



# ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

19 – 25 January 2024

Conversations with the  
**President**



## AFRICA'S GLOBAL COMMITMENT TO THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Opening Address by **DEPUTY PRESIDENT PAUL MASHATILE**  
to the **7<sup>th</sup> Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference**, Mpumalanga Province

**W**E are gathered here this morning following an eventful week where ANC activists from across the country put into action their commitment to defending our freedom and advancing a better life for all towards achieving a decisive victory in the General Election this year! In their numbers, South Africans publicly declared their support of the African National Congress and the vision that we share for this country.

The ANC's 112th celebration was indeed a bold declaration that the ANC of Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela is still alive! As the President said in his address, as the ANC, we are ready to launch a citizen-led campaign that will serve as a basis for the next 30 years of South Africa's democracy.

The year 2024 indeed marks a significant milestone for our nation! These 30 years of democracy and progress for us activists

represent the manifestation of hope for a better tomorrow that many of our brothers and sisters in the struggle fought and died for. The sacrifice of South Africans and the dedication of our friends from across the world is indeed what has solidified in us the commitment to human rights, and human rights for all!

Whilst we celebrate how far we have come as South Africa and across Africa, our revolutionary slogan remains relevant '*aluta*

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## 7<sup>TH</sup> AFRICA CUBA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

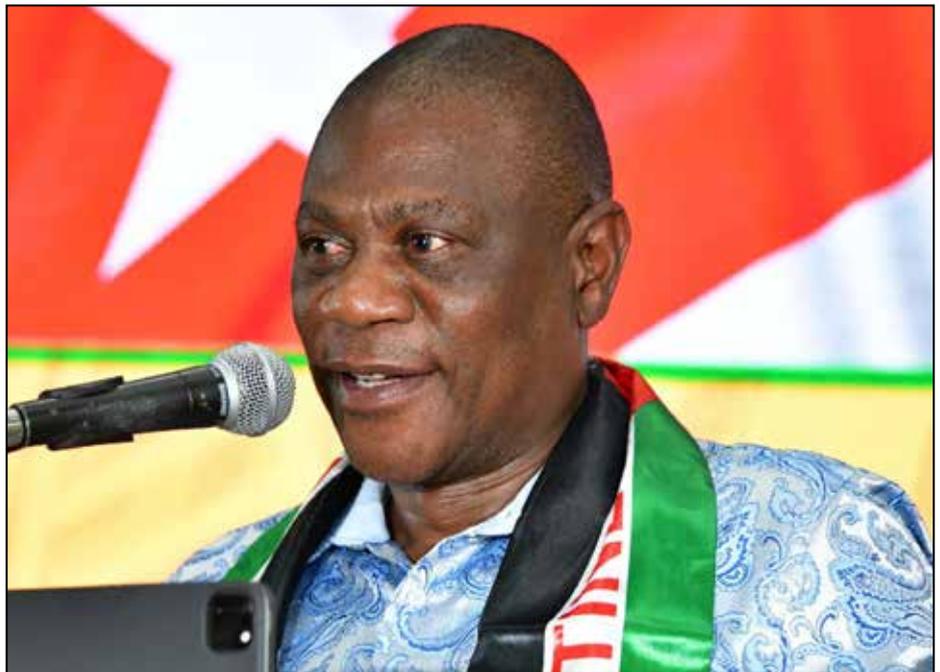
*continua*’, the struggle indeed continues! As progressive formations from the continent, may this conference serve as an opportunity to renew our commitment to justice for all, not only for our countries but for the betterment of the world.

This year’s conference is themed; **“Africa’s Global Commitment to the Cuban Revolution,”** this is an important theme that is rooted in an appreciation of solidarity as a lens to understand politics. It places emphasis on the fact that it is because of our shared history of colonial rule, apartheid in our context and global capitalism that we remain true to the ideals of internationalism, liberation, democracy and social justice.

Our journey as African nations, as well as our journey with Cuba indeed serves as the bedrock of the development that we have seen in our countries for decades. Comrade Che Guevara once said – *“Above all, always be capable of feeling deeply about any injustice committed against anyone, anywhere in the world.”* It is because of such principles that we extend our sincerest appreciation to all in attendance for your active involvement in this conference, which unites us in our fervent support and solidarity with the Cuban Revolution and the genuine liberation of its people.

As South Africans, we recognise the rich history of overcoming challenges and the remarkable individuals from around the world who played a part in our triumph. This year, we celebrate 30 years of democracy, a milestone that may have remained a mere aspiration without the invaluable support of nations like Cuba!

As stated by President Nelson



Mandela, *“The Cuban people hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Africa. The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom, and justice, unparalleled for their principled and selfless character.”*

We owe the Cuban people a great debt of gratitude for their selfless contribution to the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid fight in the African continent.

It is an undeniable fact that Africa and Cuba have a long history of solidarity, stemming from a shared understanding of the challenges that our respective peoples face in our countries. It is a strong connection formed during the intense struggle for freedom, as we stood together in the battle against imperialism and injustice.

Today, we gather once again to reassert our dedication to that struggle as we confront another set of challenges on our journey towards growth and development. Cubans continue to endure a dire economic crisis. The economic crisis in Cuba, exacerbated

by the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly hampers individuals’ ability to exercise their social and economic rights. This is evident in the form of severe shortages of essential items such as food and medication, as well as power outages. This crisis is also underscored by increasing climate change, and a global economy that is fueled by digitisation, these both being areas that are central to development in this epoch.

The United States embargo against Cuba has been a significant obstacle to the development of the country. It hinders trade between US businesses and Cuban interests, therefore impacting the potential for economic growth and further marginalises the Cuban people. This is by far being the most enduring trade embargo in modern history.

The ANC strongly condemns the unjustifiable US embargo against Cuba, waged as an economic war with a general fascination with persecution. The very core of the embargo is to make the Cuban people socio-economically deprived and in dire need of

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basic items, leading to social unrest and rising against their revolutionary government.

We, as the ANC, are dedicated to fostering solidarity with the Cuban people and advocating for the United States to end the embargo on Cuba and completely withdraw from Guantanamo Bay!

We urge Africans to increase their efforts in the humanitarian campaign to support Cuba by donating non-perishable foods, medicine, and clothing among other things. As African governments, we should also strengthen solidarity by expanding trade with Cuba through bilateral and multilateral channels. We urge the United Nations General Assembly to maintain a consistent and stronger stance by voting in favour of lifting the blockade.

As Southern Africa, we unapologetically offer our friendship to the Cuban people, as they stood by us throughout the dark days of apartheid and the conflict that affected the southern area of our continent.

South Africa still has various Cuba Friendship Associations around the nation, such as the Friends of Cuba Society (FOCUS). These associations have arisen from a sincere collective feeling of unity with Cuba. These demonstrate that international relations are more than just inter-state cooperation, and that they are, first and foremost, interpersonal relationships. As a result, a strong civil society is essential to the formation of any foreign policy.

Therefore, we will continue to build good relations with Cubans, who at our time of need came to our region and shared their knowledge and skills as doctors, teach-



ers, and agricultural experts. We will never forget that during the fight against oppression, underdevelopment, and racism, they were right there with us.

As individuals and various formations from Southern Africa, we express our admiration for them and make a solemn commitment to always remember their extraordinary demonstration of self-sacrifice. We will always be grateful to the Cuban people for their generous hospitality.

Notably, a significant number of young individuals from Southern Africa have received education and training at Cuban educational institutions, and some are still training in Cuban schools and universities. Moreover, many young professionals in various sectors of the health industry, government, and military are actively contributing to the development of our nation. These individuals have acquired their talents through the extensive training opportunities offered by Cuba.

We must emphasise that our relationship with Cuba takes into account both the problems of the past and the problems of the present. It is based on equality, freedom, and the right of people to choose their own destiny.

Regrettably, other nations, including very influential ones, have urged us to denounce Cuba over the years. As a nation, it would be foolish for us to undermine the same foundation that has propelled us to our current state of progress.

In reality, we have reminded those who want us to condemn Cuba that throughout our struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination, the very same nations that now seek our denouncement were supporting the apartheid system. However, Cuba, despite its meagre resources, steadfastly remained by our side and provided assistance.

The African National Congress, along with the vast majority of South Africans, will forever remember those who supported us throughout the most challenging period of our fight against apartheid.

We also remain committed to prioritising global solidarity that is anchored in principles of multipolarism towards social justice and equality. We recognise that the world as it stands is still skewed in terms of power and economic influence, particularly in institutions that are meant to serve the interests of all nations in a



just way. The inroads that have been made in the transformation of global institutions such as the United Nations and other bodies can only be maintained and advanced further if they are premised on justice and equality.

In solidarity with the vast majority of people across the globe, we are dedicated to making a contribution to the international struggle for a more equitable and peaceful world order.

As President Cyril Ramaphosa stated during his January 8th statement on Saturday, we reaffirm our unwavering support for the realisation of the inalienable rights of the people of Western Sahara and Palestine to self-determination, independence, and statehood. We also call for the implementation of all relevant UN resolutions, including the holding of the UN-supervised referendum in Western Sahara and the resolution of the Palestine Question.

In this regard, we have demonstrated our commitment to fighting for human rights by approaching the International Court of Justice (ICJ), under the Genocide Convention, for acts committed by Israel in the context of its attacks on Gaza. In an effort to promote a fair and long-lasting solution that would bring peace to Israelis and

Palestinians, South Africa has backed a number of UN resolutions as well as other international initiatives. We continue calling for a ceasefire and humanitarian interventions.

Our message to the world is clear, and we should never be intimidated for raising our voice. We are not in favour of any kind of infringement of human rights, and we are not in favour of imperialist acts that attempt to degrade the dignity of individuals regardless of their race, gender, or religious affiliation. We support peace, and where there is a conflict of political ideologies, we call for peaceful resolutions.

As the ANC, we will persist in conducting campaigns to demonstrate our support for marginalised people in Western Sahara, Palestine, Cuba, and other parts of the globe. These efforts align with our principles of upholding human rights, promoting social justice, and advocating for equality.

These are indeed the principles that should guide our commitment to our relationship with Cuba, and also inform our strategy to deepen solidarity with her people.

Our solidarity strategy must involve; strengthening our econom-

ic ties and promoting trade and investment between our nations, strengthening people-to-people relations, fostering cultural collaboration, and promoting the exchange of knowledge, which will greatly benefit our societies. In addition, we must come together as a region to tackle the underlying factors that contribute to persistent inequality, poverty, and underdevelopment in our countries.

We must take advantage of this opportunity of the 7th Cuba-Africa International Solidarity Conference, to restate our dedication to the Cuban Revolution because, collectively, we have the power to conquer the obstacles that await us and construct a future characterised by fairness, unity, and respect.

Africa stands with Cuba, and Cuba stands with Africa, supporting each other in solidarity. May our bond grow stronger, and may our deeds serve as a source of inspiration for future generations.

May this conference inspire more solidarity and collaboration among us all.

**Long live the Cuban-African Solidarity!**

***Hasta la victoria siempre!***

# DECLARATION

of the **7th African Continental Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba**  
held in Mbombela, South Africa, 15–17 January 2024

**W**E, the delegates that convened from 15th to 17th January 2024 in Mbombela, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa, express our sincere gratitude to the South African revolutionary alliance comprising the African National Congress, South African Communist Party, Congress of South African Trade Unions, and South African National Civic Organisation, as well as civil society organisations - the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, and the Friends of Cuba Society, for hosting the 7th Africa Cuba Conference of Solidarity with Cuba.

The 7th Conference was graced with the participation of a high level delegation from Cuba, led by Cde Comrade Fernando Gonzalez Llort President of the *Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos* (Cuban Institute for Friendship among the People, ICAP); the Prime Minister of the Saharawi Republic cde Burchraya Beyoun, Ft Michael Lapsley of the Friends of Cuba Society; Mme Modiehi Masoleng-Matlhako who received an Award from the Cuban government, presented at the Conference and high level delegations from African national liberation movements, political parties, solidarity associations and networks.

This meeting served as a crucial platform for us, from our respective African countries and other global regions, including Europe, Latin America, North America and Asia, to strengthen our efforts and deepen our international solidarity with the Cuban government and people. We pay tribute to the Cuban people on their historic revolution of 1st January 1959. This year, January the 1st marked the 65th anniversary of the Cuban revolution, a decisive advance in the struggle for national self-determination, freedom and socialist construction to end capitalist exploitation and imperialism – the highest stage of capitalism.

As we met, the imperialist regime of the United States under Joe Biden, its latest President, has intensified the inhuman economic, trade, investment and financial blockade, as well as the accompanying political



propaganda and other forms of regime change machinations against Cuba. Yet during his campaign for the office, Biden made a commitment to return to the “normalisation” of United States relations with Cuba. His predecessor, Donald Trump, had adopted 243 draconian measures to intensify the blockade against Cuba, rolling back the little normalisation progress whose first step appeared publicly at the former South African President Nelson Mandela’s memorial service in December 2013.

At a historic event on 10 December 2013 in Johannesburg, for the first time since the Cuban revolution, United States’ President Barack Obama, publicly shook hands with Cuba’s President, Raúl Castro. This was subsequently followed by engagements and other steps towards the normalisation of US-Cuba relations. However, in his announcement in the United States two years later, on 17 December 2014, Obama reaffirmed adherence to the achievement of “US interests” in Cuba. This, he said, was his administra-



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tion's goal for what he called the "*United States-Cuba Normalization*". He did not change US imperialist interests but asserted "normalization" as a substitute for what he called "*an outdated policy that had failed to advance*" those interests in Cuba. In the end, the gesture at the memorial service did not deter the United States' imperialism from seeking to suppress nations striving for self-determination.

Before the Cuban revolution, working people in Cuba lived under wretched, semi-colonial and super-exploitative conditions. Comprador capitalists, wealthy landowners, along with their political lackeys, hangers-on, and beneficiaries of their patronage networks, all subordinate to the United States' imperialist interests, were in charge. They called the shots, each according to their importance and exercise of power and/or authority in the economy and/or the state. The bourgeoisie super-exploited the working-class, accumulating wealth and depriving ordinary people of decent livelihoods and emancipation. The victory of the Cuban revolution, ended the regime of the US-backed Fulgencio Batista, the dictator. It marked the beginning of a transition to socialist construction in the Western hemisphere. We support the efforts of the government and people of Cuba in their struggle to refuse to go back.

After the revolution, Cuba became a bastion of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist solidarity, and a major inspiration to peace-loving people across the world. The Cuban people showed the way to victory in the struggle to end colonial rule and exploitation in the global South. As Africans, we will continue to cherish the revolutionary discipline, resilience and strength of the Cuban people in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola. The battle raged on from the end of 1987 into 1988. Cuban soldiers, alongside our African liberation counterparts, fought courageously, others shedding their blood for Africa's liberation. In a historic victory, they defeated the arrogant army of the apartheid South Africa, highlighting the global impact of working-class and progressive solidarity.

The triumph in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale resulted in the liberation of Angola and Namibia and paved the way for the negotiations that ultimately brought an end to the apartheid regime in South Africa. This marked a significant transition to democracy in Southern Africa after decades of liberation struggle. We express our sincere gratitude to the selfless Cuban people, who sacrificed a lot, and returned to Cuba only with the mortal remains of their fallen heroes – and not a single African mineral or shred of wealth.

The Cuban Revolution gave both hope and material support not only to Africans but to other people in different global regions against oppression, exploitation, domination of one country by another, and disease. An independent country of just over 11 million people, Cuba stands as a beacon of socialist transformation and development, upholding the social, cultural, and economic rights of citizens, with guarantees to the right to work, education, health, housing, food security, and social protection. Today, Cuba is the only country in the world to have fulfilled the UN Millennium Development Goals. It has made these and other achievements despite six decades of an economic blockade imposed by the imperialist regime of the United States. While it claims to be a democratic state, the United States is an imperialist dictatorial state in both its posture to Cuba and relations with many other countries.

The United States' blockade of Cuba is illegal. Included in the unjust blockade are unilateral sanctions outside of and undermining the United Nations' legal and multilateral frameworks and annual resolutions. Through the blockade, the United States is against all of us in our respective countries and global regions. The blockade encompasses extraterritorial impacts directly affecting our countries and non-US citizens and companies through sanctions, prohibitive and punitive measures in trade, investment, financial and other relations, economic and political.

We salute the resilience of Cuban socialist construction, which continues despite the heightened blockade. We condemn every US administration up to and including the Biden administration for their intransigent attitude towards global appeals to lift the blockade completely with immediate effect and unconditionally end the occupation of Guantanamo Bay, a Cuban territory. The US blockade, unilateral sanctions and associated intransigence represent an assault on the human rights of the Cuban people and all the global citizens it affects. We declare our unwavering commitment to strengthen the bonds of solidarity and friendship with Cuba.

Besides offering support for many of our national liberation struggles, Cuba offered vital medical, engineering and other education and training assistance to many people in Africa and other global regions. In solidarity with other countries, Cuba trained and is still training medical doctors, nurses, other healthcare professionals, engineers, teachers and other professionals. Cuba's Henry Reeve Medical Brigade has helped other countries during the fight against the Covid-19

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pandemic. This is terrorist – in the minds of the imperialist leaders and legislators of the United States. In using every trick in the book in pursuit of its imperialist agenda, the United States has included Cuba in its spurious unilateral list of countries allegedly sponsoring terrorism. We condemn this with the contempt it deserves.

For 31 years since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly has passed a resolution annually for the United States to end its illegal blockade of Cuba. Of all countries, only the US and the apartheid Israeli regime, which has unleashed a genocide of the Palestinian people, have consistently voted against the resolution. The United States has intransigently disregarded both the United Nations and the global community, which have condemned and called for an end to its blockade of Cuba. Also, it has maintained its occupation of the Cuban territory of Guantanamo Bay despite international condemnation and calls to end it unconditionally with immediate effect.

The 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference believes that Now is the time for additional efforts in the struggle for a peaceful and just world order. Consistent with our continuing condemnation of the US blockade of Cuba, its extraterritorial impacts and foreign occupation of Guantanamo Bay, the Conference adopted a Programme of Action.

The Programme of Action contains concrete actions of united efforts to raise awareness and intensify peaceful political protests, directed at United States embassies in our countries, against the unjust and illegal blockade of Cuba; against the unjust occupation of Guantanamo Bay; against regime change agenda and other destabilisation mechanisms in Cuba; and against the inclusion of Cuba in the unilateral list of states that allegedly sponsor terrorism

We further commit to deepen collaborative ties between Cuba and Africa (starting within our respective countries) in various sectors, strengthen people to people and diaspora solidarity; and cooperation in the areas of health, education, science and technology, as well as culture, sports, government to government, tourism, diplomatic and a range of other areas, and amongst various sectors, especially women and youth, set out in the Programme of Action.



Conference welcomes the commitment by FRELIMO, the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) to host the next, 8th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference in Mozambique.

The conference reiterated its commitment to stand firmly with all oppressed people of the world, especially in Africa and South America, including the struggle against patriarchy and vow to continue to work for peaceful resolutions to conflicts. In this regard, the Conference adopted a special resolution on the genocide in Palestine.

Conference pledged our unwavering support to and solidarity with the Cuban revolutionary government and people in defence of Cuba's fundamental right to self-determination, not least their right and pursuit of socialism as their chosen transformation and development trajectory.

The 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference held in South Africa rises determined to continue and expand Africa's unwavering support and solidarity with Cuba. We make a Clarion call to the peace and freedom loving people, organisations and governments of our continent to rally support for the Cuban people, and to work tirelessly for an immediate end to the unilateral economic blockage and other imperialist actions against the people and government of Cuba.

**Adopted on 18 January 2024, Mbombela City. South Africa**

# Resolution of the 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference ON PALESTINE

**W**E, the delegates at the 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference, held in Mpumalanga South Africa from 15–17 January 2024 condemn the fascist genocide being perpetrated by the apartheid Israeli Zionist regime against the peoples of Palestine.

We equally, condemn the United States of America support for the genocide being perpetuated in Gaza. President Biden like Prime Minister Netanyahu's hands will forever be stained with the blood of the thousands of non-combatant innocent men, women and children of Gaza.

We strongly condemn the mass detentions, continual occupation of Palestinian homes and land, and other violations of human rights against the peoples of Palestine.

The daily mass murder of citizens by the Israeli Defence Force has turned Gaza into a concentration camp and death chamber of Palestine. By allowing and being active participants in the above heinous acts, Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Biden have taken over where Hitler and Goebels left off. We condemn the genocide committed at their behest and sanction.

We support the principled internationalists decision of the South African government for having arraigned a charge of genocide against Israel at the Peace Palace in the Hague, Netherlands.

We pledge our support for the struggle of the people of Palestine for human rights, dignity, freedom and their inalienable right to self-determination.

We urge an urgent cease fire and the immediate end of hostilities, and for urgent humanitarian assistance to the peoples of Gaza.





# AFRICA CUBA SOLIDARITY PROGRAMME OF ACTION

As presented, amended and adopted by Plenary on 17 January 2024

**T**HE 7th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference, held in White River Mpumalanga in South Africa, from 15–17 January 2024, adopts the following programme of action until the next Conference, in order to galvanise and unite all progressive forces on the African continent in solidarity to the Cuban Revolution:

## On Education, Health and Science and Technology

1. Strengthen cooperation on health, including telemedicine, pharmaceuticals, combating disease, health promotion, training of medical personnel, and support the work of the Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disasters and Serious Epidemics.
2. Encourage cooperation and exchange programmes between universities, academics and students.
3. Maintain partnerships in training doctors and engineers, consider Cuban teachers at the high school level, and ensure appropriate recognition of Cuban degrees.
4. Embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution, integrate technology in education and administrative systems, job creation and collaborate with Cuba on telemedicine.
5. Support cooperation amongst continental, regional and country research institutions on technology with relevant Cuban institutions.
6. Explore how Cuba addresses climate change, analyse media narratives, and partner with institutions for educational initiatives.

## On Pan African Solidarity Action and Coordination

7. Adopts the declaration of an annual Cuban Solidarity Focus Week, culminating in an African Day of Solidarity with Cuba on 23 March each year.

The day of action should have mass protests to the US embassies, and also highlight the issues of US financial and economic blockade against Cuba. The focus week should include lectures, cultural activities, screening of documentaries and other local and national actions in all countries, to raise awareness, educate our citizens on Cuba and campaign for the immediate end to the economic blockade against Cuba. Add important Cuban dates, such as 26 July to our calendars, to raise further awareness on Cuban Solidarity.

8. Promote and be consistent with the legacy of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz and the Cuban people in Africa, in the form of in-person and/or virtual events, conferences, exhibitions, panels, political events in different countries to remember their contribution to the liberation struggles.
9. Establish a Pan-African Continental and In-Country coordination network/mechanism to streamline collaborative efforts, and encourage to create Cuban friendship societies in countries where they don't exist.
10. The coordination network should coordinate the implementation and monitoring of African solidarity efforts agreed on at this and future conferences, with the host country reporting to the next Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference on the implementation of this programme of action.
11. Stress the need to create a Cuban Pan African Solidarity Fund to support solidarity, with fundraising activities such as crowd funding and contributions from individuals and states.
12. The pan African coordinating mechanism should also create a database of all organisations, networks and societies working on Cuban solidarity in the continent, in order to facilitate cooperation and exchange of information so that we support each other's solidarity activities.

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### On Economic Solidarity and Cooperation

13. Strengthen economic cooperation between Cuba and our countries in such areas as telemedicine, agriculture and agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and other common sectors, including on trade, investments, business to business, entrepreneurship, exchanges and technology transfer.
14. Collaborate on activities in trade, finance and economy in defiance of the blockade, through state enterprises, the African Continental Free Trade Area, BRICS, the African Union and other forums, in order to promote developmental trade and self-determination, as well as country to country developmental trade agreements.
15. In particular, address the inability of the Cuban embassies in our countries to use financial and other banking facilities, by developing policies that forces our banks not to defy international laws.
16. Supports the active collaboration between trade unions in Nigeria, Namibia and South Africa and the Cuban trade union federations, and encourage trade unions across Africa and in the global trade union movement, to follow these examples.
17. Review policy and legislative environments that prohibit trades and economic relations with Cuba.
18. Encourage tourism as part of solidarity: enable free movement through lifting visa requirements, explore direct flights to Cuba and work with travel agents such as Amistur Cuba towards the establishment of an African brigade. Note the 1 May International brigade and the need to revive the initiative.

### On People to People and Diaspora Solidarity

19. Raise awareness through social media, citizen and political education, on solidarity with Cuba as support for global humanity, not an act of charity. Mobilize community-based activities,
20. Organise grassroots and community mobilization activities, including documentary screenings, poetry sessions and other cultural programmes and exchanges to build strong networks of support for Cuba in our countries, with a focus on sectoral organisations.
21. Immediately expand the campaign to collect non-perishable goods in all our countries, and ship these at least twice a year.
22. Set up a network of alumni who were trained in Cuba, to share information and expand and contribute to solidarity activities in our countries.
23. Organise community-based agricultural pro-

grammes towards food security; empowerment programmes to enable communities to build and maintain their own facilities e.g. schools, clinics, access roads and other socio-economic infrastructure; and short programmes for primary health care. These exchange programmes must not be confined to matriculants and graduates only, but should also empower all our communities, including early school-leavers.

24. Do ideological work to engage in the battle of ideas work on solidarity and history and position of Cuba and its contribution to Africa and global humanity, as well as the national and socialist development achievements of Cuba, despite the odds. Popularise revolutionary teachings of Cde Fidel Castro and other Cuban revolutionaries.
25. Develop communication strategies through TV, radio, social networks, newspapers and other platforms that allow the Cuban reality to be disseminated, denounce hostile policies against Cuba, and disseminate solidarity activities.

### On Cultural Solidarity

26. Encourage sporting activities with between African and Cuban sports clubs, as an education mechanism and for fundraising in support of Cuban solidarity activities.
27. Encourage cooperation and exchange in film, art, music, broadcasting and other cultural exchanges.
28. Encourage the building of monuments in Angola and other countries celebrating the Cuban contribution to African liberation and development, the creation of a Cuba-Africa museum with proceeds going to Cuba, especially where those who fell in this struggle. Take note that the Museum of African Liberation, based in Harare, Zimbabwe will also recognize the role and contributions of Cuba in the armed struggle across the continent.

### On Women and Youth Solidarity

29. Encourage women solidarity through cooperation amongst Women's Leagues of NLM, develop an action plan on women solidarity, colloquiums on women of Cuba, and activities coordinated by PAWO to advocate for the dignity and respect for the Cuban women. Collaborate on Young women's dignity packs to be send to Cuba. Use the promotion of UN resolution on women, peace and security, Resolution 1325, as anchor for solidarity actions amongst women.
30. Strengthen youth solidarity with Cuba, with brigades, student exchanges, activities at universities and colleges, social media solidarity and



awareness campaigns, exchanges through national youth services, social media campaigns, and other activities to raise awareness amongst new generations on Cuba. Inclusion of the role of Cuba in our history curricula, showcasing collaboration between Cuba and Africa in various sectors, and the creation of a Cuba Africa Youth Forum.

### **On Diplomatic and Government to Government Actions**

31. Encourage liberation movements and political parties, particularly those in power, to take a prominent role in advocating for the lifting of unilateral financial and trade blockades against the heroic people of Cuba. This involves leading international calls, mobilizing support, and engaging in diplomatic efforts to address the economic challenges faced by Cuba. Particularly mobilizing for the majority vote at the United Nations and African Union Resolutions.
32. Urge all African governments to raise the issue of the unilateral and unjust economic blockade against Cuba in diplomatic relations with the USA and countries of the North, and raise the matter in all multilateral and regional institutions.
33. Review Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements to strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation.
34. Promote the establishment of Cuban institutions in African countries, focusing on education and leveraging African minerals and other goods produced on the continent to support Cuba at all times.

35. Strengthen and work towards the establishment of local government twinning agreements between African and Cuban municipalities, towns and cities.
36. Distribute the Declaration and Programme of Action of this conference to legislatures across the continent and the world.
37. For the Africa Cuba Solidarity movement to reach out to Cuba Solidarity networks in the USA, Canada and the rest of the world.
38. Encourage national liberation movements and political parties to invite our respective diaspora communities and chapters in the USA to participate in national conferences, and to lobby, mobilise and advocate in the USA for the lifting of the blockade against Cuba.
39. Write a letter to the government of the United States of America, signed by Conference participants, calling for the end of the unilateral economic blockade, for the removal of Cuba from the US list of countries sponsoring terrorism, the total withdrawal of the US from Guantanamo Bay and deliver to USA embassies in all our countries.

### **Reporting and the 8th Africa Cuba Solidarity Conference**

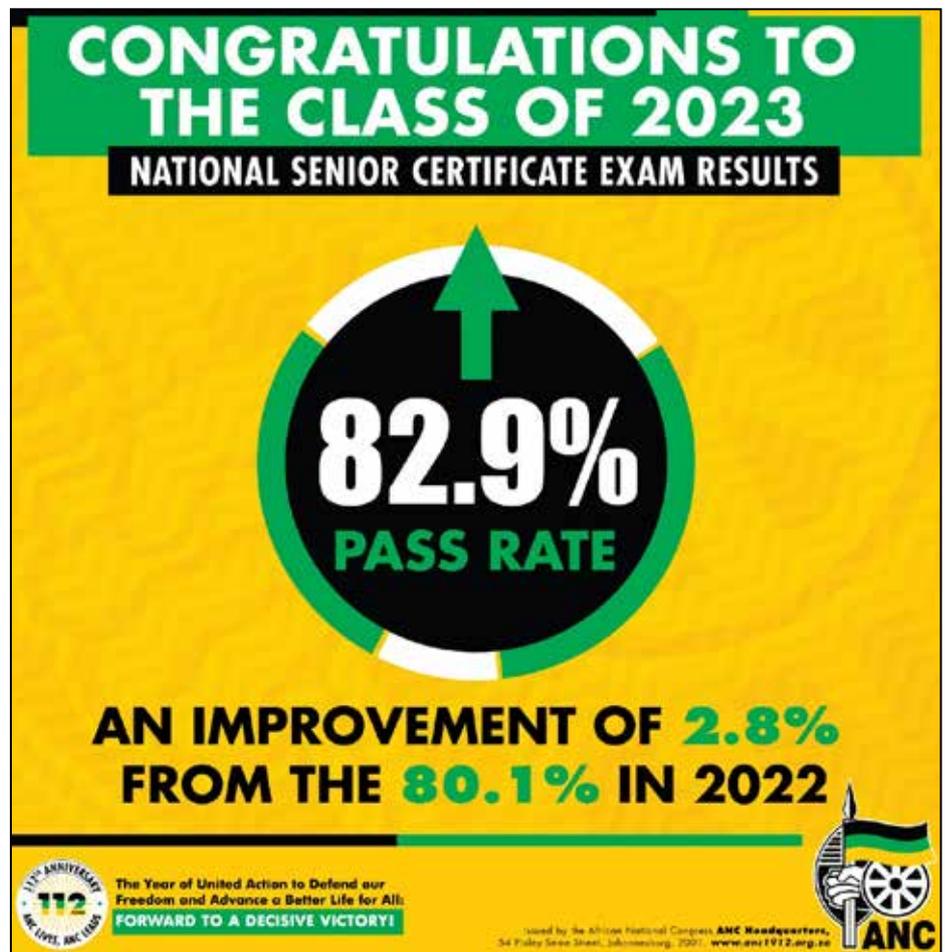
40. Request South Africa as the host of the 7th Conference to monitor the implementation of this programme of action, and to hand over the report to Mozambique at the next conference.
41. Welcomes the offer from Mozambique to host the 8th Africa-Cuba Solidarity Conference at a date to be communicated.

# ANC CONGRATULATES THE MATRIC CLASS OF 2023 ON THEIR EXEMPLARY ACHIEVEMENTS

**T**HE African National Congress (ANC) heartily congratulates the Matric Class of 2023 on their commendable achievements in the National Senior Certificate examinations. This year's results not only reflect the resilience and dedication of our learners but also stand as a testament to our nation's enduring commitment to basic education.

The Class of 2023, encompassing 723,971 full-time students, 181,143 part-time students, and 34,626 progressed learners, has faced unprecedented challenges, notably the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these obstacles, our students have demonstrated remarkable fortitude and adaptability.

We are especially proud to note that the rigorous process of examinations was upheld with utmost integrity, supported by 207 meticulously prepared question papers, 72,500 diligent invigilators, and 52,500 dedicated markers. These figures position South Africa at the vanguard of educational excellence within the Southern African Development Commu-



nity (SADC).

The ANC-led government's unwavering commitment to equitable and fair education has ensured that every candidate was given a fair opportunity to succeed, thus leaving no one behind. The successful implementation of the curriculum recovery strategy, devised by

the Department of Basic Education, has borne fruit in these outstanding results.

As we celebrate these achievements, we must also acknowledge the concerted efforts of teachers, administrators, and the broader educational community who have tirelessly worked to ensure the delivery

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of quality education under challenging circumstances. Their commitment has been crucial in nurturing the potential of our youth.

The ANC believes that basic education is the cornerstone of empowerment and progress. The success of the Matric Class of 2023 is not just an individual triumph but a collective victory for our nation. It reaffirms our belief that through perseverance and unity, we can overcome adversity and continue to forge a path towards a more enlightened and prosperous South Africa.

We urge our matriculants to continue striving for excellence in their future endeavours. May they carry forward the legacy of determination and success as they transition into the next

phase of their lives, contributing positively to the nation-building process.

The ANC stands committed to continuing its investment in the basic education sector, ensuring that every South African

has access to quality education that prepares them for the challenges of the future.

Together, we move forward, stronger and more united in our quest for educational excellence.





# MY REFLECTIONS OF JANUARY 8 2024

■ By **SOPHIE T. WILLIAMS DE BRUYN**

**J**ANUARY 2024 could be characterised as a momentous month. We started with the South African government making a successful application to the International Court of Justice calling on Israel to stop its genocide against the people of Palestine in Gaza.

I was in awe of the dignified and majestic performance of the South African delegation and legal team at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). I am at a loss for a phrase I can use to define how well they represented me as a South African and as a member of the ANC. How well they put their case in more eloquent terms than any word can

describe. They and our government presented to the world and the Palestinian cause the real internationalist character of the ANC.

The statement by Professor Max du Plessis SC captures this internationalism of South Africa when he said in his statement, “*Where the international community has failed Palestinians for so long, despite Israel’s wilful defiance of Palestinians’ rights, South Africa turns to this Court seeking to protect the core rights of Palestinians in Gaza to be protected from acts of genocide, attempted genocide, direct and public incitement to genocide, and complicity in and conspiracy to commit*

*genocide...And South Africa advances its case on the basis that Palestinians’ rights are equally as worthy of protection...*”. This is an eloquent presentation of what makes the South Africa of Mandela when he said, “*We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinian*”.

Then I listened to the January 8 address in Mbombela, Mpumalanga, by the President, Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa, with a warm feeling of joy and a happy heart. Somehow, it evoked fond memories of mine and captured a beautiful personal journey of a deep and lasting friendship and solidarity we have made with



many Palestinian friends. This again took my mind back to my personal journey in the ANC and when, in 1995, my late husband, Henry De Bruyn, a.k.a Benny Nato, was appointed by Nelson Mandela as the first Black Ambassador to represent South Africa in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in the city of Amman.

It gave us the opportunity and joy to interact and strengthen the bonds of friendship and solidarity with the Palestinian people, who, because of survival, had taken refuge in their millions for generations. They had been refugees for decades. They left their country as highly trained professionals and intellectuals and had to survive in neighbouring Jordan for generations. Yet they never lost hope.

As the President read these words in the January 8 statement, reflecting on Mpumalanga, this reminded me of Amman, in Jordan, *“in the diverse cultures and traditions of our nation, sunrise represents a moment of hope”*. The Palestinians in Jordan represented a diverse culture and tradition of Jordan. But they have remained committed and hopeful that they will one day return to the land of their forefathers.

We cemented a deep friendship and solidarity with our Palestinian brothers and sisters in Amman. Our icon, Madiba, was revered by the Palestinians, Jordanians, and the world.

I remember our nostalgic conversations and interactions with our Palestinian friends, which demonstrated their determination and insatiable thirst for their freedom and inalienable rights. A Palestinian professor friend invited Benny and me to his residence.



The main question posed after the meal was: *“Safeer, Safeer, tell us, how did you attain your Freedom (Safeer in Arabic means ambassador)”*. Benny, the great orator that he was and, because of his great pleasure, was in his element, telling our story, the unexaggerated, South African struggle and liberation movement with its four pillars, as instrumental in attaining our freedom.

Benny ended his three-hour conversation with a moving and profound saying: *“When we waged our liberation struggle in exile, we, the cadres of our organisation, the ANC, didn’t look left or right; we had blinkers on the side of our eyes so that we only look and focus on the motherland – our beloved South Africa...”*

These interrelated events reminded me of two great South Africans who led the ANC. OR Tambo and Nelson Mandela. This is when OR Tambo speaking at the Geneva conference on Palestine said *“anything that is injurious to any section of humanity is harmful to all humanity and that any order that is not freely and collectively worked out and voluntarily accepted by all cannot be just*

*and lasting.”*

This also brought my memory back to the words of Nelson Mandela: *“We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians”*.

That is why I am so proud to associate with the January 8 speech when it stated, *“today we reiterate our call for an immediate cease-fire 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”*.

With what I witnessed at January 8 in Mpumalanga and at my attendance at the Gala Dinner hosted by the President and our committed Treasurer General, and the events at the ICJ, this has added many more years in my life of happiness as a member of the ANC.

Of course, there will be those who will always seek to roll back the wheel of history or, as the January 8 statement said, *“to stop the march towards a united, non-ra-*

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



cial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous country that truly belongs to all". But the wheel of renewal and confidence is grinding forward.

As I end typing this piece of Reflection on January 8, 2024, allow me to join in the call of the January 8 statement when it called "to register to vote so they can exercise their hard-won right to shape the future of our country". I am now 85 years old and will be 86 on January 24. I marched in 1956 to oppose the carrying of dompass by women. I joined the ANC as a teenager to fight for freedom in our lifetime, and fortunately, in my lifetime, I celebrate 30 years of freedom and my right to vote.

I witnessed my children growing up in exile voting for the first time.

There may be those, of course, our opponents, who say that 30 years is enough for the ANC and they need their turn. No, it is not their turn to serve the people, for they have no capacity nor interest of the poor and the working class to have a better life. But to roll back the wheel of history. At 85 years old this year, and I did so also last year, I can confirm that my registration at the IEC is still

valid. I shall vote for this movement of ours. And work hard and smart, together with our elderly comrades and colleagues, to help rid the ANC the albatross

on its neck, preventing it from achieving a meaningful, decent, lasting life for South Africans.

I will do so with pride and dignity because I was moved and humbled when I saw many people outside the embassy of South Africa in Amman, with Palestinian and South African flags waving high when I saw these people, young and old, hugging and kissing the South African ambassador in Amman, all shouting one word – *Shukraan* South Africa, *Shukraan* South Africa. No other party in South Africa is capable of doing this.

**Shukraan ANC!!**

*Aunt Sophie De Bruyn*

**VOTER REGISTRATION WEEKEND**

**3 - 4 FEBRUARY 2024**

**GET YOUR ID AND REGISTER TO VOTE**

**REGISTER TO VOTE** ANC   

# South Africa's 30-year struggle FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL – and a better world for all

■ By **OSCAR VAN HEERDEN**

**I**T seems rather clever of the ANC to focus our attention on the last 30 years of democratic rule in the run-up to this year's elections rather than the past five years of the Ramaphosa administration. After all, half of the last five years were taken up by COVID-19 and the skilful management thereof.

I'm sure many would agree that considering how the pandemic "hit" certain countries in the world and the massive toll it took on lives, the government should be commended. Like the handling of the vaccinations and the insistence that Africa must be allowed to develop its own vaccinations in future. As well as being a caring government and giving our most vulnerable citizens a special grant in order to cope with the devastating effects of the pandemic, generally, and poverty, inequality and unemployment, specifically.

I'm sure no one can deny that, as the black majority of the population, the lives of all have markedly



improved over the last three decades. Our dignity has been restored through our Bill of Rights and this has been enshrined in our Constitution.

You can now go where you want to, live where you want to, swim where you want to, and we are all equal before the law.

No more sanctions and those with money can again make more money by trading with the rest of the world.

## The successes of SA

When looking at the recent Census 2023, you will find that the level of education and those accessing schools, colleges and universities have all gone up. Feeding schemes have been introduced at primary schools, thus ensuring that our children get at least one meal a day.

Generally, our democracy is very strong, with the arms of the state respecting each other and maintaining their independence.

The national legislature has been diligent with the passing of laws, while our courts have stamped their authority on numerous fronts, including holding Parliament to account at times. The executive branch, through President Cyril Ramaphosa, has steered the country back to an

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

even keel, away from the state capture years under his predecessor.

The prosecution authority has been strengthened, and the investigative unit will also soon be brought back. Ramaphosa also effected much-needed changes with regard to who leads SARS, the National Treasury, the NPA, and the police, with the concomitant positive effects.

The ANC-led government should also be commended for building up a respectable foreign currency reserve, considering that the coffers of the government were empty in 1994, hence the small loan from the IMF of 800 million US dollars.

Trade has increased multiple folds, and this has been very good for our industries, agriculture, banks and more. Over the last 30 years, our government has also flexed its muscle in world affairs.

Because South Africa is a responsible member of the international community, it has played a meaningful role in various peacekeeping and peace-building operations on the continent and further afield. Top of mind, during the Mandela era, SA got involved in the then-Zaire peace talks. Mbeki played a role in Zimbabwe, Sudan and a few others.

Our SANDF has increased its role in various “hotspots” on the continent, whether it be in CAR, Mozambique, Lesotho, DRC and many more. We have also played our part with regard to aid and assistance to our neighbours in times of disaster.

The joining of the BRICS group is another feather in SA's hat, no

SOUTH AFRICANS USHERED IN DEMOCRACY IN 1994 TO END APARTHEID AND PATRIARCHY.



The ANC-led government started building a united, **democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous** South Africa.



Guided by the **Constitution, apartheid's legacy began to be dismantled.**

doubt.

As for the latest conflicts, SA is stepping up to the plate here too. A peace mission to Ukraine and Russia to see if they can assist in any way to halt hostilities, The Department of International Relations and Cooperation remain involved in the ongoing conflict in Sudan, as well as talks with the Ethiopians. And the latest application to the International Court of Justice against Israel for atrocities being committed in Gaza against the Palestinian people. It seems SA remains on the right side of history.

The SA government has successfully negotiated yet another cycle of the AGOA trade agreement and has skillfully managed those elements in the USA that wanted to see SA exit the agreement.

### Let's be half-full

The world is changing, and we must adapt to it; relations with countries that have not traditionally been our partners must not be scoffed at. Brazil, China, India and, indeed, Russia, plus some Middle Eastern countries, must surely be welcomed. More clients for our markets and more access to theirs.

When looking across the socio-economic landscape, there has been a growing black middle class over the last three decades, more black millionaires, more than 80% electrification, access to piped water and free primary healthcare. Old age pensions have been standardised across race groups and more than 18 million citizens receive some form of a grant in order to restore their dignity.

Five general elections, with a sixth one around the corner, where successive presidents have been replaced without any hindrance.

Challenges will always remain, but looking at the last 30 years, we can confidently say, as SA, we have turned a corner from the heyday of apartheid.

The triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment will haunt us for a long period still - and anyone who says 30 years is enough to reverse the effects of colonialism and apartheid is obviously smoking something strong. By now, I'm sure you've noticed that, when it comes to the glass being half-empty or half-full, I'm more of a half-full kind of guy. Together we can achieve anything, Mzansi.

# Ramaphosa's Boast can be a Long Shot, or a Short-cut to the Future

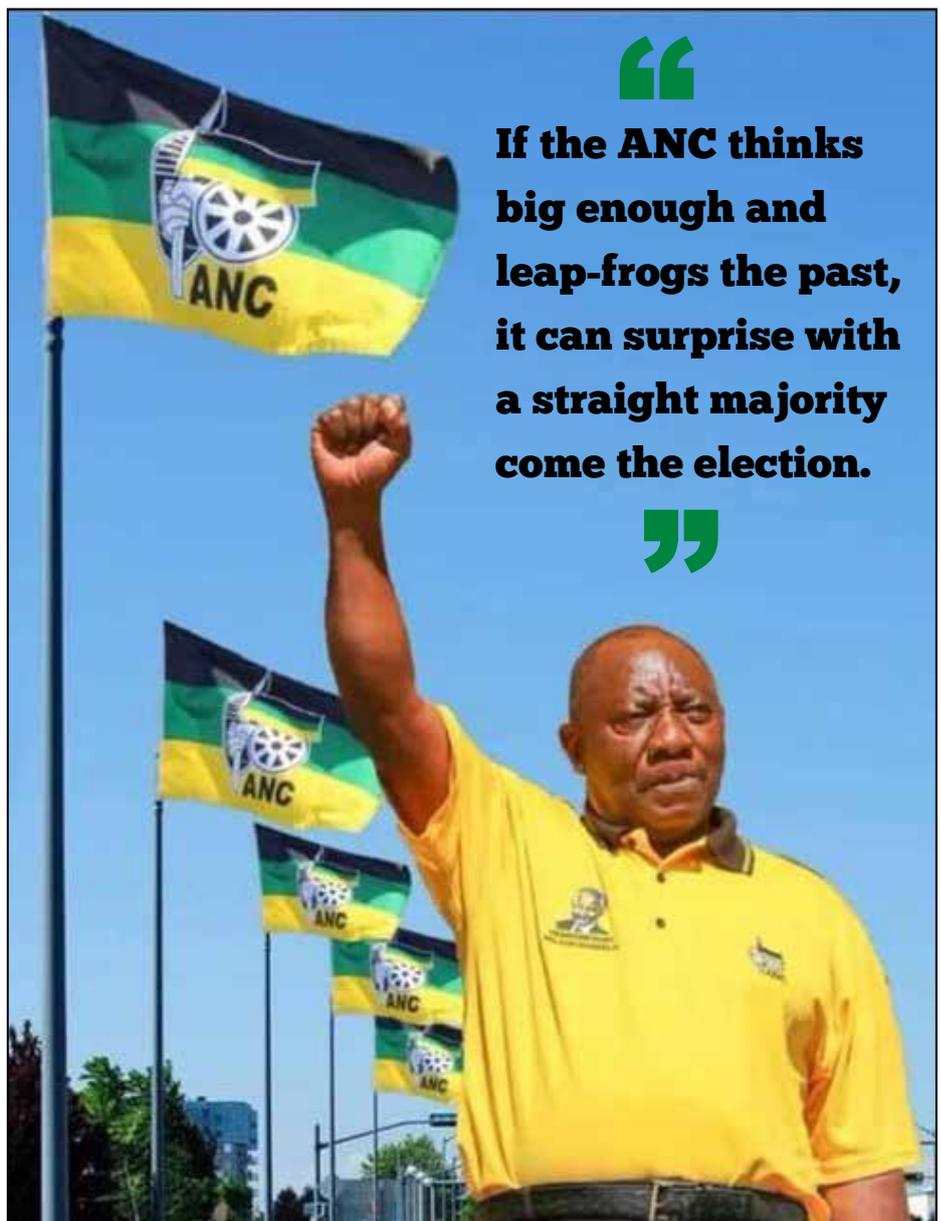
■ By **YACOOB ABBA OMAR**

**T**HE assertion by ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa that his party will achieve a clear majority after the 2024 election has already elicited a huge response.

Speaking at the ANC's 112th anniversary celebration, Ramaphosa called upon the electorate to judge the ANC on the basis of its 30 years at the helm of democratic SA.

This could turn out to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand it can be used to demonstrate how profoundly different South Africa is now compared to the apartheid state. This perspective, called by French philosophers the *longue durée*, is contrasted with the *histoire événementielle* or "event history", which is more short-term.

The former approach highlights the slow pace at which permanent change is achieved, arguing that conclusions should only be drawn from historical trends and patterns. It allows us to judge the ANC taking into account the many challenges it and the country have had to face from the pe-



“

**If the ANC thinks big enough and leap-frogs the past, it can surprise with a straight majority come the election.**

”

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

riod of apartheid through crises such as the 2007/2008 global financial shock and the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, the *longue durée* argument has been turned on its head by some – ANC internal critics and outside detractors alike – who claim that independence movements have usually lost the plot after three decades in power. These include the Indian National Congress, which has come to be replaced by the Hindu chauvinist BJP.

However, history abounds with examples from the democratic world where leaders and parties have been around for decades, such as Lee Kwan Yew's 31 years as prime minister of Singapore at the head of his party, with another 17 years as the city state's most important influencer. One should include in the mix the four terms of the US Democratic Party's Franklin D Roosevelt, as well as Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander, who served in that post for a 23 uninterrupted years, albeit with a variety of different political computations.

Politicos could do well to read a nonpolitical book published in 1994, **Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies**, which is based on the histories and performance of a range of US corporates.

Authors Jim Collins and Jerry I Porras defined a visionary company as one that is a premier institution in its industry, is widely admired by knowledgeable peers, has made an imprint on the world, had multiple generations of leaders, and had come through multiple life cycles.

Among the observations the au-



thors made about such successful companies were the presence of a core purpose and ideology, taking on “*big, hairy, audacious goals*” (BHAGs) to think big and aim high; a cult-like adherence to the company's culture; and having what they termed home-grown management – internal leadership cultivated from within its ranks.

Building a nonracial democracy has been at the core of the ANC's beliefs. Reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality remain its topmost priorities. Having multigenerational leaders in its top echelons is proving a strength as more young people feel they are being heard by the “dinosaurs” at the top.

There are therefore many reasons for Ramaphosa's confidence about a decisive ANC victory, the primary one being the sense that the ANC, like the visionary companies of Collins and Perras, is implementing the renewal vision and roadmap it

adopted at its 2022 national conference.

The formulations of Built to Last have not been without criticism, in particular that 10 years after its publication almost half of the visionary companies on the list had slipped dramatically in performance and reputation.

What is needed in the ANC is a new set of BHAGs. Getting the country onto a higher economic growth path should be part of its mantra; enabling the smooth transition of leadership and management of the young cohort who have been elected to its national and provincial committees and actively committing itself to uplifting the lives of all South Africans.

These elements could well be the cornerstone of its new life cycle as it contemplates another few terms in office.

**Abba Omar** is director of operations at the Mapungubwe Institute.

# Taking a glimpse of a revolution that had become an enlightenment of the modern age of human civilisation

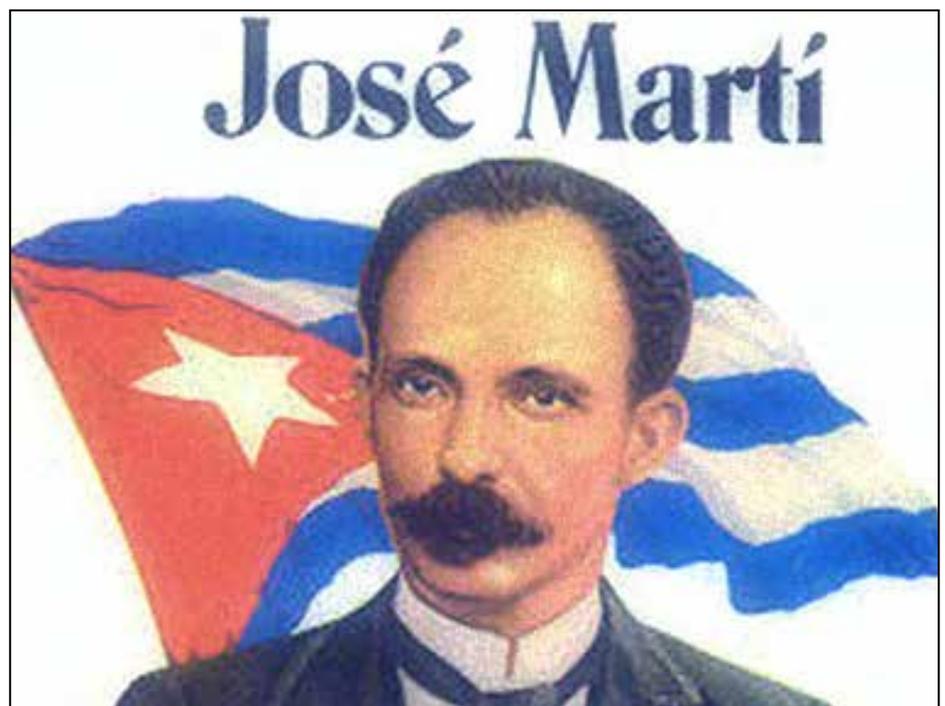
■ By **PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

**M**ANY scholars and historians from different intellectual and ideological backgrounds have written many books and articles about what most revolutionaries regard as the macrocosm of human solidarity and internationalism. The scholarly sphere has acclaimed the Cuban revolution as the enlightenment of the modern age of human civilisation.

On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the triumph of the revolution, we dedicate the milestone achievement to its most celebrated guardian of the fatherland, Apostle José Martí. We pay tribute to a revolutionary whose genius has contributed immensely to the treasure trove of human progress.

We remember the remarkable towering giant of our struggles for liberation. An internationalist whose biography has become a gallery of the greatest memories our struggles.

His profundity has distinguished him as the most illustrious revolutionary of our epoch. A revolutionary endowed with great ideas



which have nourished the minds and the hearts of generations of humankind.

At the tender age of nine years, Apostle José Martí accompanied his father to work at a sugar plantation in the province of Matanzas. There he was exposed to the realities of the bloodiest horrors of the system of slavery. Thirty years thereafter, he composed a poem, elucidating his experiences and lessons at the sugar plan-

tation. The poem reads:

*“Lighting ploughs a bloody furrow through the gloomy storm clouds and the boat spills out through the gate, by their hundreds the blacks.*

*The fiery winds were breaking up the bushy plantations’ trees, and the line of the naked slaves was moving, moving.*

*The thunderstorm was beating against the crowded slave bar-*

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*racks, a mother with her child passed by howling.*

*Scarlet as in the desert, the sun rose in the horizon, it shone upon a dead slave, hanging from a mountain Ceiba.*

*A child saw him and shook with passion for those who suffer. And beneath the dead man he swore to expiate with his life the crime...*

In 1868 José Martí formed the *Partido Revolucionario Cubano* which became the vanguard of the struggle for independence.

He proclaimed that *“the party will not work directly for the present or future dominance of any class of the people, but the basic organisation, in accordance with democratic methods, of all active forces in the fatherland”*.

After visiting the statue of Simon Bolívar in 1881 in Caracas Venezuela, in recognition of Bolívar as his father, he wrote the following poem:

*“They tell how a traveller arrived one day in Caracas at dusk, without shaking off dust of the road, he could not ask where he could eat or sleep, but how he could find the statue of Simon Bolívar.*

*And they tell how the traveller, amidst the tall and sweet-smelling trees to the square, wept before the statue that for him seemed to come to life, moving just as the father when the son comes near.*

*The traveller did well, because all the people of the Americas must love Bolívar as the father.”*

This is how he respected Simon Bolívar, whom he regarded as the father of the Americas, of whose sword we were all born. A mentor

that he regarded as greater than Caesar, because he was Caesar of liberty.

During the year 1895, Apostle José Martí and General Maximo Gomez signed the Manifesto of Montecristi in the Dominican Republic, which outlined the political reasons that spurred Cuba to launch the war against the Spanish colonial power. In the manifesto, the two internationalists clarified that the war of independence was not against the nation of Spain, but the colonial regime that held the Cuban colony under its economic and military control.

*The manifesto reads this:*

*“Today, as we proclaim from the threshold of the earth, in veneration of the spirit and doctrines that produce and animate the wholehearted and humanitarian war for which the people of Cuba unite once more, invincible and indivisible, it is fitting that we evoke, as guides and helpers to our people, the magnanimous founders whose labour the grateful country takes up once again, and the honour that must prevent Cubans from wounding by word or deed those who gave their lives for them. And thus, making this declaration in the name of the patria and deposing before her and her free faculty of constitution the identical labour of two generations, the Delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, created to organise and support the current war, and the Commander in Chief elected by all the active members of the Liberating army, in their shared responsibility to those they represent and in demonstration of the unity and solidity of the Cuban revolution, sign this declaration together...”*

Apostle José Martí met his untimely death during the skir-

mishes of the ten years war with Spain.

Here are the painstaking words of the renowned Nicaraguan poet and writer, Ruben Dario, upon receiving the news of his death:

*“Oh: Cuba, you are certainly very beautiful, and those of your children that fight for your freedom, perform a glorious task, but the blood of Martí was not yours only, it belongs to the entire race, to the entire continent, it belongs to the powerful young that loses on him the first of its teachers, he belongs to the future...”*

The revolutionary vanguard of the 26th of July Movement, Moncada revolt, Grandma expedition, Sierra Maestra and the battle of Playa Giron under the leadership of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro, regarded him as the mentor and the father of the revolution. And that each and every one of the militants of the revolution carried the imprint of Martí.

Today as we join the millions of the people of the world in celebration of the 65th anniversary of the revolution, we remember the colossus of our struggle for liberation. We remember his humility, tenacity and dedication to our struggle for the emancipation of humanity.

Apostle José Martí has gone from our sight, but never from our hearts. We shall forever cherish the memories of his indelible life. His loving memories continue to illuminate the pathways of human civilisation into the future.

**Phatse Justice Piitso**, a member of the ANC and the SACP, is a former South African Ambassador to Cuba. He writes in his personal capacity.



# South Africa at the ICJ: PUNCHING ABOVE ITS WEIGHT FOR MANKIND

■ By **YONELA DIKO**

South Africa at the ICJ: Punching Over the years South Africa has shown great moral courage to fight against all injustices in defence of the poorer countries of the world. We have fought for poor indebted countries to be relieved of their heavy and mostly unjustified debts; we fought for the relaxation of patents for Aids drugs, and we have fought

for fairness of trade in favor of the countries of the South in all World Trade Organisations trade rounds among many brave global endeavours.

We have come to establish ourselves as 'bridge-builders' between the powerful north and the emerging Global South. When the world wanted to embark

on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we were instrumental in that cause. We championed the banning of landmines, the elimination of conflict diamonds through the Kimberly process, and we encouraged many countries to be party to the Roman Statutes of 1998.

Nelson Mandela always remind-

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ed us that 'human rights will be the light that guides our foreign policy' (Alden and Le Pere, 2004: 284). Even as we sat in international organisations such as G20, IBSA and BRICS, G77, UNSC, Human Rights have always been the lenses through which we see all our global Interactions and no economic gain would ever come at the expense of this firm and guiding light.

We have always punched above our weight on the global stage for Justice of all peoples of the world.

### **South Africa taking on might powers for human rights**

The past week have brought South Africa back into its rightful place as 'middle-power', sending a delegation of its top legal minds to the highest court in the world

to bring the State of Israel in front of the global court of justice for its atrocities against the oppressed people of Palestine

In a world where countries' sense of morality is tied to their economic interests, South Africa stands as a beacon of hope for all the vulnerable people of the world.

In a world where countries' governments and media have a symbiotic relationship that pushes governments' biases and moral bankruptcy down the citizens throats, South African Government stands as a custodian of all that is right and just in the world.

In a world where countries are afraid to speak their truths in order to preserve their economic relationships with those who violate human rights and those who aid them, South Africa stands as

a bulwark for moral courage and moral cover for all citizens of the world.

South Africa knows that Israel has powerful friends, the United States Government and the United Kingdom, and these are also our friends, but no friendship should ever allow or expect one to turn a blind eye on Injustice.

Former Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu in 2018 said: [ . . . ] *"We want South Africa to be once again a moral compass and a voice of reason in a world increasingly overcome with selfish, narrow interests."* (Sisulu, 2018);

That is what we stand for. We stand for Human Rights, over and against hostile global environments that seek to define Human Rights only through the

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

eyes of our friends and those we consider our enemies be damned.

### The case against Israel

South Africa is accusing the Israeli government of committing genocide in its assault of Palestinians in Gaza.

The Genocide Convention defines Genocide as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.” When both the acts and intent have been established, then such a State or group is guilty of genocide.

While the ANC rightfully condemned Hamas for their October 7th attack on Israelis, South Africa stated in its submission that “[n]o armed attack on a State’s territory no matter how serious – even an attack involving atrocity crimes – can, however, provide any possible justification for” violations of the Genocide Convention.

South Africa’s A-Team of Lawyers, delivered on all the areas of law to satisfy articles of the convention. Genocidal intent was established along with acts of genocide, urgency and potential irreparable harm and it is hoped the court will act with a great sense of urgency in favour of the people of Palestine.

### Israelis should be defending Palestinians

Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Ronald Lamola, in his opening remarks at the ICJ rightfully invoked Nelson Mandela in his timeless words that “In extending our hands across the miles to the people of Palestine,



we do so in the full knowledge that we are part of a humanity that is at one.”

South Africa was clear in its presentation in front of the International court of Justice that the country stands against Injustice, whether it’s committed against Palestinians or Israelis.

Ironically, the UN convention on genocide was formed in direct response to the killing of approximately 6 million Jews by the Nazi

regime and the global community wanted to prevent a recurrence of such atrocities.

Today, it is the Israeli government that is killing and destroying a substantial part of Palestinian national and ethnical groups in Gaza.

### Conclusion

The Israeli government has failed in its defence against the watertight South Africa case. The courts cannot turn its back on the truth.

It is much of the world’s hope that the court will find in favour of Justice and declare a ceasefire and save the lives of Palestinians

**Yonela Diko** is an ANC member of the Gaby Shapiro Branch in Rondebosch Cape Town.



## POETRY

# LAMENT FOR THE DEAD

■ By **BEN DIKOBE MARTINS**

in remembering  
 the time  
 of the butcherbird  
 that shadows  
 the days  
 of our lives  
 we mourn silently  
 lamenting the dead  
 when midnights  
 cannot console  
 or still our  
 troubled hearts  
 from turmoil.  
 under  
 no sculptor's chisel  
 or mould  
 have their heroic deeds  
 found expression  
 in marble  
 or bronze  
 no cenotaph  
 no monument  
 street  
 school  
 ship  
 grand civic centre  
 freedom square  
 or heroes acre  
 bear testimony  
 to their valour.

there is no tomb  
 dedicated to  
 the patriots  
 whose mortal remains  
 were buried at sea  
 or scattered  
 in disused mines  
 and crocodile  
 infested rivers.  
 there are no

annual parades  
 in their honour  
 they remain without laurels  
 for bravely shouldering  
 our hopes, aspirations  
 and fighting  
 for our glory.  
 only the rusting  
 iron corpses  
 of pretoria's  
 armoured vehicles  
 abandoned in hasty retreat  
 on the fierce battlefields  
 of front line states  
 attest to their  
 unbounded bravery  
 courage, resolve  
 and strength  
 of character

## POETRY

under fire.  
 many were  
 tortured to death  
 at vlakplaas  
 after which  
 their bodies  
 were strapped  
 to bombs  
 which blew  
 arms, legs  
 and chunks of flesh  
 about  
 when god  
 seemed distracted  
 not to see  
 or care.  
 others  
 in neighbouring  
 states  
 in  
 horror upon horror

lost  
 hands, eyes, limbs  
 and life  
 to apartheid  
 letter bombs.  
 yet many more  
 were killed wantonly  
 by men at their vilest  
 who dipped  
 their bread  
 in our blood.  
 no church bells  
 tolled  
 for the dead

at dawn  
 who found  
 an end to  
 their hopes  
 when they swung  
 at the end of  
 the pretoria gallows  
 hangman's rope.  
 some  
 fell  
 where we  
 left them behind  
 in the heat  
 of battle  
 where  
 their broken bodies  
 sprouted burning  
 roses and petals  
 of blood.  
 o!  
 if only  
 the venerable dead  
 could hear  
 their gallant  
 deeds retold  
 if only  
 their

eternal sleep  
 could be awakened  
 by the feather touch  
 of tribute.  
 yesterday  
 is a long time ago  
 in politics  
 memories

**POETRY**

diminish fast  
Like a full moon  
today  
is an ever sharp  
knife's blade  
gleaming with  
desire.  
if only  
the glorious dead  
who opened  
a doorway  
to a different  
version of our lives  
could speak  
from the destination  
from which  
no traveller returns  
they would remind us  
that the past is carrion  
picked at by vultures  
and carrion crows  
who call themselves  
historians and biographers.  
they would remind us  
to unlearn the many lies  
we have been taught  
to make us enemies  
of our own selves.  
if only the noble dead could  
speak  
they would  
caution us  
not to climb  
dry trees  
  
and tell us  
that it is not wise

to expect  
those who poisoned  
the well  
of our history  
to sing our praise.  
if only the valiant dead could  
speak  
they would remind us  
that there is  
a soft boundary  
between memory  
and forgetting  
and warn us  
against the decay of truth  
and remind us  
that when the truth  
is buried  
it grows.  
if only the wisdom of dead  
could be heeded  
we would remember  
that there are lessons learnt  
at the cost of blood  
and that  
we may forget  
our history  
if it is untold  
by us.  
if only the glorious dead  
could speak  
they would implore  
our mothers  
to show us  
where our  
umbilical cords  
are buried.  
if only the venerable dead

## POETRY

could speak  
 they would caution  
 that governing a country  
 is as delicate as frying  
 a small fish

and remind us  
 that a good harvest  
 demands tilling  
 and planting  
 good seed  
 watering, weeding  
 and attending to  
 the vagaries  
 of the four seasons  
 and  
 so too it is  
 with the recruitment  
 of members.  
 if only the gallant dead could  
 speak  
 they would remind us  
 how steel  
 is tempered  
 and chastitise us  
 for not uprooting  
 the hardy weeds  
 of corruption.  
 if only the valiant dead could  
 speak  
 they would warn  
 of the ever yawning  
 distance between us  
 and the majority  
 of citizens  
 and caution us  
 against believing

our own platitudes  
 and formalities  
 of bureaucracy.  
 if only the glorious dead  
 could speak  
 they would demand of us  
 to rally in unity  
 like the red seeds  
 of pomegranates  
 and demand of us  
 unity in thought

will and action.  
 if only the brave and fearless  
 dead could speak  
 they would implore us  
 to lead  
 with diligence  
 and to be worthy  
 of our people's hopes  
 and demand of us  
 to ensure a better life  
 for all.

if only the venerable dead  
 could speak  
 they would caution us  
 to choose leaders with wisdom  
 and forethought  
 for to be led by a coward  
 is to be controlled by  
 all that the coward fears.  
 if only the dead could speak  
 they would warn us that  
 a nation that separates  
 its intellectuals from  
 its freedom fighters  
 will have its thinking

## POETRY

done by cowards  
 and its fighting  
 done by fools.  
 if only the glorious dead  
 could speak  
 they would caution  
 that to be led by a thief  
 is to offer up  
 your most precious treasures  
 to be stolen.  
 if only the venerable dead  
 could speak  
 they would tell us  
 that it is possible for  
 a nation to achieve freedom

without the poorest  
 of the poor  
 breaking the chains  
 and shackles  
 of grinding poverty.  
 if only the valiant dead could  
 speak  
 they would remind us  
 to raise our voices  
 for those that have  
 no voice  
 and caution us  
 to beware  
 of the naked man  
 who sells clothes.  
 if only the glorious dead  
 could speak  
 they would warn us  
 that to be led by a liar  
 is to ask to be told lies.

if only the venerable dead  
 could speak  
 they would remind us  
 that there is a great deal of  
 room  
 where there integrity  
 and warn us  
 against being damned  
 by those singing our praise  
 and caution us  
 never to succumb  
 to the glamorous  
 allure of the  
 seductive dance  
 of thieves.  
 if only the virtuous dead could  
 speak  
 they would remind us  
 that those who govern  
 should serve the people  
 and not steal  
 their bread.  
 if only the glorious dead  
 could speak  
 they would point out  
 the prickly pear  
 vices  
 of incumbency.  
 if only the brave dead could  
 speak  
 they would caution against  
 allowing the husks of chaff  
 raw, hard and coarse  
 to outweigh the wheat  
 and

## POETRY

remind us  
 that  
 succulent grapes hang  
 in bitter vines  
 and that sweet dates  
 grow from branches  
 of thorns.  
 if only the gallant dead could  
 speak  
 they would caution  
 of  
 scaling-ladder climbs  
 and falls  
 through rotten rungs.  
 if only the noble dead could  
 speak  
 they would remind us  
 that flowers blossom  
 bloom  
 fade, wither and die  
 in the heart of spring  
 and warn  
 that change  
 comes  
 with the sharp pain  
 of a scabbed-over  
 wound  
 ripped open  
 to bleed afresh.  
 if only the glorious dead  
 could speak  
 they would warn  
 that although a nation  
 can survive its traitors

and fools

it is nevertheless  
 no easy task  
 to hold a hyena  
 aloft by the ears  
 when  
 justice is in one scale  
 and self-preservation  
 is in the other.  
 if only the gallant dead could  
 speak  
 they would warn  
 that during winters  
 of discontent  
 the desire  
 to rise  
 swells  
 in every  
 heart  
 the masses  
 raging  
 having tasted  
 so many disappointments  
 invoke the wrath  
 of god  
 for the  
 expropriation  
 of the expropriators  
 to feed  
 the hungry flame  
 of justice  
 with the flotsam  
 of history  
 if only the venerable dead  
 could speak...

*Comrade Ben Dikobe*

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

19 – 26 January 2024

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

### 19 January 1940 Black Sash President Mary Burton Born



Mary Burton was born on 19 January 1940 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She moved to South Africa in 1961, and witnessing the injustices of Apartheid, became a member of the Black Sash in 1965, and its President from 1986 to 1990. She served as one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners. After the TRC completed its work, Burton started a Register of Reconciliation for people who could not be heard by the TRC to share their experiences and continue to campaign for reconciliation. She also served on the Council of the University of Cape Town.

### 19 January 1999 Devastating storm hits Mount Ayliff

On this day, at least 22 people were killed and 4000 left homeless, when several tornadoes causing severe storms hit Mount Ayliff and the Kokstad area in the Eastern Cape. 10 children

were among those who died and 95% of homes were destroyed. It was the most destructive tornado, classified F4, recorded in South African history. The Mount Ayliff extreme weather event was one of several tornadoes recorded during the summer of 1998/1999, with heavy tornadoes also recorded in November 1998 in Harismith, KZN and in December 1998 in Umtata, Eastern Cape. These events had been studied by De Coning and Adam for the Weather Forecasting Research Programme, South African Weather Bureau.

### 20 January 1939 Record-high temperature recorded in Goodhouse, Northern Cape

On this day in history, the second highest temperature ever recorded in the shade was noted at Goodhouse, located on the Orange river in the Nama Khoi municipality in the Northern Cape. The temperature reached 47 degrees Celsius, the second highest temperature of this nature recorded up to the year 2000. The other record temperature was recorded on 3 November 1918 in Dumbrody, Eastern Cape, with a recorded high of 50 degrees Celsius.

### 21 January 1962 Verwoerd announces 'self-rule' for Transkei

Dr Verwoerd announced his plan for the creation of the first Bantustan, Transkei, which would

have its own parliament, cabinet, separate citizenship and separate control over agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, foreign affairs and so forth. The Bantustan policy laid the basis for the disenfranchisement, forced removals and dispossession of millions of South Africans.

### 21 January 1987 Kwamakhutha massacre



On 21 January 1987 several men armed with AK47 assault rifles killed 13 people, including 7 children, in a house in Kwamakhutha, KwaZulu Natal. The attack was aimed at Victor Ntuli, the 21-year-old founder, treasurer and area organiser of the Kwamakhutha Youth League (KYL), a UDF affiliate. Between 1976 to 1996, political violence in KwaZulu-Natal led to over 11 700 deaths and the displacement of up to half a million people.

### 22 January 1837 Piet Retief completes Groot Trek Manifesto

Piet Retief, Afrikaner leader completed the manifesto that set

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

out the reasons why the Voortrekkers were leaving the Cape Colony, published in English in the Graham's Town Journal on 2 February 1937. The Great Trek expanded colonialization into the South African hinterland, with wars of dispossession fought against various kingdoms and settlements of the time, eventually leading to the establishment of the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and Oranje Vrystaat, which merged into the Union of South Africa in 1910. The Great Trek forms an important part of Afrikaner identity and folklore.

### 22 January 1874

#### Josephine Wood, Library of the Blind founder born

Josephine Ethel (Josie) Wood was born in Grahamstown, and trained as a teacher. After teaching for a number of years, she started work with the blind in 1919, and initially established a small library for the community in her home, selling her art works to raise funds for the venture. The library grew and officially opened in 1946 as the South African Library for the Blind in Grahamstown. Woods was also co-founder of the National Council for the Blind in 1929, which today is also affiliated to the African Union of the Blind (AFUB) and the World Blind Union.

### 22 January 1984

#### UDF launches million signature campaign

On 22 January 1984, amidst the Apartheid government's constitutional reform plans, the United Democratic Front (UDF) embarked on an ambitious campaign to collect one million signatures from the public, declaring opposition against the Apartheid government and its constitutional



reforms, and as a show of support for the UDF.

### 22 January 2001

#### South African History Online goes Live

The South African History Online non-profit organisation's website began operations on 22 January 2001. CEO Omar Badsha founded the organisation as a Section 21 non-profit and launched its website two years later. Since then SAHO has popularised history in South Africa, becoming the largest independent history education and research institute in the country.

### 22 January 1936

#### Painter Jan Volschenk passed on

Jan Volschenk (b 1853), a prominent South African painter, died at the age of 83, in Riversdale in the Cape Province, where he was born. Volschenk was a self-taught landscape painter, whose works were mostly done in oil, and very occasionally in water colour. He also produced some wood engravings.

### 22 January 1976

#### Broederbond Treurnicht to head Bantu Administration and Education

A government reshuffle, including the appointment of 3 new ministers and 2 deputy ministers was announced on the eve of the opening of the 1976 Parliamentary session. The most significant change was the appointment of Dr. Andries Treurnicht, the conservative former chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, as Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Bantu Education.

### 22 January 1983

#### Relaunch of the Transvaal Indian Congress as Molvi Saloojee passed on

The TIC was re-launched in Johannesburg after the repression of the 1960s and bannings, imprisonment and exile of many of its leaders following the repression of the 1960s. The TIC also expressed support for the formation of the United Democratic Front and opposition to the racist Tricameral Parliament. On this day, cde Molvi Saloojee, the last president of the TIC and resident of Fietas died.

### 23 January 1961

#### UNSG Hammerskjold submits report after visit to South Africa

After a fact-finding mission to South Africa in early January 1961 after the Sharpeville massacre and the Herero Massacre in then protectorate South West Africa, UN Secretary General Dag Hammerskjold reported to the UN on the Implementation of the UN Security Council resolution of 1 April 1960. His report indicated that after the mission and discussions with the Prime Minister of

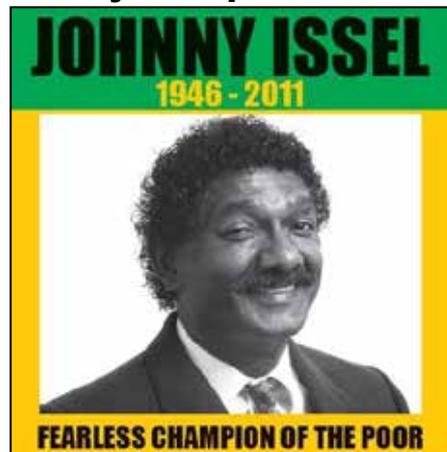
## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

South Africa, “so far no mutually acceptable arrangement” for racial policies have been found in South Africa. A more detailed research paper on this visit and its aftermath by Saunders can be read on the ACCORD website: <https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/hammarskjolds-visit-to-south-africa/>

### 23 January 2011

#### UDF and ANC activist

#### Johnny Issel passed on



John James Issel was born on 14 August 1946 in the wine growing area in Worcester and worked in a farm at a young age, cleaning grapes for the export market. During his matric, he became actively involved in the East Rand anti-apartheid Labour party, contesting for the Coloured Representative Council. Issel was a founder of United Democratic Front and a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe. He worked closely with trade union movements and student organizations, and made an immense contribution and sacrificed in the liberation struggle of South Africa to fight against apartheid. Issel passed away on 23 January 2011 from renal failure.

### 23 January 2018

#### Hugh Masekela, father of SA jazz passed on

On 23 January 2018, Hugh Mase-



kela passed away peacefully at his home in Johannesburg, surrounded by his family, after a battle with prostate cancer. Masekela was born in KwaGuqa Township in Emalahleni, Mpumalanga Province. He started to sing and play the piano at a young age. At the age of 14 after seeing a film of a ‘young man with a horn’, he began to play the trumpet. His first trumpet was from Archbishop Trevor Huddleston at St Peter’s Secondary School, joining Alfred Herbert’s African Jazz Revue. He later received a trumpet as a gift from the great Louis Armstrong. Masekela as a teenager played with jazz artists such as Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim), Jonas Gwangwa, Kippie Moeketsi and Makhaya Ntshoko; and in later life recording with icons like Miriam Makeba, Dorothy Masuka, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Hedzoleh Soundz, Francis Fuster and Dudu Pukwana. Masekela went into exile after the Sharpsville Massacre, first in the UK and then to study in the USA at the Manhattan School of Music studying classical trumpet between 1960 and 1964. Masekela went on to an illustrious career that spanned over six decades, during which he recorded over 50 albums, composed and performed in musicals and on stage

and spoke out against apartheid and other social ills. Masekela and Abdullah Ibrahim performed together in 2016 at Emperors Palace in Johannesburg, for the first time in 60 years, reuniting the Jazz Epistles in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of 16 June 1976.

### 24 January 1901

#### Emily Hobhouse report on Anglo Boer War concentration camps



Emily Hobhouse, an English philanthropist and social worker who visited the Transvaal and Orange Free State Boer Republics during the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902), reported to the British government that she found 2 000 women and children in shocking circumstances in the British concentration camp in Bloemfontein. It was estimated that more than 27 000 people in White camps and more than 18 000 inhabitants of Black camps died in captivity during the war. The British government was unsympathetic to the plight of the prisoners and the dire circumstances continued.

### 24 January 1960

#### Cato Manor Protests

Protests in Cato Manor, Durban resulted in the death of nine police men. The New York Times

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



reported that the Commissioner of Police testified that the police were met with increasing hostility from communities, as they implemented the ever-expanding Apartheid laws and repression of political activities.

### 25 January 1930 Automobile Association formed

The Automobile Association of South Africa (AA) was formed at a meeting in Port Elizabeth attended by several provincial and other motoring clubs, in order to provide a strong national motoring organisation to protect and promote the interests of motorists in South Africa.

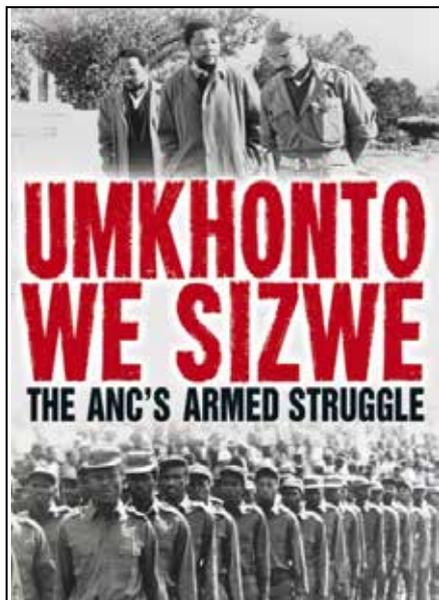
### 25 January 1977 Priests report against 1976 police brutality



A group of clergymen of seven Christian churches – including the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist churches – calling themselves *'Ministers Fraternal'* published a report blaming the riot police for their role in the violence in the Cape Town town-

ships at Christmas 1976. Their report was banned. The Minister of Justice and Police, J. Kruger claimed the internal unrest and riots were not the result of the government's apartheid policies but were instigated by Communists and the ANC.

### 25 January 1980 Silverton siege in Pretoria



On 25 January 1980 three MK Cadres – Stephen Mafoko, Humphrey Makhubo and Wilfred Madela – were allegedly on their way to carry out a planned MK sabotage mission on petrol depots at Watloo near Mamelodi. En route, 'the Trio' realised they were being tailed by the police. In an attempt to escape, they took refuge in a branch of Volkskas Bank in Silverton, Pretoria. They held 25 civilians in the bank hostage, making a number of demands, including a meeting with State President Vorster, the release of Nelson Mandela and James Mange, as well as R100 000 in cash and an aircraft to fly them to Maputo. After negotiations, which included the police handing food over to the cadres and hostages, a police unit stormed the bank and all three cadres were killed

by the police. Two civilians, Valerie Anderson and Anna de Klerk, were killed and many others were wounded in the shootout.

### 25 January 1981 Laingsburg Floods

On 25 January 1981, Laingsburg, Western Cape was devastated by a severe flood. The hard rains immersed the whole town in water, with only roofs left visible. 425mm of rain fell on 24 and 25 January 1981 causing the Buffalo River that flows North-south through the town to burst its banks. The average rainfall was 175mm. The force of the water was so immense that victims' bodies were found as far away as Mossel Bay, 250 kilometres away.

### 26 January 1887 Ethiopians defeat Italians at the Battle of Dogali

The battle of Dogali was a skirmish that was part of a larger conflict between the Italians and the Ethiopians. At this time Ethiopians had the most well equipped standing army on the African continent. This battle ended in a stunning victory for the Ethiopian forces, as they totally routed the invading Italians on 26 January 1887.

### 26 January 1896 Oldest teachers training college opens in Wellington

The oldest teacher training college in South Africa opened on 26 January 1896, in Wellington, Western Cape. Andrew Murray, a Dutch Reformed Church Minister, was instrumental in developing early tertiary education in South Africa especially for white women, making Wellington famous as an education

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

centre in the country. The foundation stone for the building, Murray Hall, was laid on 19 November 1874. This building also served as a hostel for girls and women, the Huguenot University College and the Teachers Training College and is now part of the Boland College of Education.

### 26 January 1983

#### Dieter and Ruth Gerhard detained as spies

The South African government announced at a press conference that senior South African naval officer, Commodore Dieter Gerhard and his wife, Ruth, had been detained for questioning in connection with alleged espionage. Gerhard was commanding officer at the strategically important Simonstown naval base. They were jailed in December 1983 after being convicted of spying for the Soviet Union.

### 26 January 2001

#### First edition of ANC Today published

The first edition of the ANC's online weekly newspaper was published on this day in 2001. This edition, had the Letter from the President Thabo Mbeki, the originator of the idea, as well as three other articles on the Arms deal.



# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

19 – 26 January 2024

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

### 14 January

#### World Logic Day

Logic, the investigation on the principles of reasoning, studied by civilizations throughout history played and continues 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.

### 15 January

#### Wikipedia Day

The massively popular, free, multilingual, online encyclopedia, Wikipedia has changed the way people do research and get information. Wikipedia Day celebrates the anniversary of the creation of this user-generated online source. Three films to date explore the phenomena of Wikipedia, namely *The Truth According to Wikipedia (2008)*, *Wikipedia and the Democratization of Knowledge (2021)* and *Truth in Numbers (2010)*.

### 15 January

#### Pothole Day

Potholes are a constant annoyance to motorists everywhere, but they've existed since the very earliest roads around, and it's from those times they take their names. Modern potholes are caused by wear and tear on the road caused by rain and sun and repeated travel by heavy vehicles across the road. Hot-patch is often used to fix it, but the next major rainstorm will see this temporary patch pushed right back out again as the road swells and contracts from the changing heat of the road.



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Potholes got the name from roads built during the Roman Empire. Roads were built on a bed of clay, topped with gravel, and topped by hard-baked bricks. Potters would break open the road's surface to get at the good potting clay underneath. This was a great source of clay for the potters and a miserable source of trouble for the chariots and wagons that traveled those roads. Pothole day reminds us of their long history, and our responsibility to help get them taken care of. (<https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/pothole-day/>)

### 20 January

#### Penguin Awareness Day

Penguins are a group of aquatic flightless birds from the order of Sphenisciformes of the family Spheniscidae. They are fun and interesting animals that are unique in many different ways. There are currently over 18 different known species and some have been around the planet for well over 65 million years. They're a beloved animal thanks to many popular depictions in movies and children's stories, but they're also fascinating birds. However, penguin numbers around the world are dwindling at an alarming rate. They are a barometer of the effects of human activity on the North and South Poles, according to scientists from institutions around the world.

### 24 January

#### International day for African and Afro-Descendant Culture

This UNESCO global day celebrates the many vibrant cultures of the African continent and African Diasporas around the world, as a rich source of global heritage and culture. On 24 January 2006,



the African Union adopted the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance in Khartoum, replacing the earlier Cultural Charter for Africa, which was adopted in Port Louis by the OAU in 1976.

### 24 January

#### International Day of Education

The world celebrates the importance of Education on this day, in all its different dimensions, but with emphasis on universal access to education (schooling) and lifelong learning.



According to UNESCO, "258 million children and youth still do not attend school; 617 million children and adolescents cannot read and do basic math; less than 40% of girls in Africa complete lower secondary school and some four million children and youth refugees are out of school. Their right to education is being violated and it is unacceptable."

### 25 January

#### National Police Day

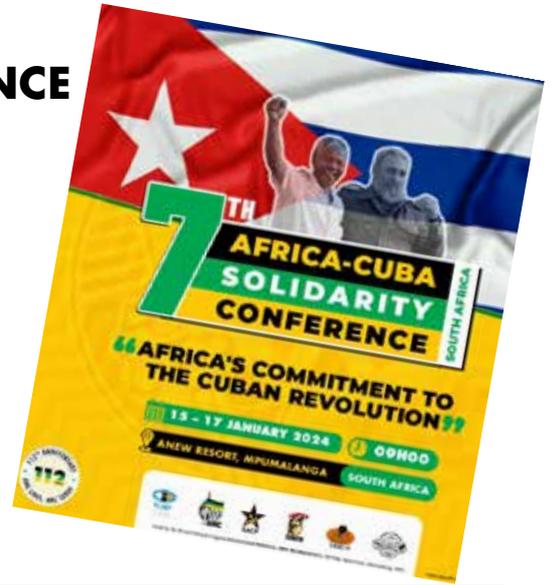
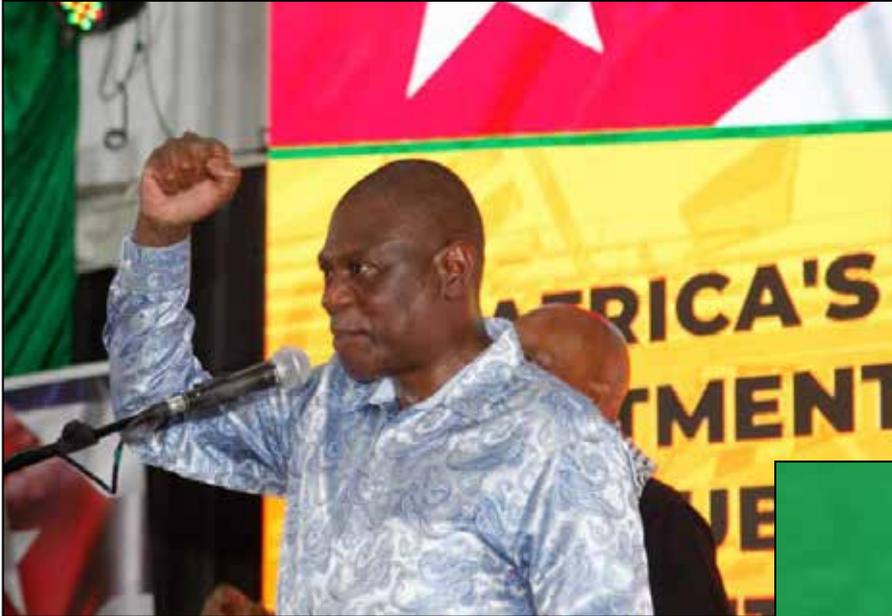


This is a South African awareness day, adopted by Cabinet in 2005. On National Police Day the South African Police Service (SAPS) remembers the sacrifices that our men and women in blue have made and continue to make as they provide safety for all who live in South Africa. South Africa has about 193,000 sworn police officers, with 1 154 police stations. According to the Constitution (205 (3)), the purpose of the police is to "prevent, combat and investigate crime, to maintain public order, to protect and secure the inhabitants of the Republic and their property, and to uphold and enforce the law."

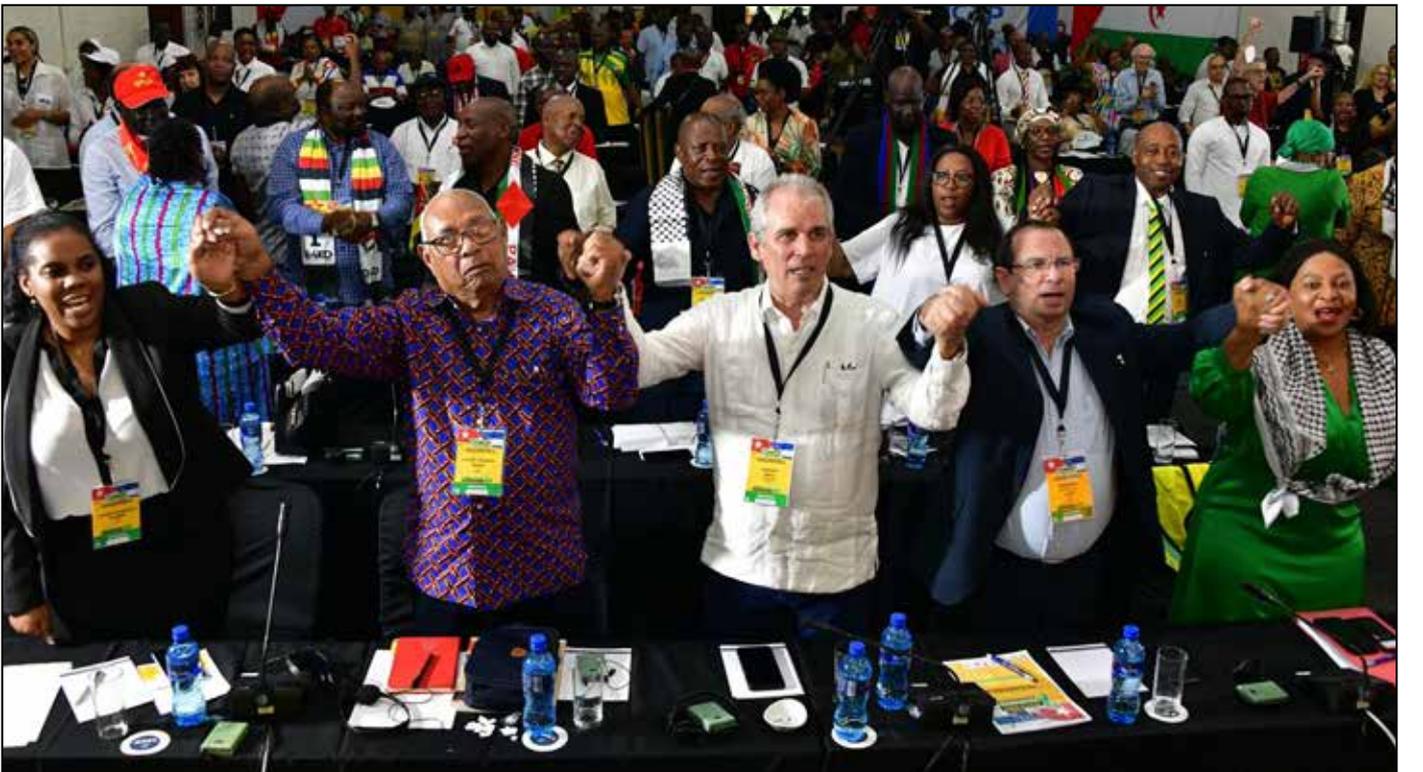
in pictures



## 7<sup>TH</sup> AFRICA-CUBA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE



in pictures

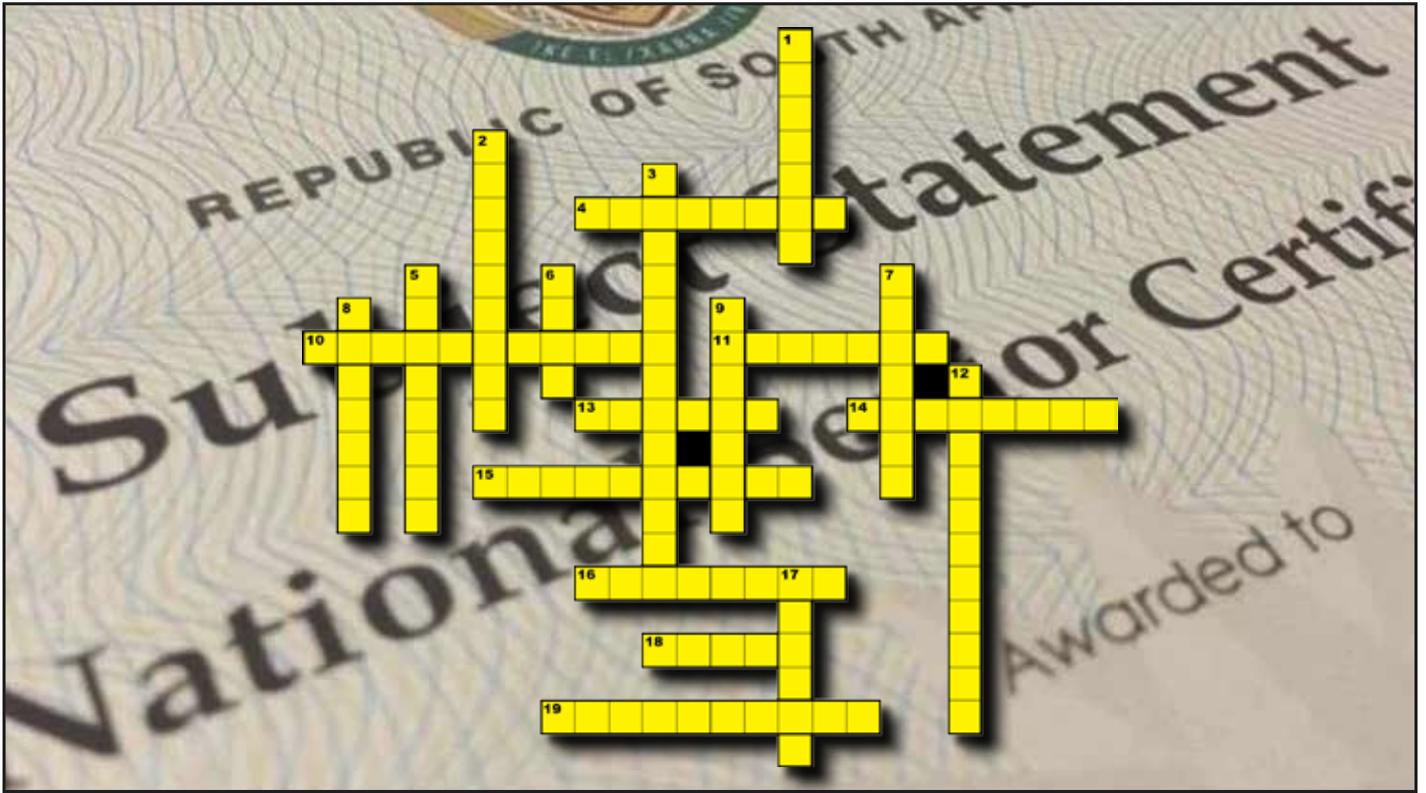


in pictures



## X-WORD

### Matric Class of 2023



#### ACROSS

4. Portion of young people who do not successfully complete twelve years of education.
10. YouTube channel for online learning support.
11. The BELA bill seeks to introduce 3 compulsory language at schools, which will advantage ... languages.
13. Covid saw expansion of ... & Digital Learning Programmes.
14. 715 719 ... candidates sat for Matric exams in 2023.
15. Worst performing province at 75.8% Matric pass.
16. In addition to published Matric results, there are 39 000 NSCs obtained by ... candidates.
18. Top performing specialized science and technology school iLitha Park, Khayelitsha (99%).
19. Successful... of 12 years of education, rose from 45% in 2008 to 62% in 2022.

#### DOWN

1. Only gateway subject that saw decrease in performance compared to 2020.
2. Province with highest percentage of Matric passes for Class of 2023 (89.0%).
3. Top matriculant of class of 2023.
5. COVID-19 saw declines in the availability of ... due to illness and death.
6. Purpose of Matric to prepare learners for entry to higher education institutions and the world of...
7. National agency overseeing Matric exams.
8. The Class of 2023 were confronted with 2 years of ..., doing Grade 9 and 10.
9. Province with highest successful completion of Grade 12 of youths in 2022.
12. Entered Grade 1 in January 2012.
17. National Senior Certificate, school-leaving qualification also known as ...

#### WORD BANK

Free State	Matric	COVID19	Mpumalanga	COSAT	History	teachers
full-time	remote	Woza Matrics	Umalusi	Melissa Muller	Class of 2023	
part-time	completion	Gauteng	one third	work	African	

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