these eventualities.

### **Sale of Vodacom under JZ and opposition by COSATU**

For the record, JZ presided over the selling of Vodacom to Vodafone, a British multinational telecommunications company—under serious opposition by COSATU.

In fact, it is under him that concentration of monopolies was intensified.

As if that was not enough, COSATU cried in vain and in deaf ears from JZ especially when the labour union opposed the purchase of Massmart by Walmart. JZ did nothing.

As we speak today, as COSATU warned about this acquisition, workers at Makro are losing jobs daily and in various other retail outlets.

There is a new phenomenon that we must resist. That is the phenomenon of the new conceptualization or definition of truth as being arrogant, disrespectful or emotional.

No matter how we chose to label or give labels to the truth, unfortunately it does not stop to be true. Those who give label to the truth is because through facts they know they cannot dispute the truth. The only available tool at their disposal is to vilify it.

As comrade Dr Zamani Saul argues: *"we are in a post-truth world – we must reject the post truth world"*.

We must be slaves of the truth, we must dishonour lies, we must reject lies, we must hate lies and we must expose lies.

This is because political charlatans have in the past got away with serious political crime based on their reliance of inventing and spreading lies. Just because their lies are not rejected or disputed with truth, unsuspecting masses turn to believe lies of political charlatans.

Lies are dangerous. A person who has been fed lies about a

thug can even go and demand that a thug must be released from jail even when that thug has killed his own parents. This will be because lies have made him to believe that a thug is an honourable man.

To prove our point, why would some ex-MK combatants follow a man who was a President for full nine years but left them destitute?

It is because they believe his lies. If we are to be crude – why would they follow a man who used R246million (almost quarter of a billion) of tax payers' money to build his home – an amount that would have built 2 733 houses for ex-MK Combatants.

This is because his lies have not been confronted.

### **uMkhonto weSizwe for the benefit of Zuma family**

No one should be faulted in thinking that JZ believes that if it is not the ANC – uMkhonto weSizwe is the next property that should benefit his family. It is for this reason that together with his daughter they have appropriated the name of uMkhonto weSizwe for their own personal selfish benefit.

uMkhonto weSizwe will always be associated with the ANC.

Our democracy was attained through the blood and sweat of many of our heroes and heroines. Many of them did not live long to enjoy the fruits of their labour, dedication and sacrifices. It is up to us comrades to do more in honour of Cde Sihle Mbongwa, Cde Zinto Cele, Cde Portia Ndwandwe, Andrew Zondo and many more other departed comrades of our revolution.



**Former members of Umkhonto we Sizwe carrying the birthday cake at an ANC Rally**

The true MK and the entire mass democratic movement fought for the majority of the people of this country to vote for the government of their choice, not this fake one of JZ.

We must double our efforts to ensure that future generations inherit an intact alliance that will remain an instrument for their total liberation – politically, socially and economically.

Our message is that leaders will come and go but the ANC will remain. Some of us are elected leaders given the responsibilities by our structures to lead our respective organizations as part of the advancement of the national democratic revolution. At every given moment – collectively or as individual components, we are expected to channel our energies to build on the foundation laid by the pioneers of the mass demo-

cratic revolution.

The pathfinders of this political freedom agreed to use the ANC as a vehicle for the attainment of a prosperous South Africa where there is equality and a better life for all.

This has always been the historic mission of the ANC.

So long as there is poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment, crime and lack of access to economic opportunities, there is every reason for the ANC to exist.

The ANC does not belong to the leaders – most of all, it does not belong to the former or current leaders.

The ANC does not belong to leaders of factions, the chief lobbyists and the founders of slates and factions.





### **The Way forward**

#### ***Focus on the election and strengthening the mass democratic movement***

We remain focused on winning the upcoming elections with a landslide victory.

As a way forward, the ANC, alliance partners and the entire mass democratic movement must convene meetings with all our structures. These meetings are ongoing in regions, sub-regions, branches and other platforms.

As we move forward, we will be engaging with academics, captains of industry and more importantly traditional and religious leaders across the province.

As we stated in our End of Year Message for 2024, we will be focusing on reconnecting the ANC with The People.

We affirm our position that without the People, the ANC cannot exist as a revolutionary movement. It can only exist as an empty vessel that makes only revolutionary-sounding slogans.

We don't want to be known as loudhailers but we want to continue to struggle, alongside our People to build a free, happy and peaceful South Africa.

Our people can't progress only through singing and dancing. After we have danced we must do practical programmes like President Ramaphosa.

President Ramaphosa has initiated the NHI Bill it has now gone through in two houses of parliament. Once the President signs it into law everyone in our country will have access to quality free



healthcare.

President Ramaphosa has signed into law the establishment of the State Bank.

He has introduced the universal National Minimum Wage in terms of National Minimum Wage Act No. 9 of 2018.

He has made the early childhood development to be compulsory for two years. And he has ensured the transfer of early childhood development programme to the Department of Basic Education.

He has protected the most vulnerable in our society by introducing the twelve official language sign language.

He has introduced Social Relief of Distress (known as SRD Grant-R350).

He has mandated the Minister of Finance to look at ways towards the introduction of Basic Income

Grant.

Indeed, President Ramaphosa may not be a good singer and dancer but through practical actions he is a champion of the poor.

As Commanded by President Ramaphosa, we have also agreed that this reconnection with the People demands a leadership collective that consists of the best amongst us.

The leadership who might disagree with each other – who might make mistakes but the leadership that can never be lazy, confused, disinterested in the plight of our People.

We cannot have a leadership which is meant to transform the country, but claim to be shocked when they see the results of their own lack of decisive leadership.

We offer a leadership that is prepared to take on the challenges of today and craft a future along-



side our people to live in dignity and peace.

Our position is that forces opposed to the ANC will never rest until they see the total destruction of the ANC as a symbol of hope and a vehicle of people's power.

Attaining the rights to vote in 1994 marked another struggle for the enemy of the revolution.

The enemy relinquished power reluctantly – considered the setbacks as temporary but did not fold its arms.

The enemy plotted their next cause of action immediately when the majority of marginalized people went into the voting stations in their numbers and exercised their democratic right and put the ANC into power.

The enemy has used every trick in the book to prune power of the majority in South Africa exercised through the people's movement, the ANC.

The enemy is aware and believed what the former President of the ANC Cde Oliver Tambo once said – that it will be only the ANC that will defeat itself.

The strategy and plan of the enemy is centered on this reality, hence all developments including the recent one must be seen through these lenses.

There is a complex strategy which reveals an Anti-Majoritarian liberal offensive plan and programme designed and earmarked to weaken people's power exercised through the leadership of the ANC in government and the society.

This programme and plan is de-

signed in such a way that it must erode the support of the ANC over time to a point where the ANC will not be able to rule on its own or without a coalition with other opposition parties – themselves created by hostile capital.

A bonus for the hostile capital will be to forge a multiparty coalition excluding the ANC that will be able to offset the ANC from power.

The DA leader of the Multi Party-Charter has made it clear that it will fire almost seven hundred and fifty thousand government workers as its second priority. This has led to an unprecedented mushrooming of political parties in opposition to the ANC.

A lot of money is offered to those political organizations that have a big potential to win over traditional membership and support

of the ANC.

Once again, let us hold hands and march to victory in the elections.

JZ is now no difference from leader of the DA – they are in the same WhatsApp Group.

At least now let's hope he will eventually talk. For more than 20 years we have been waiting for him to talk. Now he is free to talk so that many can also talk about him.

But I can assure you he will never talk because he has nothing to talk about.

Amandla!!!!

**Bheki Mtolo** is Provincial Secretary of the ANC KwaZulu-Natal.



"The distinctive feature of the revolutionary cadre is a high level of discipline, dedication and courage in carrying out the tasks assigned by the movement.

Such cadres are guided by our goal of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa."

**Oliver Reginald Tambo**  
27 October 1917 - 24 April 1993





# The Agenda, Programme and Resolutions of the ANC 1912 Historic Conference: **Blow by Blow**

■ By **CHINA DODOVU**

**T**HE first session of the ANC's 1912 historic gathering was chaired by John Mocher, president of the Free State Native Congress, who officially welcomed all the delegates to the conference. Mocher then invited Rev. Henry Ngcayiya, a teacher and minister of the Ethiopian Church to open the dignified proceedings with a prayer.

The opening prayer was followed by a song "*Nkosi Sikelel, i-Afrika*" (God Bless Africa) composed by a Xhosa teacher and composer, Enoch Mankayi Sontonga. The song was officially sung for the first time at that great African gathering and was later adopted by the ANC as its official anthem in 1925. The song was subsequently adopted as a national An-

them of several African countries like Zambia and Tanzania and since 1994, it has been part of the South African national anthem.

The next item on the agenda was to choose a secretary to record the conference proceedings and in this regard, Sol Plaatje was appointed. In addition, Plaatje was assigned to publicise the confer-



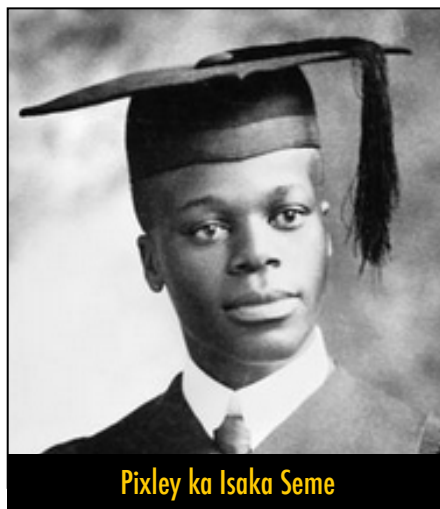
ence proceedings through the newspapers.

A constitutional committee consisting of representatives from provinces was appointed to consider and prepare the draft constitution. Among other important clauses of the constitution, the committee recommended that the ANC be constituted by two houses namely the Upper House, representing the Chiefs and the Lower House for the elected office bearers.

The keynote speech was thereafter delivered by Pixley ka Isaka Seme who explained to the assembled delegates: *“Chiefs of royal blood and gentlemen of our race. We have gathered here to consider and discuss a scheme which my colleagues and I have decided to place before you. We have discovered that in the land of their birth, Africans are treated as hewers of wood and drawers of water.”*

At the end of his speech, Seme formally moved that the South African Natives National Congress (SANNC) be established. Seme’s motion was seconded by Alfred Mangena. The motion was further supported by Chief Joshua Molema who was followed by Chief Maama (Basutoland), Chief Motlaka (Zoutpansberg) and Chief Makgalagadi. With a powerful speech, Dr. Walter Rubusana also supported the motion which was then put to a vote and passed unanimously with loud cheers and standing ovation. This was followed by the singing of Tiyo Soga’s Lizalis idinga Lakho, Thixo Nkosi Yenyani-so (Fulfil thy Promise, God, Thou Lord of Truth) song. In that way, the SANNC was born.

The next item of such delicacy was the elections of office bearers



Pixley ka Isaka Seme

of the ANC. It was widely expected that Dr. Walter Rubusana of East London, member of the Cape Provincial Council and formerly President of the South African Native Convention (SANNC) and very much of an elder statesman figure in the African eyes, would be elected as President. Instead, three names – Edward Tshweu, Sefako Makgatho and John Dube – were submitted to the conference by the 18 member committee appointed by conference. The Presidency was offered to another clergyman, the Reverend John Langalibalele Dube, well known as the principal of Ohlange Institute, editor of Ilanga lase Natal newspaper, and for many years, a leading kholwa figure in Natal.

The choice of Dube was propelled by the conference’s wish to achieve a degree of political unity, and to emphasise at the same time that African political activity should no longer be centred in the relatively privileged Cape. Dube was not actually present at the conference and was represented instead by his brother, Charles Dube. In the absence of Dube, Phillip Modise, the principal secretary to Basotuland paramount king Letsie II chaired all the sessions until the conference retired.

Other positions in the National Executive Committee in the Lower House were filled as follows:

- **4 Vice Presidents:** Dr Walter Rubusana (minister of religion); Meshack Pelem (labour agent); Alfred Mangena (lawyer) and Sefako Makgatho (teacher and estate agent);
- **Secretary General:** Sol Plaatje (editor and author);
- **Corresponding Secretary:** Dickson George Montsioa (lawyer);
- **Treasurer General:** Pixley ka Isaka Seme (lawyer);
- **Speaker:** Thomas Mapikela (building contractor);
- **Chaplain-in-Chief:** Rev Mqoboli (minister of religion); and
- **Assistant Chaplain:** Rev H.R. Ngcayiya (minister of religion).

With regard to the Upper House which represented the chiefs, it was unanimously agreed that the following chiefs be elected as the Honorary Presidents of the ANC:

- Chief Dalindyebo of the Thembus;
- Chief Montsioa of Barolong bo Ratshidi;
- Paramount King Letsie of the Basutoland;
- Khama of Ngwato in Bechuanaland;
- King Dinizulu of Cetshwayo
- Chief Lewanika of Barotse-land;
- Moepi of Bakgatla ba Kgafela; and
- Chief Marclane of Pondoland.

After the election of office bearers was settled, a whole range of discussions on social and political issues ensued to frame resolutions in order to engage with the government.

The conference set up various committees to deal with matters such as the native schools and

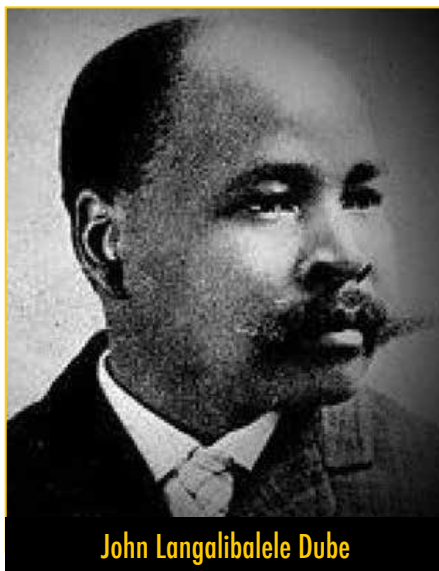
churches; hostels and passes for native women; medical examination of women; native labour; segregation; pass laws and the land question.

Recommendations on each topic were presented to the plenary of conference for adoption. The pressing topic was the Squatter Bill which was gazetted by the government. The bill was proposing was proposing drastic restrictions on the purchase and ownership of land by Africans.

Another important point of discussion which followed was the ANC's draft constitution. There were two sticky issues needing further elaboration and clarity. Firstly, the question of the financial structure of the organisation and secondly, the size of contributions from the local branches.

The draft constitution was then approved with an understanding that the new constitution would be adopted during the next annual conference. However, the adopted draft constitution gave clear expression to the importance of the chiefs in the organisation and created an Upper House of Chiefs that corresponded roughly to the House of Lords in the British Parliament.

The name of the new organisation was also a bone of contention. During the deliberations, Sol Plaatje proposed that the new organisation be known by a distinctive name, preferably a native name. Plaatje's argument was that there were already in existence many councils and congresses and that another one would further confuse people. Although strongly supported by Joshua Molema, the meeting decided to adopt the recommendation of the Transvaal organisa-



John Langalibalele Dube

tions in the meeting that it should be known as the South African Native National Congress.

Plaatje clearly felt strongly about the issue. When the executive committee was authorised on his own motion to remain behind and complete the unfinished work and review the constitution, Plaatje again requested that the name be changed. Supporting his case, Plaatje read a letter from Cleopas Kunene who proposed the name Imbizo Yabantu Congress. "We are Abantu", Kunene wrote: "It is only fitting that any organisation – political or otherwise – of ours having a national significance should be named after, and in



Sol Plaatje

*accordance with, our racial individuality, thus enhancing the recognition of our standing among the races of the world. I wish to appeal to the gentlemen present not to approach this matter from a European's point of view, but from a native one."*

Again, Plaatje's proposal was defeated, and Section 1 of the revised constitution read: "The name of this organisation should be the South African Native National Congress". The conference also resolved that the ANC would hold its national conferences annually. The draft constitution explained the objectives of the ANC as to promote unity and mutual co-operation between the Government and the Abantu Races of South Africa and to maintain a central channel between the Government and the aboriginal races in South Africa.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, after important resolutions were passed and new leaders elected, Philip Molise was still chairing and the delegates rose to sing the hymn "Give a Thought to Africa" by John Knox Bokwe.

The 1912 inaugural conference signified the birth of the African National Congress. It was there where the ANC was assigned with the historic task of building a new nation, of being the midwife in the process of national rebirth and regeneration.

With the epoch-making formation of the ANC, the people of Southern Africa had forged a new and mighty weapon of struggle, a regional political force, a national movement which grew to become part of the people.

The Ilanga newspaper of 22 March 1922 wrote this about the



inaugural conference: *“the 8th DAY OF JANUARY 1912 shall ever remain memorable in African history because it was on that day that the transcending influence of Letsie II brought us together at Bloemfontein. It was a conference of races and nations – many of whose ranks had been devastated by the demon of inter-tribal strife and jealousy.”*

The ANC’s political life, experience and history became the embodiment of the people’s deepest belief in the certainty of victory and the expression of their identity with the progressive forces of the world in pursuit of the cause for humankind.

As such, the ANC became the first organisation within South Africa to transcend ethnic divides reinforced by colonial domination and boundaries. However, from the outset it was a conservative organisation, whose ideology and programme remained the attainment of equality and inclusion, or integration, of Africans into the economic life and political institutions of the country.

In the later years, especially after the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955, the ANC became a progressive force of the left which pursued a national liberation for black people in general and the African people in particular. The ANC became a vehicle which pursues a strategic objective of creating a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous society.

Amandla!

**China Dodovu** is an ANC Member of Parliament. He writes in his own personal capacity.

# A Leaf out of South African History: 112<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ANC

■ By **CASTRO KHWELA**



On 8 January 1986, the then President of the African National Congress (ANC), Oliver Reginald Tambo, extended the Movement’s warm revolutionary greetings and saluted all in the name of the People’s Army,

Umkhonto we Sizwe. As 16 December 2023 was the 62nd Anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the 74th Anniversary of the ANC becomes important to acknowledge, as it was declared by the ANC as the **Year of Umkhonto we Sizwe**.



Referring to the previous year, 1985, The Year of the Cadre, the January 8 Statement said:

*“The strength of any organisation lies in the calibre of its individual members and units. In order to advance in keeping with the momentum of our struggle we must improve the quality and expand the quantity of our membership. We need cadres of unquestionable loyalty, dedication and understanding of our struggle. In order to achieve such a high standard and spur our nation into a greater onslaught on the enemy and its institutions, we declare this year, 1985, the Year of the Cadre!”*

*Let this year see us take big strides in further strengthening the organised underground structures of the ANC. Let us see greater mass political actions in all the provinces and districts of our country. Let it see us extend people’s war to all corners of our land. Let it see the fastest and furthest possible co-ordinated advance on all fronts towards the goal of people’s power.*

*There is no going back!... Forward Always is our battle cry! The enemy cannot stop us!... Our future is in our hands!”*

The analysis of the Year of the Cadre laid a formidable foundation for taking the struggle forward.

*“The message of that year...is simple and yet momentous. It is that the end of the criminal system of apartheid is in sight. Nearly four decades of illegal rule by the heirs of Hitler is coming to a close and with it, centuries of colonial and racist white minority domination. There is nothing that the Pretoria regime can do that*



*can change this historic outcome of our struggle.*

*Our uninterrupted forward march has thrown the apartheid system into an enormous general crisis. A central feature of this crisis is the rebellion of millions of our people against the criminal system. Even the most stubborn racist can now see that we are no longer prepared to live as slaves and are determined to liberate ourselves whatever the price we have to pay in human lives.”*

The ANC then declared 1986 the Year of Umkhonto we Sizwe – the People’s Army! During the Year of MK:

*“The charge we give to Umkhonto we Sizwe and to the masses of our people is attack, advance, give the enemy no quarter – an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!*

*The Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative. That initiative is now in our hands...The fact that the Botha regime has lost the strategic initiative, and is therefore on the defensive all along the line...This is an inspiring victory of historic significance.*

*Let this Year of the People’s Army see us engulf the apartheid sys-*

*tem in the fires and the thunder of a People’s War! Let the Year of MK see us mount a military offensive that will push the enemy into a strategic retreat! Let us use the opportunities that this Year gives us to replace each combatant who fell last year with a hundred more, and, building on our achievements, to create a formidable fighting force of the people, superior to the enemy forces because of the justice of our cause, the discipline of our combatants and the bravery and boldness of our warriors.*

*Let us mount a determined mass political and military offensive! Let us retain the strategic initiative! Let us, in struggle, shift the balance of power further in favour of the revolution! Let us turn every corner of our country into a battlefield! Let us weaken the enemy and prepare to seize power!*

*Every patriot a combatant: Every combatant a patriot!*

*People’s power is within our grasp!”*

Indeed the balance of power shifted further in favour of the revolution, as the apartheid regime declared a State of Emergency in 1986.

# THE BEHEMOTH THAT IS THE ANC: THE DEATH OF THE OPPOSITION

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

**T**HE *Sunday Times* headline “Zuma as good as left ANC” attributed to ANC Secretary General Fikile Mbalula should be expanded. It should also be understood in a fertile environment that breeds political parties faster than rabbits.

The mushrooming and proliferation of political parties is best surmised by Comrade Phehello “Smally” Oliphant as a fecundity.

Comrade Zamani Saul gives a fresher perspective on the implications of the rapid birth of these parties.

Considering what Smally and

Zamani postulate, 2024 will be grueling, cruel, the gnashing of teeth, and butting of heads.

Why? These parties represent a deliberate attack on the ANC, at worst, undermine intelligence, insulting and reducing the populace to the ‘hoi polloi’ that possesses no independent thinking.

Mbalula’s view amplifies Comrade Gwen Ramokgopa’s principled stance on the ANC’s intolerance to corruption and the resolution of the ANC Veterans League, the ANC’s candidate selection criteria, ethical and credible leadership.

The political train has long left

NASREC, its staff riders flying out of the windows as it heads towards renewal after expecting it to veer off the rails.

This is the most excruciating yet unavoidable process of change. Added to Zuma’s new party, the implications of the emergence of these parties are to thwart attempts to jail the corrupt.

Chaff is sifting from the wheat. It’s a painful process. The Secretary General’s views are reflective of society’s expectation of the ANC to act decisively on graft and glutony, representing the ANC position on its fight against corruption.

And that no individual is bigger





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than the ANC and the country. And that narrow nationalism and tribalism are inimical to unity and renewal, which are an affront to the tapestry that adorns the country.

The ANC must rise to give effect to NASREC 2022. To expel those who de-campaign the ANC for parochial ends to the detriment of clean governance and an organization capable of advancing the National Democratic Revolution.

The ANC cannot mask difficulties and fake unity because of individuals like Zuma and fears of losing KwaZulu-Natal. It can't be.

On Zuma, many overtures were extended until he insulted the ANC with his NASREC troops.

By his deeds, Zuma automatical-

ly expelled himself from the ANC. The unity and renewal machinery is on the right track.

Again, society believes in the ANC, its vision, and leadership collective than individuals.

With this decisiveness, the ANC will restore society's confidence as a leader of society and the custodian of its interests.

Whoever wants to form a political party must have this in mind. The opposition is shrinking, eroding itself into oblivion.

The people have trust in the ANC in spite of challenges facing the country.

Both the renewal and election manifesto review processes serve as an umbilical cord that

connects the ANC with society, reaffirming the notion that the movement is indeed a midwife that delivered our democracy.

The proliferation of new parties emasculates the moonshots and new pacts whose agenda is nothing else but a palace coup.

We're on the citadels and garrisons, as sentries watching a coordinated effort to kill the ANC.

The spear is ricocheting to harm the opposition.

In the end, the UDM, NFP, AIC, BOSA, COPE and minute parties will sink into extinction and irrelevance.

Mbalula is correct.

**The ANC will sail through.**

# WHAT COULD BE EXPECTED OF THE GENOCIDE CASE REPORTED BY SOUTH AFRICA AGAINST ISRAEL AT THE ICJ?

■ By **SEPHOKA DAVID SEKGOBELA**

**T**HE situation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is still volatile, with the war still raging unabated. Israeli soldiers are continuing to annihilate the Palestinians in huge numbers, all in the name of self-defence. Israeli propaganda machinery and its sympathizers would like to justify the senseless killing of innocent and unarmed civilians, mainly women and children, by alleging that Hamas is using civilians as human shields. However, whatever the reason, the killing of women and children could never be justified, because they are not just collateral damage, caught in cross-fire of the warring factions, but innocent and unarmed civilians.

To date, more than 30 000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed, after about 1,200 people were killed in southern Israel on 7 October 2023 when Hamas led surprise attacks against Israel from the Gaza Strip by land, sea, and air. Israel responded heavy-handedly with air raids and artillery fire where many people, including women and



children were killed, and nearly 90 percent of the population displaced and many more arrested.

South Africa is a peace loving country that respects the sovereignty of other nations, and does not go about provoking other nations unnecessarily, with the expectation of not being provoked or violated as well. The pillars of South Africa's foreign policy are the 'advancement of human rights and the promotion of democracy'. In the face of gross violations of human rights against

the innocent Palestinian civilians, South Africa could not sit back and do nothing.

As the killings of civilians intensified, South Africa lodged a complaint with the ICC for investigation into alleged war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza. The ICC is supposed to investigate and the prosecutor lay charges against individuals like Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister. After gathering evidence and identifying suspect/s, the ICC Prosecution would request ICC

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

judges to issue warrant of arrest. In effecting arrest. The ICC relies on countries to make arrests and transfer suspects to the ICC, or, the ICC may issue summonses to appear before it, and the suspects would appear voluntarily before it. The ICC is already investigating the case referred to it by South Africa.

In view of the inaction or the slow process of the ICC, South Africa laid a case against Israel to the ICJ for the violation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crimes of Genocide. In 1948, the United Nations Genocide Convention defined genocide as any “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group”.

The ICC is a criminal tribunal that would prosecute individual offenders for war crimes, whilst the ICJ deals with disputes between countries. The ICC is an independent body to which other states, such as the US, are not signatories to its founding document, the so-called the Roman Statute. It therefore only applies to signatories to the Roman Statute. The ICJ, on the other hand, is an establishment of the UN applicable to all nations.

The case reported by South Africa to the ICJ is presently being heard (on 11–12 January 2024). There is apparently a clear line drawn between South Africa and Israel and its alliance partners, including the US, who are of the view that Israel is entitled to defend itself in whatever manner against Hamas’ aggression. As the complainants, are we ready for the big show? What are our chances of presenting a formidable case that would enable the ICJ to find in our favour? Do we



have to be worried as South Africans? In IsiZulu they say, “Bambelela Siyajika”, because it is going to be hectic. It looks like we have stirred the hornet’s nest in as far as international relations are concerned. Are we ready for the subsequent repercussions or consequences of our actions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, that may include international isolation by Israel and its Western allies, including the US? What could the actual subsequent repercussions for South Africa be? What is clear is that the gloves are off, and there would be no love lost between South Africa and Israel, and its allies. Peter Tosh sings, “If you’re living in a glass house, don’t throw stones”, and “If you can’t take blows, don’t throw blows”.

As the complainant, South Africa has lined up its legal gurus to assist in presenting its case to the ICJ. However, it seems that South Africa would be facing fierce legal opposition by Israel and its allies, including the US. There is a school of thought suggesting that South Africa did the right thing in responding the way it did to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. However, international relations expert, Brooks Spector, is criticizing South Africa’s referral to the ICJ, saying that Israel’s harsh military

action against Hamas in Gaza is “misidentified” as genocide. Prof Siphoo Seepe, on the other hand, is saying that South Africa’s case to the ICJ has no impact, but just a mere posturing. He further states that the US and other major western countries might not be interested in implementing the ICJ case against Israel.

South Africa is probably the first country to take this step in recent history. It would have been expected that other countries, especially members of the Arab League, would be the ones to do that. Though putting South Africa in the firing line of international relations with Israel and its allies, the case with the ICJ provides the basis for talking about the solution. If South Africa’s plea is anything to go by, this could put Israel in a more difficult position in international space, and bring about much needed peace or cessation of hostilities in the middle-east. However, Israel has rejected South Africa’s genocide case with the ICJ, calling it baseless, and accuses South Africa of collaborating with the terrorist organization. It has further dubbed the move as cheap exploitation of international courts. However, South Africa seems to have garnered much support from other countries as well.

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With the bubble just about to burst at the ICJ, there are those who are of the view that South Africa might have invited problems to itself by acting the way it did. They are asking, of so many countries in the world, including almost 22 of the Arab League nations that include Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen, what prompted South Africa to report Israel to the ICJ?

As if the two situations are the same, others are asking why South Africa has not reported Russia to the ICJ for invading Ukraine. On the other hand, Israel has come out guns blazing accusing South Africa of aiding and abetting a terrorist organization, Hamas, and trying to play the devil's advocate by reporting Israel to the ICJ. Israel is alleging that South Africa's case is spurious.

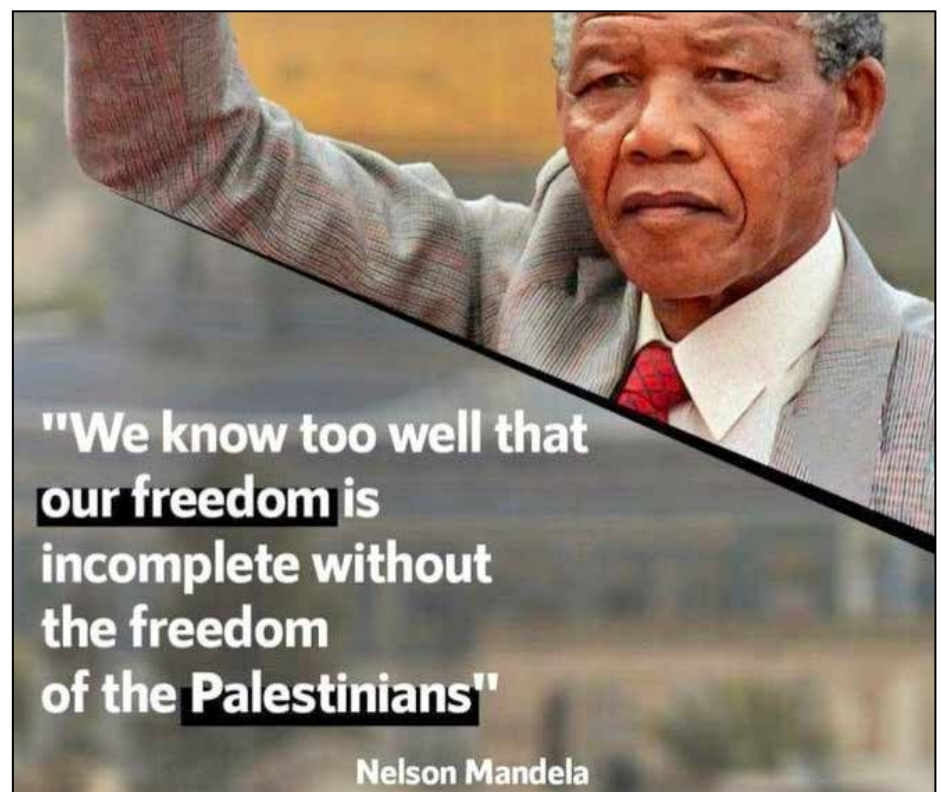
If South Africa's case against Israel at the ICJ succeeds, this could be the turning point of South Africa's international relations, not only with Israel, but with many of Israel's allies and sympathisers. But what would be the repercussions for both South Africa and Israel respectively? The implications for South Africa are still relatively unknown, but the genocide case could also expose Israeli's weapons arsenal that "the Federation of American Scientists estimates to consist of more than 90 nuclear weapons", in contravention of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in terms of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The case against Israel could further have unintended consequences for Israel. Hügo Krüger, a writer, podcaster and a structural engineer specializing in nuclear structures, outlines how

Pretoria can use its nuclear non-proliferation position to pressure and isolate the Netanyahu government internationally for its policy of apartheid and assault on Gaza. He contends, "South Africa and the African Union can approach the International Atomic Energy Agency directly to ask for inspections of Israel's nuclear facilities such as The Negev Nuclear Research Reactor that was first revealed by the dissident Israeli scientist Mordechai Vanunu, who is still under house arrest in Israel". According to Hugo Kruger, "Potentially, Netanyahu's links to the nuclear smuggling Mafia can be used to build up the case, as well as the diplomatic documents between Israel's defense minister at the time, Shimon Perez, and his counterpart P.W. Botha that link the Israelis in approaching the apartheid government in South Africa for help in obtaining nuclear weapons". He concludes that, "If Israel is found to have violated the non-proliferation treaty, then under existing U.S. federal

law, such as the Symington Glen Amendments, all U.S. aid, diplomatic and military will come into question, placing overwhelming diplomatic pressure on the Israeli government".

In conclusion, of importance is that, if South Africa is successful at the ICJ, there could be immediate ceasefire between the warring factions. Could the case ultimately pave way to bring forth other war crime cases to the ICJ for the likes of the US's George W. Bush and the UK's Tony Blair for lying about the availability of "weapons of mass destruction", that were never there, that led to the invasion of Iraq, and the subsequent killing of many people, including Saddam Hussein, women and children in Iraq? Unlike the ICC, which the US is not signatory to the Roman Statute thereof, the US signed the UN Genocide Convention, and it is under their own laws. Therefore, decision of the ICJ is likely to scare the US as well.



**"We know too well that  
our freedom is  
incomplete without  
the freedom  
of the Palestinians"**

Nelson Mandela

# THE COUNTRY SUFFERS MULTIPLE GRIEF IN THE CREATIVE SECTOR

■ By **QONDILE KHEDAMA**

**T**HE spate of multiple losses of lives of artists is an unusual occurrence, especially taking place in the same sector. Not only is it a daunting experience, but also an excruciating pain within the arts circles. What's mostly disturbing is the sequential way the losses are happening. It was only a few weeks ago when we mourned the death of Bulelwa “Zahara” Mkutukana, a talented and self-taught “Afro Pop” artist and guitarist, who sang in Xhosa; her native language, as well as in English. While still recovering, we are informed of the sudden passing of a renowned South African theatre genius, producer and composer, Mbongeni “Madlokovu” Ngema in a car crash, the creator of the Broadway hit “Sarafina!”.

Most South Africans and across borders mourned these icons and expressed themselves in diverse ways. Social media was of course instantly flooded with messages of sympathy as is now standard practice. We also heard a few notes calling for restraint.

These iconic brands that were respected in their individual areas of work were inspired by real



events. They were driven by passion and love for their fellow human beings and the love of their country. They chose love to express themselves.

The last stroke was the news report of the death of the iconic anti-apartheid photographer Peter Magubane, who was 91. Popularly known for his photographic work, Magubane started his photographic work during the apartheid era. He won international and local awards for his contribution to the arts and culture in his

career. Magubane later became former president Nelson Mandela's official photographer after the latter was released from prison in the 1990s until his early years in the Presidency. Through his work, Peter Magubane proved that photojournalism is and has been an incredibly powerful tool. From time immemorial, photojournalists have been the ones who defined historic events.

Then, whether you knew the person behind the lens or not, photographers of the time dis-

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tinguished themselves. When you think of the American Civil War, you would think of Matthew Brady's images of battlefields, and Dorothea Lange's photo *Migrant Mother* is the iconic image of the Great Depression. War photographers like Robert Capa witnessed some of the worst conflicts of the 20th century and when you imagine the end of World War II, the first image that comes to mind is often Alfred Eisenstaedt's image of V-J Day in Times Square. In South Africa, Bra Peter Sexton Magubane who has grown to become a visual sociologist bears a resemblance to two momentous events; the 1960 Sharpeville massacre and the 1976 Soweto uprising.

Arts played a major role in changing political discourse during the dark days of apartheid. Most political formations such as the ANC, PAC, and BCM spread awareness and their messages using arts as a vehicle. It gave the possibility for everyone to be involved in the struggle.

It (Arts) was a strategy to build up destroyed, torn communities ravaged by the oppressive govern-

ment. It brought strength and unity to mobilize the majority against the minority. Art became the voice of the silenced, which was essential for the downfall of the National Party and the end of apartheid in 1994. Peter Magubane, a proponent of protest art used his camera to confront the illegitimate regime and exposed its cruelty in the international community.

The other forms of Protest Art were manifold. They ranged from blatantly confrontational pictorial imagery and subversive symbols scrawled on public surfaces, through allegorical depictions of distant but associated incidents and situations, to ambiguous figurations and personal mystical metaphors that camouflage their inner meanings in deceptive outer shells.

According to SA History online, the use of public surfaces for the expression of popular opinion predates even the written language. But particularly in a society in which mass gatherings are banned, the graffiti slogan can be coupled with the painted image to communicate, publicly the otherwise muffled messag-

es of solidarity and resistance. The modern urban landscape, already a collage of commercial signage, advertising and political publicity, presents many inviting surfaces for informal verbal or pictorial assault.

Often the product of so-called 'guerilla' artists, working under cover of the night, graffiti, posters and defiant mural images have appeared in cities all around the world. During the 1970s the practice was accorded a new kind of status, particularly in the USA.

Mbongeni Madlokovu Ngema infused his stories with dark humour, music, dance, and dignity, seeking to convey the spirit of Black South Africa during the apartheid era. (In 1994 the once-jailed anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela became the country's first Black president.)

*"We could illustrate the culture and style of life of South Africa as well as the resistance movement itself,"* said Mr. Ngema. He told his actors that they doubled as "ambassadors" of the anti-apartheid cause. After *"Sarafina!"* opened on Broadway in January 1988, Mr. Ngema coached the cast on how to reply to political questions. *"I wanted technique as well as the truth,"* Mr. Ngema told Africa Report. It is a series of chance events that brought Mr. Ngema into the world of theatre.

At performances in Johannesburg's Market Theatre, owned by Barney Simon, and one of the few mixed-race venues in South Africa, some White theatregoers walked out. Others came backstage in tears. When Madlokovu's *"Woza Albert!"* came to the Arena Stage in 1984, Washington Post reviewer David Richards praised the play's ability to tackle the bru-



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Mbongeni Ngema

tality of apartheid with “more spirit, humour and, yes, hope, than the subject generally inspires.”

Racism was, and still is, the legacy of South Africa to my contemporaries: a nation of binaries; of white against black. A world of unfathomable violence and gated communities, where shootings, stabbings, inequality, AIDS, rape, and hijackings are rife.

Three decades on from apartheid that legacy is still felt on day-to-day basis. “*The ‘rainbow nation’ lost its sparkle,*” wrote Alec Russell in his post-apartheid report, ***After Mandela: The Battle for the Soul of South Africa***.

Where protest theatre in the seventies forged the way towards a different imagining of South Africa, the gap it left after reunification was staggering.

The loss of these icons showed us that the most common attributes that all humans share are the experiences of being born and the fact that everyone would eventually die as expressed in the Arabic proverb “*the end of life is death*”. This is an artefact that South Africa had to experience and come to terms with.

Mass mourning over personalities or celebrities’ deaths is not just a current generation phenomenon. The Internet and social media only accelerate and amplify how fans and followers process profound, visceral sorrow.

Years from now, the most earnest, intensely felt remembrances on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (X) – the ones reacting to an untimely, unexpected passing of the likes of Zahara, Madlokovu and Bro Peter Magubane – will serve as newspaper clippings as we once did: They’ll take us back to that historic, shared moment of gut-punching, a moment of mass mourning.



Peter Magubane

References will be made on – Who did you WhatsApp when you heard of the sudden death of Mbongeni Ngema? Where were you when Peter Magubane was arrested? Did you play Ngema’s song over and over again upon hearing of his death in a car crash? Do you (or your parent) have a story about the life and times of Peter Magubane?

Revisiting these memories again and again (as we would do) can feel traumatic, sometimes soothing, and the most sensational details will obviously still shock decades later. But there is a more expansive, alternate history and dark heritage component at work, too, imagining what these legends would have created had they lived, and how their absence would shape the music and arts that was to follow.

Most clichés begin as essential truths: Yes, artists featured and remembered here are gone - but they will never be forgotten, their names will go down in the annals of South African history.

**Qondile Khedama** is a former ANC-FS Spokesperson, Communication/Media specialist and columnist.

# Tribute:

## Farewell Joe "Guitar" Motsitsi

■ By **PATRICK MAKHAYA**

**A** man of quiet demeanor, deep thoughts and a low hoarse voice, Joe 'Guitar' Motsitsi, has passed away. He distinguished himself as a humble, loving, caring and entertaining character, who always had his guitar nearby.

Sabata Johannes Motsitsi was born on 26 August 1957 in Meadowlands, Soweto. His parents, Knox Molema and Maria Tsileng Molema, and other members of the extended family, were part of the multitudes that were removed from Sophiatown, starting from 1955 to 1958. Thus, Joe was born at the time when the mass removals from Sophiatown to Meadowlands were in full swing. He was the first born in a family of eight siblings. They grew up at House No 333D, Kubu Street, Zone 3, Meadowlands.

The dislocation and difficulties caused by removals, led to Joe being raised by his grandmother, Maketetsa Motsitsi. That is how he came to use the surname, Motsitsi.

He later earned himself the nickname of Joe 'Guitar' because of his prowess with guitar strings.

Joe attended Tsogang Primary School in Meadowlands. He later attended Selelekela Second-



ary School in Orlando East.

It was during his days at Selelekela that the Soweto Uprising of June 16, 1976 caught up with him.

In the aftermath of the Uprising, hundreds of students left the country to either pursue their studies abroad, or to undergo military training.

Joe Guitar and many other students found themselves in Tanzania initially, waiting to pursue the academic route, as another terrain of struggle.

There was an intake of South African students by Nigerian high schools to prepare them for tertiary education. Joe Guitar was among the first to go to Nigeria in 1977. Those students later left for other institutions in Europe, and Joe found himself in the USSR in 1978 to study music. From mid

'78 to mid '79, he did the Russian Language course, after which he was placed at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow in September 1979. Unfortunately, after only a few months at the institution, he had to return to Tanzania.

When the ANC resumed the Nigerian programme in the mid 80s, a few students arrived there to pursue tertiary studies. There were two of us at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka – in the region that was known as Biafra during the civil war of 1967 to 1969.

I came from Lusaka with Itumeleng Ntjana (aka Mike Mohlalefi) from SACTU. We enrolled for Mass Communication and Economics respectively during the 1986/87 academic year. Desmond Shangase from Tanzania was in the Faculty of Medicine. Elsewhere, there was Lungile Daweti and Archie Radebe at the University of Lagos. There



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was also Pascal Makhetha and Hopolang Matsela at Ilaro Polytechnic. Richard S'bengile was at Abeokuta College of Education. Zulu Mgjijima and Mncedisi 'Imbongi' Qangule were at the University of Ibadan.

During the 1987/88 academic year at the University of Nigeria, we were joined by Joe Nku; Boas Maphala; Mzee and Joe Motsitsi. The latter had come for a degree in Music.

If you visited the South African students in their rooms, you would find them with textbooks and instruments that related to their fields of study. You would find Desmond Shangase with a white duster coat and a stethoscope. When you entered Joe Motsitsi's room, you would find two guitars placed against the wall. On his desk, there were American music textbooks with photographs and history of jazz greats such as Muddy Waters; Charlie Parker; Miles Davis; John Coltrane; Johnny Hodges; Sarah Vaughan, Billy Holiday and many others.

After breakfast, I would bump into Joe 'Guitar' with one of his guitars slung from his shoulder, carrying his textbooks, and heading for the Music Department that was situated up the main campus – to attend early morning lectures.

As we got acquainted, he would tell me stories of his earlier stay in the USSR in the late 70s. These involved a wide variety of subjects: Patrice Lumumba University; Ballet theatres; Moscow hoodlums by night; the snow, Vodka and so on. I would visit Joe 'Guitar' in his room on weekends. Sometimes he would feel like playing a Mbhaqanga tune from SA, and wanted a person to accompany him. He showed me

how to pull and manipulate a few bass strings to provide rhythm for his various notes. We otherwise had a small tradition where South African students visited each other over weekends, with a variety of music cassettes. We would play until midnight. Joe would not only play cassettes of Winston Mankunku; Hugh Masekela, Dudu Pukwana and so on. He would complement the session by playing his guitar.

When we arrived in our first year with Mike, we lived in the residential complex of flats that were owned by the first president of Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe. The place was known as Zik's Flats, located at the bottom of the campus. Zik's Flats had better water supply than other residences over the hill. Thus, we advised ANC students who found us there, to join us at Zik's Flats. Besides, just outside the complex, you found shops, restaurants, bars and public transport. In the midst of all these, Joe 'Guitar' had his favourite spot where on weekends, he would chill with students from the Music department. He was always the only one with a guitar at the joint, entertaining friends and patrons.

One of Joe 'Guitar's favourite musicians was Ndikho Xaba. Writer, Gwen Ansell, describes Ndikho Xaba as a multi-instrumentalist; instrument-maker; composer; actor; teacher and revolutionary. Ndikho Douglas Xaba was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1934. In the 50s and the early 60s, he played in various parts of the country, including Dorkay House in Johannesburg. He had to leave the country in 1964 as the Special Branch were hot on his heels because of his involvement in the ANC underground. He played for many years in America. In

1971, he formed a band that he called 'Ndikho Xaba and The Natives' which he used to mobilise for the struggle. The original members of the band in 1971 were Afro Americans: Ndikho Xaba played piano and bullhorn, Plunky Branch – Flute, Tenor and Suprano Sax, Lon Moshe – Vibes and Percussion, Shabalala Kent – Bass and Kieta – Drums.

One American reviewer described Xaba's Avant Garde style as the African Jazz Holy Grail.

In 1983, Ndikho Xaba landed at Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College near Morogoro.

I first heard of Ndikho Xaba from Joe Guitar. He was fascinated by his multiple genre approach. "*Jy sien daai grootman, o' Bra Ndikho, speel mngca instruments,*" Joe would quip. Bra Ndikho designed a curriculum in order to work with those students who wanted to pursue music in the future.

Joe Guitar was so impressed by Bra Ndikho's style that he always dreamt of composing, producing and releasing music like Bra Ndikho. I last spent a day with Joe Guitar in the JHB CBD, at some joint, in 1993.

Joe Guitar passed away on 29 December 2023. He is survived by three brothers and his lifetime partner, Ms Lovey Mantse.

In the Great Beyond, he will not be lonely. He will be received by 'Ndikho Xaba and the Natives', the band that Bra Ndikho used for resistance against apartheid. Joe Guitar will blend well with the Natives as he had long been consumed by the Holy Grail.

Hamba kahle Joe Guitar.

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

# Gaza

■ By **MONGANE SEROTE**

We  
 We keep looking this way and that way  
 We know this road  
 The siren is blurring all sound into oblivion  
 The siren the siren the siren rings in the heart and blurs  
 hearing and sight  
 To be deaf and blind

The siren screams and blasts the ears and brain of the  
 human race  
 The earth is in a scream  
 The siren scream is like a strong blinding fierce light into  
 the sight  
 of the human race

We keep looking  
 This way and that way that way and this way  
 Something must be done  
 We keep looking  
 Searching  
 Where on earth will understanding come from  
 Where from on earth  
 Will the power come from  
 To call a halt to the blinding blurring deafening siren

Ah  
 This world my brother  
 This world my sister where where from  
 Will help come

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

From whom  
In this world  
Ah  
Palestine!

We ask the ear  
The eye  
The mind  
We ask the heart

Has the human race run  
Ran away to hide its sight and ear  
Ran and hid its being away  
Where from will understanding step in and stop this carnage  
The siren is blurring in our being  
Where from from whom

We hear in our ears deep in our minds and eyes  
In our being  
We hear from the wind even from the sunlight  
Obliterate  
Palestine Palestine Palestine  
Bloody Palestine  
Obliterate Palestine  
Obliterate this History Culture and being

This Echoes and echo as would the being of the mountain  
echo

They must not be alone please they must not be alone  
The people of Palestine  
Palestine must not be alone

We wish we think we feel  
We hope as hopelessness attempts to embrace us

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

We see  
We wriggle out of it

The Palestinians are alone on earth  
In the world they are alone

Please  
Please they must not be alone they cannot be alone  
On earth

In the world they must not be alone

They must not be alone they cannot be alone  
Many of them perish as we say so  
Many  
Children  
I am afraid to count how many  
children  
Because even one  
Is too too many

We hear in our eyes the sounds of the siren and of the  
explosion  
As it blasts our eye and hearing  
and the red fire  
flares its coming in the air with the power of a storm  
The red-hot fire holds human flesh in its red hot dance  
It was preceded by a thick black smoke  
Which bellows and rages  
On  
Oh  
Human race

It rages  
In the air and sky  
The deafening sound of the bomb

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Above skyscrapers in the sky towards the earth  
The fire flares turning the heavens crimson  
this

As

The siren is fading into an eerie quiet

The fire

The smoke

The deafening sound of the bomb

Tears

Skyscrapers houses and buildings apart

Like a pack of cards brick and cement  
crumbles

to the earth

to be a heap of earth the last grave of men

women and children

We see this

And feel their painful slow death

Under the rubble

As it Begins

We hear this roar rumble

as the sight whispers to us

We hear this

we feel this deep deep in our minds hearts and being

From far away

The silence of death

We see this we hear this we feel this

We own it now

Ah Palestine!

Victories cannot be won through genocide

Palestine

Forever

Palestine

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

The Palestinians will be here on earth  
 Forever Palestine  
 Forever  
 In our minds  
 In our hearts  
 In our being as human beings  
 For their cry  
 Is a human cry humane to the human race  
 Palestinians own their victory  
 Culture and History  
 To live forever  
 Here now  
 The denied two state begins its reality  
 To emerge for real  
 To be  
 To be present forever on earth like a Baobab tree  
 Under the sky  
 Under the sun and under the moon

Palestine must stand

She  
 stands  
 On her language culture and history  
 And being  
 Firm as her flag flaps in the sky like the dress of a young  
 lady  
 Dancing in the wind under the sun forever

Ah Palestine!  
 Be.

*Mongane Wally Serote*

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

1 – 18 January 2024

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday and The Africa Factbook (2020)

### 1 January 1804 Haiti gains independence

After more than 200 years of colonization and slavery, General Jean Jacques Dessalines proclaimed the independent black republic of Haiti after rebel slaves defeated French troops dispatched by Napoleon Bonaparte. Haiti was the first nation to successfully gain independence through a slave revolt.

### 1 January 1906 Dr Benedict Vilakazi born



Poet and writer, Benedict Vilakazi was born in Groutville, KwaZulu Natal. He was the first Black South African to receive a Doctorate in Literature and wrote the first book of Zulu poems to be published.

### 1 January 1948 Zakes Mda born

Zakes Mda, Poet, playwright and author of amongst other books *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland and Other Plays* (1980), *And the Girls in Their*

*Sunday Dresses* (1993), *Melville 67* (1998), *Ways of Dying* (2002), *The Heart of Redness* (2002), *The Madonna of Excelsior* (2004), *The Whale Caller* (2005), *The Sculptors of Mapungwe* (2013), and *The Zulus of New York* (2019), amongst other work was born in Herschel, Eastern Cape.

### 1 January 1972 First women enlisted in the South Africa Police

On 1 January 1972, first in the history of the South African Police (SAP), policewomen were enlisted as 'full members of the force'. Two white women were appointed as commanders of the newly established 'women police force'. Women began their basic training at the police College in Pretoria on 1 March 1972.

### 2 January 1950 Richard Mzamane Mabaso born

South African artist, Richard Mzamane Mabaso, is born in Alexandra, Johannesburg. He started drawing and carving without any instruction and worked for a variety of firms until 1985, when he became a guest artist at the AIA (African Institute of Art) at Funda Centre until 1987.

### 2 January 1967 Francois Pienaar born

Springbok rugby captain Francois Pienaar was born in Ver-

eeniging, Gauteng. He captained the South African national rugby team from 26 June 1993 until 10 August 1996, and led the Springboks to victory in the 1995 Rugby Union World Cup.

### 2 January 1985 Educationist Moses Josiah Madiba passed on



Moses Josiah Madiba (1909-1985), author, educationist and first Black chancellor of the University of the North, died in Seshego, Pietersburg district. A protagonist of mother tongue instruction in primary schools, he held the view that training of primary school teachers through medium of their mother tongue would improve the quality of teaching. Madiba wrote several school textbooks and stories in Northern Sotho (Sepedi).

### 3 January 1892 JRR Tolkien born in Bloemfontein

Author, academic and philosopher JRR Tolkien – author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

– was born in Bloemfontein to Mabel and Arthur Tolkien.

### 3 January 1994

#### Millions regain Citizenship

Restoration of South African citizenship, announced on 15 December 1993 by then President F.W. de Klerk, became effective 4 months before the first South Africa non-racial polls of 27 April, 1994. More than seven million people in the former bantustans, forced to accept citizenship of their various homelands, regained their South African citizenship. The Restoration and Extension of South African Citizenship Act No 196 of 1993 was part of a package agreed upon at CODESA.

### 3 January 2008

#### Lungi Sisulu passed on



On 3 January 2008 Mlungisi Sisulu, the grandson of Albertina and Walter Sisulu died in London from cerebral malaria. Lungi was born on 20 August 1966 in Moscow to Max Sisulu and Mercy Vuthela, two young South African exiles studying in the Soviet Union. Lungi came to South Africa at the age of 5 and settled in Soweto with his grandmothers, Greta Ncapayi and Albertina Sisulu. As a result of political activism in his family, Lungi gained political knowledge at an early age. He was a member of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and

chaired the Dube branch of the Soweto Youth Congress (SOYCO). In 1986 he was detained for 9 months; the third generation of Sisulus, alongside his grandfather and uncle Zwelakhe to be jailed at the same time. In 2006 he was appointed First Secretary of the South African Embassy in Khartoum, Sudan, where he married Kundi Jangano in 2007.

### 4 January 1893

#### Anthropologist, Professor Raymond Arthur Dart born

Anthropologist, Professor Raymond Arthur Dart born was born in Brisbane, Australia. Raymond Dart discovered the Taung Child skull fossil near Taung in North West, South Africa. In 1922, Dart became the head of the newly established department of anatomy at Wits University, South Africa.

### 6 January 1906

#### Artist Walter Battiss born

The abstract artist was born in Somerset East. His formal art studies started in 1929 at the Wits Tech Art School (drawing and painting), followed by the Johannesburg Training College and etching lessons. Battiss continued his studies while working as a magistrate's clerk, and finally obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts at UNISA at the age of 35. On 24 October 1981, the Walter Battiss Art Gallery at Somerset East was officially opened. Battiss died in 1982.

### 6 January 1995

#### Joe Slovo passed on

Joe Slovo, former SACP General Secretary and the communist intellectual, died after a long battle with cancer. He was SACP General Secretary, Umkhonto we Sizwe and National Chairperson



of the South African Communist Party, and also the first Minister of Housing.

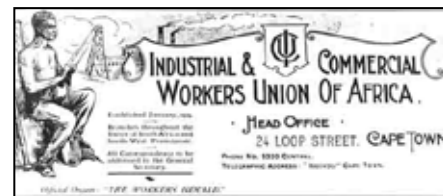
### 6 January 2005

#### Makgatho Mandela passed on

Former president Nelson Mandela's only surviving son, Makgatho Mandela, died of HIV/AIDS in the Linksfield hospital in Johannesburg.

### 7 January 1919

#### ICU formed under Kadalie



The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) was founded by Clements Kadalie, a young Nyassalander (Malawi). Formed in the stormy years after World War I with a membership of only twenty-four, the Industrial and Commercial Union made its first powerful impact when the Cape Town dock workers went on strike in December 1919. From small beginnings as a union of dock workers it quickly spread across the country, enrolling about 100,000 members.

### 7 January 1957

#### Alexandra Bus Boycott starts

Following hefty bus fare increas-

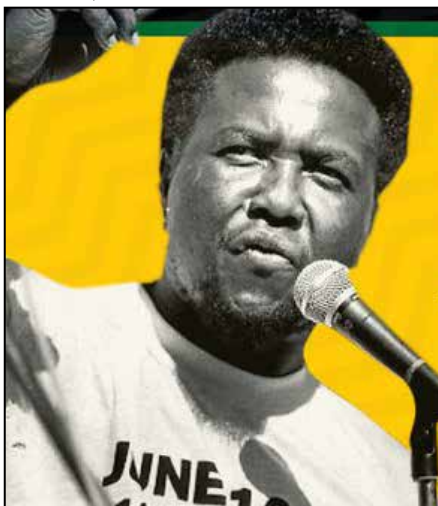


## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

es by PUTCO, the Alexandra People's Transport Committee (APTAC) was formed on this day to spearhead a bus boycott. The boycott quickly spread to Sophiatown, Germiston, Edenvale, Atteridgeville and Lady Selbourne. After months of walking to work and constant harassment by police, the commuters and the company finally reached a compromise on 1 April of that year.

### 7 January 1959

**President of the Young Lions, Peter Mokaba born**



Militant student and youth activist, first president of the South African Youth Congress (1987-1990) and of the ANC Youth League after its relaunch in 1991, was born in Shesego, Polokwane on this day. Mokaba spent time on Robben Island during the 1980s, and went on to become a Member of Parliament and Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism. Mokaba died on 9 June 2002.

### 8 January 1912

**African National Congress formed**

The South African Native National Congress (SANNC), later known as the African National Congress (ANC) was founded on the 8 January 1912. At the



SANNC's inaugural conference, Rev. John Dube was elected as its first president in absentia. The organisation developed out of a situation of racial exclusion and oppression under the new Union of South Africa, 1910. For the first time on 8 January 1972, President Reginald Oliver Tambo delivered a statement outlining the ANC programme for the year. This was repeated on the same date in 1979, and became an ANC tradition, known as the January 8th Statement.

### 8 January 1978

**Activist Rick Turner assassinated**

A passionate lecturer pioneering the teaching of radical political philosophy, Dr. Richard Turner was assassinated. He was shot through a window of his home in Durban and died in the arms of

his 13-year old daughter, Jann. Turner's murder came in the wake of renewed attacks on the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). Turner is author of *The Eye of the Needle – Towards Participatory Democracy In South Africa*, was active in the trade union movement in Durban, and was banned by the regime.

### 8 January 1993

**Rapper Anatii born**

Rapper Anathi Bhongo Mnyango, stagename Anatii was born in Bisho, Eastern Cape on 8 January 1993. Anatii produced and wrote the hit "When It Rains" for hip hop artist L-Tido in 2009, who was commissioned by Lebohang Morake to produce four songs for the Coca-Cola "Summer Yama Summahh" compilation album and released several singles.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 9 January 1871

#### Eugene N Marais born

Poet, naturalist and author Eugene Marais of the work *The Soul of the White Ant* (1925-36), a ground-breaking study on termites, and also of the Waterberg cycad tree was born on this day. An accomplished author, Marais published his first work at the age of 12, and at age 20 became owner of a newspaper, dedicated to local politics.

### 9 January 1973

#### Durban strikes started

On 9 January 1973, 2 000 workers in the Coronation Brick and Tile factory in Durban downed tools after employers rejected their demand for a wage increase. Subsequently, workers in various sectors around Durban also went on strike demanding higher wages and better working conditions. The strike spread to other parts of the country, and forced employers and the apartheid government to concede to the demand for the recognition of black trade unions.

### 9 January 2011

#### South Sudan Referendum on Independence start

After a 22-year civil war in which 2.5million southerners died, South Sudanese started to vote in a referendum on independence from Sudan. The referendum had a 60% turnout and was declared fair and free. 83% of South Sudanese voted for secession from the Sudan, and on 9 July 2011, South Sudan became an independent state.

### 9 January 1960

#### Building of Aswan Dam on the River Nile starts

The building of the world famous Aswan High Dam was started on

the River Nile in Egypt. The Nile is the longest river in the world, and its drainage basin covers eleven countries: Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt. The Aswan High Dam, completed in 1970, provides irrigation and power supply for the whole of Egypt, and was regarded as key to Egypt's post independent development and industrialization led by Abdel Nasser.

### 9 January 1991

#### White public schools allow black students

As the new school year began in South Africa, black children were admitted to 205 schools previously reserved for whites only (out of 2000 such public schools) where parents had voted in favour of racial integration.

### 9 January 1994

#### Photographer killed in Katilehong

On 9 January 1994, Abdul Shariff a freelance photographer was shot in the back and killed while covering an African National Congress (ANC) delegation visit to Katilehong. Shariff was hit by fire from a hostel occupied by Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters. It is believed that the gunshots were intended for Cyril Ramaphosa and Joe Slovo who were leading the ANC delegation. Shariff was born in Verulam, Natal and began fighting against apartheid from an early age. He was involved in the student political movement at high school and was active in early documentary projects for student publications, going on to make a career as a news photographer. Shariff's photographic work continues to appear in major news publications.

### 10 January 1946

#### First meeting of UN General Assembly held

The United Nations Organisation (UNO) succeeded The League of Nations which was founded just after the end of World War I, to ensure that war is avoided at all costs globally, through peaceful means. The League was dissolved in 1945 and replaced by the United Nations Organization (UN). The UN held its first general assembly in London in 1946, attended by delegates from 51 countries.

### 11 January 1904

#### Herero uprising in Namibia starts

The Herero people, led by Samuel Maharero, revolted against German colonization in an uprising that lasted until 1907, when it was defeated with the help of governments from the Zuid Afrikaner Boer Republics. Following the crushing of the rebellion, the Herero people were near exterminated with mass killings of men, women and children and poisoning of wells. The German government in 2016 considered an apology to the Herero people, but balked because of the possibility of having to pay reparations.

### 11 January 1859

#### John Tengu Jabavu born

Newspaper editor, preacher and the second Black matriculant in South Africa was born in Healdtown district, in the Eastern Cape.

### 11 January 1962

#### Mandela makes appearance in Addis Ababa

Nelson Mandela left South Africa early 1962, to drum up support for the armed struggle. He arrived in Ethiopia, and was

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

granted an Ethiopian passport by Emperor Haile Selassie. Mandela was classified as a journalist, under the name David Motsamai, which allowed him to travel the region. On 11 January he made a surprise appearance at the Pan-African Freedom Movement Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Mandela addressed the conference on behalf of the ANC, speaking about the decision to engage in armed struggle, a few weeks after the first sabotage attacks on 16 December 1961 by Umkhonto we Sizwe.

### 11 January 1974 The Rosenkowitz sextuplets

The Rosenkowitz sextuplets, three girls and three boys, were born to couple Susan and Colen Rosenkowitz, the first sextuplets known to survive their infancy.

### 11 January 1982 International Year for Sanctions against Apartheid initiated

The United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid launched the International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa. The Special Committee against Apartheid was established by the General Assembly under resolution 1761 (XVII) of November 6 1962, with a view to keep the racial policies of the South African Government under review throughout the year.

### 12 January 1978 Monty Naicker passed on

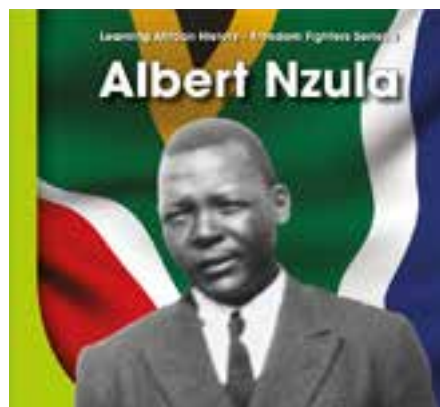
Gagathura Mohambry (Monty) Naicker, medical doctor and prominent freedom fighter, was born in Durban. As early as 1948, he called for a united front amongst oppressed political organisations.

He fought during the Defiance Campaign and was arrested and several banning orders imposed on him. Naicker died, age 67, on 12 January 1978.

### 12 January 1991 Sebokeng massacre

As third force violence continued to sweep through parts of KZN and Gauteng (then PWV), on the night of 12 January, 1991, more than 30 people were killed while attending an all-night vigil in Sebokeng. Mourners at the vigil were paying final respects to their comrade and community leader, Chris Nangalembe who was a member of the African National Congress (ANC) and killed in the violence.

### 14 January 1934 Albert Nzula dies in Moscow



Albert Nzula, teacher, journalist and leader of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), died of pneumonia in Moscow, USSR. He left SA in 1931 to study in Moscow. Nzula was the first black general secretary of the Communist Party, a teacher trained at Lovedale college, member of the Industrial Commercial and the ANC, born in Rouxville in the Free state in 1905. Nzula co-authored the book *The Working Class Movement and Forced Labour in Negro Africa* (1933).

(Other sources gives his date of death as 17 January 1934)

### 14 January 1991 Five women stoned to death

Five women who were accused and convicted of adultery in Hargeisa, Somalia, were publicly stoned to death by villagers. The stoning was carried out in accordance with Sharia law. Nothing happened to the men involved in the adultery. United Nations (UN) officials who witnessed the incident were helpless, as they feared for their lives. The practice continues to this day, including punishing women who were raped. In 2008, Amnesty International reported on the 13-year old Aisha Ibrahim Duhulow who was stoned to death for adultery in Kismayo, after she was raped. A law on Rape and Sexual Offences was introduced and finally ratified in early 2020 in Somaliland.

### 15 January 1929 Martin Luther King, Junior born

African-American clergyman, a leader of the Civil Rights Movement who orchestrated social change through non-violent methods, was born on 15 January 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin Luther shaped and articulated the message of the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. King led the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-1956, an action stimulated by the arrest of Rosa Parks.

### 16 January 1971 First Cape to Rio race takes place

The first Transatlantic yacht race between Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) took place on this

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

day. SAS (South African Ships) Tafelberg served as guardship for the voyage which started from Table Bay in Cape Town. The race of about 5 800 kilometres takes between 12 and 30 days to complete.

### 16 January 1989 UN Security Council supports Namibian independence

The Security Council, in response to the 22 December signing by Angola, Cuba and South Africa of peace treaty, adopted two resolutions on the question. In the first, the Council expressed support for the peace treaty, and requested the Secretary-General to keep the Council informed on the implementation of the resolution. In the second, the Council decided that implementation of the plan contained in its resolution 435 (1978) for the independence of Namibia would begin on 1 April 1989.

### 16 January 2006 Dr Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Inaugurated as Liberian President



Dr Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became the first elected woman as Head of State in Africa and her historic inauguration as President of Li-

beria was on 16 January, 2006. She was the 24th President of Liberia since the founding of the state, a culmination of decades of fighting for freedom, justice and equality in Liberia. In 2011 President Johnson-Sirleaf shared the Nobel Prize for Peace with two other women, fellow Liberian Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen.

### 17 January 1905 Johannesburg Meteorological Observatory opens

The Observatory was founded as the Transvaal Meteorological Department, initially meant to be used to watch weather patterns. Astronomer Dr Robert Innes was its first director. It was officially opened in 1905 and the first telescope was installed in 1906. The Observatory sits on a hill in a Johannesburg suburb of the same name. Today it belongs to the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) and the Observatory is open to teachers, learners and members of the public in general. The centre also organizes night tours.

### 17 January 1961 Patrice Lumumba Assassinated

The first Prime Minister of the Congo Republic, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated a few months after Congo gained formal independence from Belgium. The killing of Lumumba remained a secret for years. Lumumba was forcibly restrained on the flight to Elisabethville on 17 January 1961. On arrival, he and his associates were brutally beaten and tortured by Katangan forces and Belgian officers. Later that night, Lumumba was driven to



an isolated spot where three firing squads had been assembled. Lumumba was executed on 17 January 1961. The Belgians and counterparts later wished to get rid of the bodies, and did so by digging up and dismembering the corpses, then dissolving them in sulfuric acid while the bones were ground and scattered. In later years it came to light that the assassination was sanctioned by the Belgian government and US president Eisenhower, and was funded and advised by Brussels and Washington.

### 17 January 1964 Opposition demands Verwoerd resigns from Broederbond

Leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff, demands a judicial inquiry into the activities of the Broederbond, and demands the resignation of the Prime Minister from this society. Dr. Verwoerd refused to resign.

### 17 January 1988 Editor Percy Qoboza passed on

Well-known South African anti-apartheid journalist and former editor of The World newspaper and the Sowetan, City Press, Percy Qoboza, died on his fiftieth birthday. Qoboza rose to

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

fame during the 1976 uprisings, when he fearlessly covered the events in the township and country. Percy Tseliso Peter Qoboza was born on 17 January 1938 in Sophiatown, Johannesburg, and went on to study theology in Lesotho, and started working at The World newspaper. He received the national Order of Ikhamanga in Silver.

### 17 January 1997

#### General Meiring implicated at TRC

In a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) revelation, General Georg Meiring was implicated with more than sixty officers and soldiers in 'dirty tricks' including state-sponsored murder. Nobel Peace Laureate President F.W. de Klerk refused to investigate charges against General Meiring and two other generals, despite the Steyn commission of enquiry.

### 18 January 2020

#### Peter "Terror" Mathebula passed on

On 18 January 2020, Peter "Terror" Mathebula South Africa's first black world champion boxer died. Mathebula was born on 3 July 1952 in Gauteng. A fly-weight division boxer, Mathebula made his professional boxing debut on 10 July 1971 against Sydwell Mhlongo in Rabasotho Hall, Tembisa. On 13 December 1980, Mathebula became South Africa's first black world champion when he dethroned South Korea's Tae-Shik Kim in Los Angeles, California. Throughout his career, Mathebula won 36 matches, inflicting 17 KOs on his opponents, and lost 9 matches, suffering 5 KOs. Mathebula retired from boxing in 1983.

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

1 – 18 January 2024

Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org), [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) and *The Africa Fact Book (2020)*

### 1 January

#### African Continental Free Trade Agreement becomes operational

The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) on 1 January 2023 celebrated two years since its operationalization on this day. The AfCFTA was signed by all African Union Member states, except Eritrea. It lays the foundations for an African common market, with ratifying countries pledging to eliminate import tariffs on 97% of goods traded between African states. The Agreement was adopted by the 10th Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda on 21 March 2018, and entered into force on 30 May 2019.

### 4 January

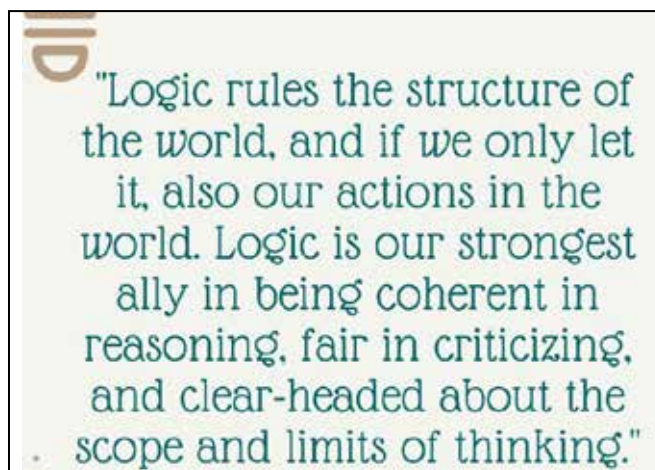
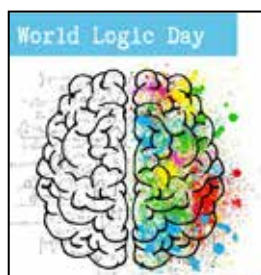
#### World Braille Day

Braille is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical and scientific symbols. Braille (named after its inventor in 19th century France, Louis Braille) is used by blind and partially sighted people, using touch, to read the same books and periodicals as those printed in a visual font.

### 14 January

#### World Logic Day

Logic, the investigation on the principles of reasoning, studied by civilisations throughout history, played and continued to play an important role in the development of philosophy and the sciences. The day was initiated by UNESCO, in association with the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences.



in pictures



# ANC 112<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



in pictures



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