



# ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the  
**President**



## ATTRACTING THE SKILLS THAT WILL ENABLE GROWTH AND JOBS

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

**T**O succeed in an ever-changing global economy, our country needs far more people with the right skills. This is so that our economy can be competitive, grow and create employment.

As a country, we have invested much in producing these skills, from significantly expanding access to higher education, introducing digital programmes in TVET colleges and a shift to a new pay-for-performance ap-

proach to skills development.

However, it will take some time before we will be able to produce enough skilled people to enable our country to grow rapidly.

A review report published last year found that South Africa's available labour supply *"does not match demand from companies which are essentially looking to employ management-level personnel, professionals, engineers, technicians, science and maths*

*educators, as well as IT experts"*. This means that, at least in the short-term, many of these high-level skills must be sourced internationally.

Last week, the Department of Home Affairs published for public comment draft amendments to existing immigration regulations that will significantly boost our efforts to attract workers with critical skills to South Africa. The draft amendments deal with two visa categories: a remote work-

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## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

ing visa and the critical skills visa.

The introduction of a remote working visa responds to the rapidly evolving world of work, where increasing numbers of skilled workers, notably in the tech industry, are attracted by the lifestyle benefits of working from a remote location. It also caters to so-called digital nomads, who are able to work virtually from any location in the world. A remote worker who wants to work in South Africa while being employed by a foreign company will be able to receive such a visa.

The draft regulations propose the introduction of a points system for critical skills visas that will take into account factors such as age, qualifications, language skills, work experience and having an offer of employment, amongst others.

The publication of the new draft regulations are part of our ongoing drive to reform the country's visa system, making it easier to attract the skills our economy needs and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. An efficient, agile, responsive visa regime is key to attracting business investment and boosting economic growth.

International experience shows that employees with critical skills contribute to improved productivity, enhanced innovation, and improving the competitiveness of the firms they work for.

In October last year, the Department of Home Affairs released guidelines for corporate employers under a 'Trusted Employer Scheme', which will make the visa process easier for large investors and streamline application requirements.



Under this scheme, a company looking to employ skilled foreign workers would be vetted and approved in advance to reduce the administrative burden for visa applications.

With South Africa fast becoming an increasingly attractive destination for industries like business process outsourcing and customer experience, attracting more skilled workers will be important.

Last year, for example, a leading international strategic advisory firm ranked South Africa second as the most favoured offshore customer experience delivery destination globally. Since 2016, government has invested more

than R3 billion towards supporting the growth and expansion of business process outsourcing, and is targeting the creation of approximately 500,000 jobs in the sector by 2030.

In line with our ongoing efforts to attract higher levels of investment and promote job creation, the new work visa regulations are a milestone. They are part of high-impact structural reforms we are undertaking to improve the business operating environment.

They send a clear signal to business that we are committed to attracting skills that meet the demands of a modern, inclusive and growing economy.

# SONA 2024 DEBATE

## TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

■ By **PEMMY MAJODINA, ANC Chief Whip**

**W**E, as the ANC and the nation, are inspired by the President's address which he delivered last Thursday. The President gave a detailed account on what had been achieved since the SONA of 2023, alongside the many challenges that still have to be addressed. He gave an honest, balanced reflection of where we stand as a nation.

The choice we face as the nation in this year of elections is to re-affirm what we set out to do in 1994: implement a national programme of transformation that will result in qualitatively changing the lives of the majority of our people for the better and not to side with those who are benefitting from the historical legacy of privilege, who seek to block transformation at every turn, as they cling to preserve their wealth, property and positions at the expense of the majority.

Under the ANC, we will continue to take the country forward, with all its challenges, toward a better future for all.

Under a conglomeration of opposition parties, they will entrench wealth amongst a few; under



them, poverty and inequality will grow. I-moonshot pact yimbutho yabagxeki abadibene ngokuzama ukubuyisa uMzantsi Afrika wocalu-calulo.

On Thursday evening, the President accounted to the nation on the implementation of not only the 2023 SONA commitments but also of the

Five-year plan and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework. To those who say nothing has been done let me remind you that:

- R14bn has been allocated

to fight crime and corruption over the next three years;

- 4,000 arrests have been made for damage to critical infrastructure,
- 70 arrests for construction extortion, and
- Over 3,000 arrests for illegal mining.
- Over 1.7 million work and livelihood opportunities for unemployed South Africans have been created through the Presidential Employment Stimulus.
- 45,000 participants have been placed in the National Youth Service, and

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- 51,000 participants have been employed by 28 implementing partners under the social employment fund.

Ngubani ke ofuna ukuteketa ajwede apha athi akwenziwanga nto? Kukho abakhalayo, kukho abalilayo, bayagqwesa ke baza-kuma apha. Bayajweda bona.

The measures outlined in the State of the Nation Address reflect continuity in progress against a programme of transformative action seized with growing the economy, creating jobs, reducing poverty, tackling corruption and fighting crime. These measures have already impacted people's lives, while the benefits of others will take longer to be felt.

We are bound as public representatives of the people to ensure that the programmes we adopt in our organisations are for the people and are implemented with the people, speaking to their needs.

To this end, the ANC's January 8th statement committed that we should be even *"more determined this year to succeed in building a better life for all and be more deliberate and resolute about the renewal of the ANC, the broad democratic forces and our society."*

Ingxelo yeNcukacha-manani (Census 2022) iyavuma ukuba ig-xathu elikhulu lenziwe. Kodwa ke ngenxa yokukhula koluntu, akon-elanga oku sesikwenzile kuba uluntu luyakhula umhla nezolo. Iziphumo zona ziyasivuma ukuba eneneni iimpilo nobomi babantu buphuchuliwe ngulombhuto kaK-hongolose.

Therefore, we do not have to be held hostage in this debate by

political parties that will come with sound bites but lack the evidence. We challenge you to tell us your sources when you quote statistics. Otherwise, you will be merely sloganeering.

In 30 years, the ANC government has increased women's representation in leadership and management positions, expanded access to education and health services to millions of our people, and moved significantly towards eradicating adult illiteracy.

Akhona ke amachaphaza asigq-walisayo asitsalela emva nje ngomgangatho owehlayo ween-konzo ezinikezelwa eluntwini, ulawulo oluheshe-heshe kunye nezicwangciso zokulawula ilizwe kumanqanaba athile karhulu-mente.

Ukwenyuka kwamaxabiso kukhwitsha kanabom iimpula zikaLujaca ekubeni uqoqosho lungenyuki nemisebenzi inqongophele kuyal-wenzakalisa uluntu. URhulumente uyazivelela ezo nkalo zonke. Esi

sihelegu sika cimi-cimi wombane yeyona nto iqhokra uqoqosho nomqolo welizwe kunye noluntu lonke luphela. Kwaye ingumvam-bo onganyamezelekiyo nje ngoku-ba sibonile ukusuka ngoMgqibelo.

Kodwa ke noxa kunjalo, ithem-ba lona likhona kuba ziyalandel-wa ezi zikrelemnqa zisifaka kule meko ka cimi-cimi.

uMphathiswa ojongene ncakasa-na nezombane uzakuyinabisa ukuba zitihini izicwangcoso zoku-jongana nalo gili-kankqo.

What we need to honestly acknowledge, is that corruption has had a devastating effect on the ability of our state-owned enterprises to function for the purpose they were set up. We have just had another manager arrested at Eskom alleged of fraud to the tune of 1 million Rands. There are more hiding away, weakening Eskom and knowing well that while they benefit financially, sadly, the ANC government must account for their criminal actions

**STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS**

**JOB CREATION**

**Operation Vulindlela was established as an initiative between the Presidency and National Treasury to drive an ambitious economic reform agenda to accelerate growth, investment and job creation.**

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with regard to the capacity of the Entity. When communities' infrastructure is being destroyed, they turn around and blame the ANC government.

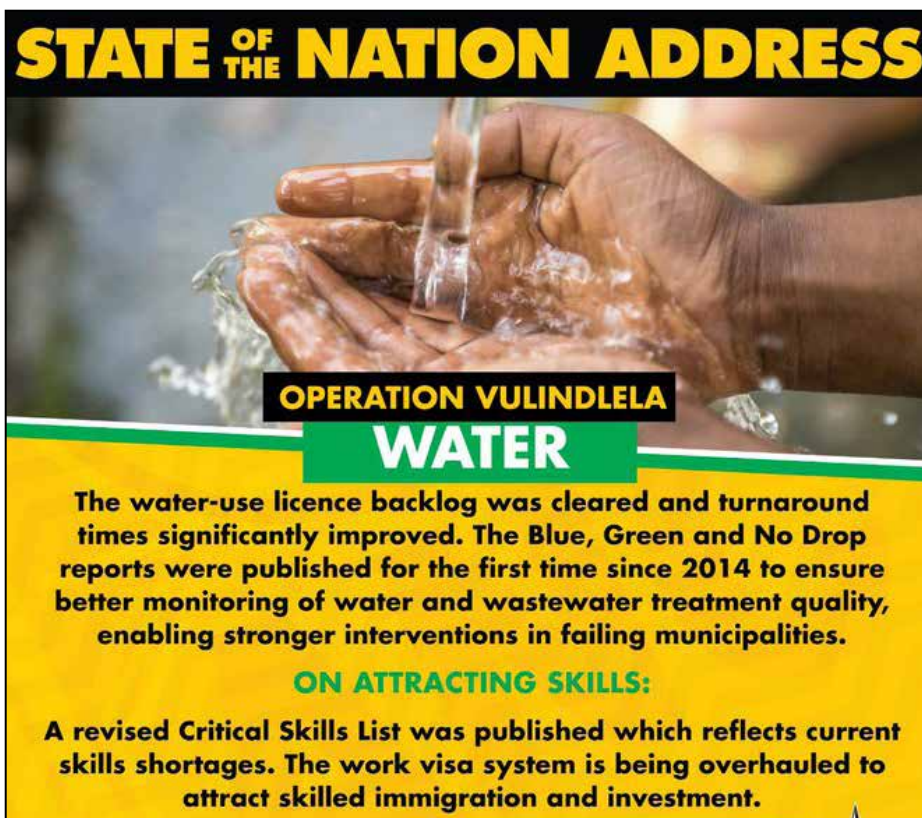
As Parliament of the people, we take our responsibilities in contributing to the health of the State of the Nation seriously. The Judicial Commission of Inquiry known as Zondo Commission and the report of the President, which were referred to Parliament for consideration, have been acted upon.

The constant narrative that Parliament has done nothing can only be said by those who have consciously gone to sleep, who do not want to see the process of assigned sections of the report given to Committees, including how the Ethics Committee had pronounced on some of the findings. This work will continue within the purview of Parliament.

As the majority party, the ANC leads in the responsibility of passing legislation, which to date in the 6th Parliament amounts to 88 bills having been passed. All these are expressions of ANC policy that shape the direction of the country and influence decision-making.

We have done this whilst we have mourned 23 ANC MPs who have passed on – the greatest number compared to any term of Parliament. They died with their boots and heels on. May their souls rest in peace.

Whilst the ANC is seeking to unite the nation, addressing the national grievances, promoting Unity in Diversity, and driving social cohesion, we are confronted with acts of racism carried out by groups of whites who are still



**STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS**

**OPERATION VULINDLELA**

**WATER**

The water-use licence backlog was cleared and turnaround times significantly improved. The Blue, Green and No Drop reports were published for the first time since 2014 to ensure better monitoring of water and wastewater treatment quality, enabling stronger interventions in failing municipalities.

**ON ATTRACTING SKILLS:**

A revised Critical Skills List was published which reflects current skills shortages. The work visa system is being overhauled to attract skilled immigration and investment.

clinging to an old apartheid flag that's outlawed and swearing allegiance to an apartheid relic.

These acts of racism only serve to reopen the wounds of the past and bring about a response.

We have been talking for 30 years about these matters, and we need to see the law sentencing those whites and some blacks who believe that racism is a methodology to advance their interests against the collective good of the majority.

Umenziwa akakhohlwa, kodwa umenzi uyakhohlwa. Asizukuvuma ke ukunyolwa esweni.

This is not dissimilar to what the DA is busy doing in the Western Cape, instilling in the minds of those who live in the Western Cape that they have

a separate identity and a special status within the Republic. Their popularity is declining rapidly

amongst communities, especially working-class communities, because of the inconsistency between what they say and what they do.

Umcimbi kaSirayeli wokubulala ngolunya amaPalestina ubutyhile ubuze be-DA nje ngombutho wabacinezeli. Yilo nto ngeCawe umhla we 11 February amawaka-waka ebegcwele eAthlone Stadium ukuqinisa oko uMadiba wakuthethayo esithi "Inkululeko yethu ayiphelanga engekakuhluleki amaPalestina."

The choice for any voter in the 2024 elections is to defend our democratic gains, advance the democracy we have painstakingly built and achieve victory in the 2024 elections to advance the National Democratic Revolution and to achieve the National Democratic Society.

**Thatha ANC! Thatha!**

**Vote ANC!**

# Tribute to one of the oldest **living veterans** of our movement, **COMRADE MICHAEL DINGAKE**

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

I AM honoured to be here today paying tribute to one of the oldest living veterans of our movement. A fighter, an organiser, a communicator, a politician, a scholar, a writer and an Africanist who was awarded the Grand Companion of the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo in 2007.

We are celebrating the life of a comrade who grew up in Botswana, schooled in Limpopo and Johannesburg and joined the ANC in 1952 at the height of the Defiance Campaign. He has been active in the different arms of the ANC and the mass democratic movement during his entire life – in the country, in the underground, in prison and in exile. After being cruelly arrested in 1965 in the then Rhodesia, he spent 15 years on Robben Island before being repatriated to Botswana. There he did not rest but formed and became the president of the Botswana Congress Party until 2001.

Cde Mike, you have been an indomitable man. On behalf of the Veteran's League, I salute you and your contribution to the struggle. You are an inspiration



to us and your sacrifices remind us of what it has taken to achieve our democratic rights in a free South Africa.

In today's world, these rights should not be taken for granted. They can be reversed. This is one of the threats that we face if the ANC does not win a decisive majority in the coming elections. Populist parties on the left and the reactionary parties on the right may seek to remove some of the hard gains we have fought for, including freedom of association, the rights of women to control their bodies and the rights of those who have come to our

country fleeing oppressive and undemocratic regimes or failing economies.

We are also seeing the rise of opportunistic parties – who have no real interest in serving the people but setting up political parties as a way to defend or advance their own personal interests. Unfortunately, our former President Zuma now fits into this category. We can't afford the coalition chaos we see in Johannesburg, where a party with only three seats holds the Mayorship.

For the ANC to win back the confidence of the people, it needs

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

to renew itself. The Veteran's League since our Conference in July 2023 and even before has unrelentingly called for the renewal of the ANC.

For the ANC to renew itself, it must get rid of those members who have allegations of corruption or unethical behaviour against them. We are working to ensure that those implicated by the Zondo, VBS and other commissions do not appear on election lists unless they have satisfactorily cleared their names.

Secondly, the ANC must once again be a party of the people with responsive branches and branch leadership that respects their members and members of the community. As the Veteran's League sets up its branches, we have been interacting with ANC branches encouraging door-to-door work and holding leadership to account.

Thirdly, renewing the ANC means rebuilding a progressive and forward-thinking cadreship. We are working on a political education programme to be rolled out first in four provinces of the country.

These steps, together with a message of hope and a realistic manifesto will give us the best opportunity to win back the confidence of society to give us another chance to govern on its behalf. Cde Dingake, your 96th birthday coincides with the 30th anniversary of our democracy. Something we must celebrate – and we hope that you will be with us on the 27th of April to celebrate this anniversary and hopefully around about the same time, a further election victory for the ANC.

Amandla!



# REFLECTIONS ON 30 YEARS OF ANC ECONOMIC POLICIES AND THE SUBNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS IN MPUMALANGA

■ By **ISAAC MAHLANGU**

**T**HE aim of this article is to present a perspective on the ANC's economic policies and their outcomes over the past 30 years, but with a focus on subnational economic governance and a look at the case study of the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA).

### **From RDP to NDP – the ANC Post-Apartheid Economic Policies and Outcomes**

Post-1994, the ANC initially outlined the main thrust of its economic policies and vision for re-

structuring and transforming the economy in the **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)**. The RDP was a long-term strategy that had to be translated into specific short- and medium-term policy measures to realize the long-term vision. The **Growth, Employment, and Redistribution** strategy of 1996 was located within these efforts.

Various researchers have praised the record of the ANC's economic policies and outcomes from the 1990s until the onset of the Global Financial Crisis (2008).

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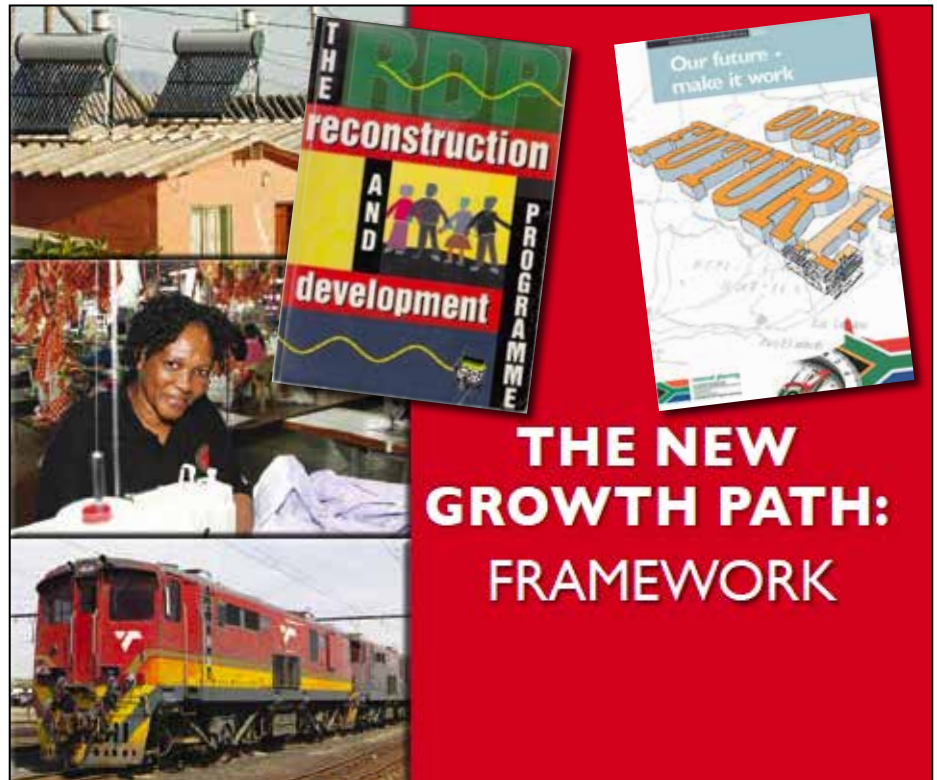
The Presidency published a Twenty-Five-year report in 2019 that highlighted that although the economy grew by 2.8% on average from 1994 to 2018, it was not able to absorb the number of people needing employment whilst the distribution of unemployment remained highly racially skewed – with African unemployment more than double that for Indians and more than four times that of white unemployment.

The ANC's later policies, such as the **New Growth Path** and the **National Development Plan (NDP Vision 2030)**, were often well-received and identified policies that were also about addressing structural features of the economy inherited from the apartheid colonial economy, that often function to militate against progress in achieving an "inclusive" fast-growing economy, such as the concentrated nature of the economy.

The outcomes have often been mixed, and many saw the economy in dire straits before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic was both a health and socio-economic crisis that had massive impacts on the economy, households, and communities that are being felt today.

Whilst the post-COVID-19 period has seen a partial recovery in economic growth with GDP rebounding and increased exports mainly due to the mining sector, this has occurred when the external environment is increasingly unfavourable.

Apart from domestic issues such as load shedding and infrastructure constraints, other key factors here have included geopolitical developments (e.g., conflict in



### THE NEW GROWTH PATH: FRAMEWORK

Ukraine and recently the Middle East), rising cost of living, bottlenecks in supply chains, and adverse climate weather events that are all a cause for concern and have meant our world economy will underperform.

#### Subnational Economic Governance and the Case of Mpumalanga

Interestingly, from an economic development perspective, the new Constitution provided for provinces and gave them original legislative and executive powers as 'spheres' of government. Inspired by successive ANC-led national administrations, provinces were empowered so that they are no longer mere 'agencies' of the central government as they are now exclusively responsible or sharing concurrently with central government important legislative and executive responsibilities (e.g. over regional planning, trade, tourism, health, education, etc.), in terms of schedules 4 and 5 of the Constitution.

The Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (PGDS) emerged as an important tool in this regard. Mpumalanga adopted its first PGDS in October 1996. The PGDS sought to set the tone and pace for growth and development in the province.

The PGDS focused on economic development (enterprise and co-operatives), infrastructure development, human resources and skills, the environment, social infrastructure, and good governance.

The province has subsequently been able to improve on these over the years, including the adoption of a Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path as a medium-term framework not only to mitigate the effects of the 2008 world economic meltdown but also to act as a blueprint that will guide the province towards placing the economy on a growth trajectory and the creation of more job opportunities.



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More recently, the province adopted the Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which is aligned with the national Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan announced by President Ramaphosa in 2020 and was primarily an 'infrastructure development' led post-COVID economic plan.

To effect pointed and deliberate interventions, the provincial governments needed to establish departments and "agencies" or entities that could be entrusted with resources to realize the overall program. Mpumalanga has always had agencies that also focused on parks, tourism, gambling, etc. Unfortunately, inadequate fiscal allocation and capacity have often hindered adequate implementation, and one can also acknowledge the perennial challenges of governance and corruption.

Overall, there are mixed outcomes of various Mpumalanga ANC administrations' efforts on socio-economic development.

For example, it is worth noting that Mpumalanga's population share below the **Lower Bound Poverty Line** improved from **64.3% in 1996 to 49.5% in 2022**.

However, the provincial economy has consistently underperformed. The average annual growth rate for the country and Mpumalanga from 1996 to 2022 was 2.3% and 1.6%, respectively. The average annual economic growth for South Africa was 1.0% between 2014 and 2019, whereas Mpumalanga's economy expanded by 0.6% per annum over the same period.

In terms of the sectoral performance of Mpumalanga from 1994 up to today, the standout industries

with an annual growth rate of more than 2.5% were transport and communication, finance, and agriculture. The industries that pulled down the provincial growth with less than 1% annual growth were mining and utilities/electricity.

### The strategic role of MEGA

The strategic mandate of the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency, within the provincial economic landscape, is to provide a one-stop development service to business and potential investors, with a core focus on trade and investment promotion, enterprise development, property management, housing finance, and agriculture development.

There are often calls in the province and elsewhere for MEGA to be disbanded. These are misguided cries in the wilderness, not recognizing the agency's true potential and ability to address local market failures whilst serving as an anchor for provincial economic development initiatives. However, the road to be traveled is still long when judged by indicators of its developmental

impacts across the province.

There is little doubt that the record on ANC economic policies and outcomes in the past 30 years has been mixed, but the space given to provinces and local government through the District Development Model is one whose impact is understated.

The province has much potential to play a key role in reversing the impact of apartheid-era spatial exclusion policies that have been shown to be associated with lasting unemployment and poverty.

The province is well-endowed in mining, manufacturing, tourism, and trade opportunities, attracting many investors locally and afar. Recently, the elevation of the discourse on climate change and the 'Just energy transition' in the province and country at large makes the province particularly interested in driving 'green energy industrialization'.

*Isaac Mahlangu served as the Provincial Secretary of the ANC Youth League and is now the CEO of MEGA. He writes in his personal capacity.*



## OPINION

# Long Walk to Freedom

■ By **POLEDISO MOTSOENENG**

**T**HIS week marks 34 years since President Nelson Mandela walked out of the Victor Vester prison.

The historic occasion was beamed to millions across the world. Finally, Mandela whom the many had heard of, but had not seen, was going to be free. When the gates of the cage he had been locked in for decades were finally opened, the mysterious figure that was Nelson Mandela finally took his first steps into a South Africa still very much at war with itself.

The sounds of guns could still be heard. The blood of activists, from Soweto to Kwa-Mashu, was still flowing freely on the streets. As he hoisted his hand, fist clenched to jubilant South Africans, President Mandela had a cold look on his face. He must have realised that his, and the collective's, was a massive task.

President Mandela knew all too well that the nearly 30 years spent in a cage would amount to nought if he didn't provide the necessary leadership to steer the country in the right direction. Although FW De Klerk was the president of the country, in Madiba, South Africans saw their true leader.

Although battered, and possibly fatigued by years of hard labour in prison, Nelson Mandela was not defeated. The faces of South



Africans who longed to be freed from the shackles of apartheid gave him even more reason to fight. That fight, he knew, would not be easy. The dark forces opposed to change would, as correctly predicted, wage a relentless war to prevent a transition to a democratic South Africa.

Those opposed to change would mount a strong and vicious fight-back to stop the inevitable, which was a South Africa free of oppression. A South Africa which, a monster called apartheid would become a long, distant harrowing nightmare.

The right wing AWB, led by war mongering Eugene Terreblanche, stormed the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park as negotiations for peaceful elections were underway. The lunatics rammed the building with their vehicles.

In another shameful stain on the apartheid regime's past, hun-

dreds were slaughtered in Boipatong on 17 June 1992. Fed up with the vicious violence, Madiba visited the bloody sight of the massacre and publicly expressed outrage at the government when he said: *"I am convinced we are no longer dealing with human beings but animals... We will not forget what Mr de Klerk, the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party have done to our people. I have never seen such cruelty."*

It was little wonder, or perhaps, befitting, that on 10 December 1996, President Mandela signed the constitution into law in Sharpeville. It was interesting that the supreme law of the country was signed in Sharpeville given its historical significance in the struggle for liberation. In 1902 the Treaty of Vereeniging signed between the British and Afrikaners disenfranchised the Black majority and set in motion processes that laid the foundation for apartheid. On 21 March 1960 police

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opened fire on a crowd demonstrating against the hated pass laws in Sharpeville.

The apartheid regime, even by their low standards, reached new lows when in April 1993, a year before elections, our beloved leader Chris Hanu was brutally assassinated in Boksburg.

It was President Mandela again who stepped to the plate when the country, on the brink of bloody violence, sought guidance. Even with De Klerk as president of the country, it was Madiba who addressed the nation.

As we reflect on the historic day that was 11 February 1990, we once again pay tribute to the father of our nation.

While his role in the actual drafting of the final constitution may have been minimal, owing obviously to his heavy schedule and his many commitments, he always kept a keen eye on the developments and always made his contribution whenever the opportunity presented itself. Of interest to President Mandela was that the broad direction was in line with the ANC's goals and what it sought to achieve. And he took strong exception to anyone who posed a risk to the collapse of a successful negotiation of a constitutional democracy. One such moment was when the IFP walked out of the national assembly, drawing Mandela's ire and coming short of calling them cowards.

He wanted to ensure that the negotiations should be inclusive and involve public participation and importantly, that the outcome should be a fully democratic constitution.

President Thabo Mbeki recalled

how, during that period, there would be deadlocks and they would reach out to Madiba for guidance, and he duly lent his voice and aired his opinion. All these, during this turbulent period in South African history, were aimed at providing a better life for all.

The majority blacks in particular, who had had to put up with decades of oppression and exclusion from economic participation, were his primary concern. The dehumanising living conditions that blacks lived in were, and still remain unacceptable. This fuelled Madiba's determination to ensure that the society was transformed.

Through our constitution, separation of powers, namely the executive, judiciary and independent constitutional institutions which, while working in tandem, do not interfere in the other's work. It is laughable then that, recently, some amongst us often accuse the ANC leadership of interfering in the work of these three organs of state.

It is quite sad to listen to peace time heroes yapping about how Mandela and his comrades 'sold out.' The better option for these revisionist historians, according to their warped logic, was for Madiba to allow the country to descend into an all-scale racial war, which would have pitted South Africans against each other along racial lines.

Even more concerning is that their blind loyalists easily agree with this nonsensical assessment. Mandela knew that war would cause much more devastation to the country than apartheid already had and that more of our people would have fallen victims.

A sharp thinker that he was, President Mandela understood that there was more to be gained working together than working against each other. While his dream of a Rainbow Nation may not have fully borne the fruits he so desperately yearned for, it was for us to keep this vision alive and see to it that it became a reality.

It is equally sad that some of those who served with him in the ANC have now completely forgotten his teachings. Some leaders of the African National Congress, whose lust for power knows no bounds, have now publicly opted to remove it (the ANC) from power. These are the same people who will have us believe that they learned a lot from President Mandela.

However, some of us are hardly surprised. We have known them to be power mongers who believe that them, and only them, can lead. Fortunately, our people can see right through them and are not going to be easily fooled.

The ANC is on a painful, yet necessary path of renewal. Those who refuse to partake in this process are being exposed and as such, have decided to leave and in the process, hurled abuse at the very ANC they once claimed to love.

As the elections draw closer, we once appeal to our people to trust us with the responsibility to lead. We are working tirelessly around the clock to change the lives of ordinary people for the better.

**Amandla!**

***Polediso Motsoeneng** is the Provincial Secretary of the ANC in the Free State Province.*

## OPINION



# A REVOLUTION LED BY THE PEOPLE

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

**T**HE period 2024 is a significant milestone in our calendar. It is a reflection of the many miles that mark 30 years of our democracy. This democracy is nascent, considering the many years of colonial rule and the pulsating vestiges of apartheid rule which account for inequality and other mortifications.

Since 1994, the ANC worked tirelessly through a number of socio-economic policy interventions to change the economic and political landscape through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and other instruments, to extricate the poor from the abyss of poverty, inequality, unemployment and indignity, pushing back the frontiers of poverty by ensuring that the people contribute to the country's economic growth not as consumers but as producers and beneficiaries in the value chain.

This was the essence of the RDP which today remains the ANC's loadstar as we pursue a dream of a national democratic society, devoid of gender exploitation and racism.

In the aftermath of the recent voter registration, the IEC reported an exponential growth in the voter registration turnout. The fundamental question is, who are these people who came out to register?

Before we respond to this important question, it is interesting that for the first time in the country's elections since the dawn of democracy, the ballot paper looks like a scroll decorated by more than 300 political parties. Many of these with different but hollow promises to the electorate.

What are these promises to the people? What are ideological leanings and what alternatives do they offer to the populace? These

are of serious interests to the nation and must be addressed.

There's one point that is a blind spot to commentators and pundits about the significance of voter registration, and why the ballot has so many political parties each vying for a slice of the vote.

Firstly, no matter the outcome, the voter registration promotes the will of the people, legitimizes the electoral outcomes and confirms our constitutional democracy. It is a fallacy to interpret this outcome, or perhaps the apathy that they point out, that this means society needs a change of political guard.

There is just too much cacophony in the media space about *"the ANC's declining fortunes, ANC support is in the doldrums, and that its decline gets real"* and so much prophesy depicting the ANC on a downward slope.

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The media has, unfortunately, joined this chorus of voices which calls for regime change, buttressing what these jaundiced political scientists view and want us to believe that society is equally jaded that there is indeed a need for a new regime. They base their flawed argument and sentiment on the notion that the ANC had dismally failed, even in the presence of evidence that points to the contrary. Apart from populist acts and parochial interests at the ballot, these parties have nothing to offer but the regurgitation of ANC policies, offering no new alternatives.

Secondly, there is no scientific evidence that there is an anti-ANC sentiment which is a reflection of the rejection of the ANC by the people and an electoral decline in the forthcoming elections.

The ANC had travelled the length and breadth of the country, subjected itself to the appraisal of its performance, its weaknesses and the extent to which it had gone in fulfilling the mandate of the people in relation to the 2019 manifesto. The ANC listened to the people, took stock of their needs and appreciated what it had done since 1994.

Its sterling performance over many years, albeit punctuated with impediments, acts of corruption, patronage, crime, landlessness, housing, water and illegal immigration and other challenges, is based on scientific evidence and legislative interventions to address the peoples' concerns.

To address this, the 55th Conference of the ANC resolved on unity and renewal' elevating people to the apex of development. Renewal had a number of purposes.

Firstly, to strengthen the capacity of the ANC to advance the interests of the people. This entailed an agenda of ethical leadership, strict candidate selection process and radical socio-economic transformation.

***“To run the country well we must first run the party well and to run the party well we must do it strictly”***— Jiang Zemin, 2000

Secondly, this was designed to strengthen the capacity of the state by fighting corruption, building a capable state to advance transformation and an economy that is responsive to the imperatives of development.

Thirdly, the Election Manifesto Review was about reconnecting with the people, galvanising society's input to shape its 2024 Election Manifesto in a manner that is people-driven and people-centred, based on the ANC's character as a people-centred organisation, rooted in communities, living with society. In this interactive process, the ANC was warmly embraced by the people.

On the 13th January 2024 the ANC commemorated its 112th anniversary in Mbombela, joined by millions of its supporters, both present and those who watched on TV and listened on radio. Again, the people welcomed the ANC. They listened to President Cyril Ramaphosa deliver the 2024 action plan. It was a statement indicating priorities and plans, elevating the peoples' hope of a better life and a rejuvenated organisation committed to the aspirations of the people.

To point to the ANC as an organisation on its deathbed is misleading. In the past, we have pointed to a systematic onslaught on the

body on the ANC, with daggers out to kill it. The lynch mob has grown substantially. Amongst these band of assassins are its erstwhile members who are the victims of the ANC renewal machine, the mushrooming and proliferation of new political parties designed to weaken the ANC's electoral base rather than contesting elections to govern the country, a coterie of beneficiaries of the 30 years democracy in the form of Multi Party Charter with an anti-transformation agenda.

This is a new alliance with a grand plan of the minority ruling over the majority through short cuts. The ANC approaches the 2024 general elections with determination.

Fourthly, the emergence of the new parties is a danger to themselves, weakening the opposition each time a new party is born.

The people have not lost hope in the ANC. In one of the interactive sessions, we were subjected to profound lessons by Dr. Martin Luther King who once said: *“We must accept finite disappointment but never lose infinite hope.”*

History has proven that where the ANC is attacked, its members will rise to defend it. The people will go to the polls to refresh the mandate of the ANC in furtherance of their aspirations, and the future of the country. This revolution must be led by the people. If not, the dream and hope of 1994 will be obsolete.

We conclude by saying that nothing and no one will come between the ANC and the people. We learned from the harsh lessons of a journey travelled for so many years. The people shall govern, defending the revolution.

## OPINION

# The African Transformation Movement (ATM) infographic IS misinformation!

■ By **BONNIE RAMAILA**

**T**HE political games have begun, and everyone is girding their loins to attack the governing party to score political points. It is a well known fact that the overriding law of nature is kill or be killed, and it looks like in these upcoming elections, it is the chosen strategy.

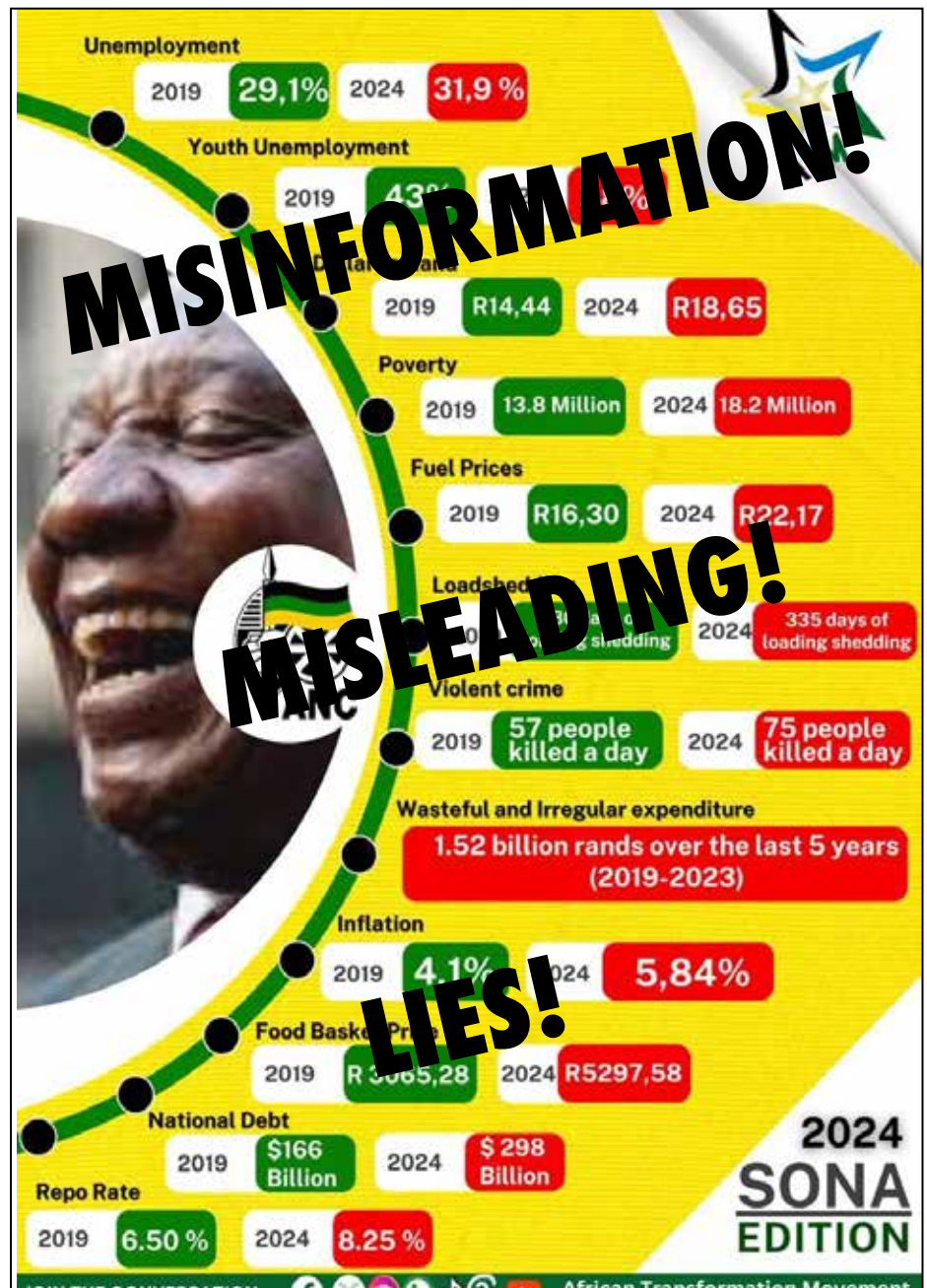
So, the gloves are off.

Our democratic country has made it possible to have freedom of speech and expression, and this is a conducive time to exercise that right.

One has noted with bewilderment how these political parties that have mushroomed recently are taking a swipe at the ANC. They have managed, through the “effective” utilization of social media, to perpetuate any rhetoric they deem fit.

The African Transformation Movement (ATM) infographic is currently making the rounds on social media and it paints a very dim picture of how everything has gone wrong between 2019 and 2024 under the ANC led government.

One has painstakingly gone through the statistics utilised in the ATM infographic, and could





# OPINION

not help but notice that 1) the year 2024 is hardly 90 days old and Statistics SA has not yet released any statistics in this quarter, but they have referenced 2024 in the infographic, therefore, the figures referenced are falsified. 2) This is a clear case of misinformation.

What I find curious is that the ATM chose a 2019-2024 period. If memory serves them well, they would remember that the country was in COVID-19 period, and the government was hard at work coming up with recovery plans and introducing social relief grants for businesses, individuals and small enterprises to keep everyone afloat. Every economy in the world was affected, and South Africa was no exception. To use the 2019-2024 period to depict a dismal picture of the failures of the ANC is tantamount to making a straw man.

If the ATM took the liberty to do this great work of depicting the country as failing at serving its people, then one wonders 1) why aren't they counteracting the concerns raised with their own policies (do they exist?); 2) what would they do if they win the election? (which they won't); and 3) how do they plan to improve the economy to be better? (which they can't). What is the plan to rescue South Africa from its 'state of depravity'?

I am not seeing any tangible plans or policies that counteract that of the ANC-led government in the public discourse. Instead, everything that is wrong about the ANC is used to woo voters, as they take advantage of unsuspecting potential voters and people who really want to

see change. It is my observation that most newly formed political parties are being disingenuous to their constituents on the real truth; instead they feed off the anger, dissatisfaction and disgruntlement that's pervasive in communities and society with all their sanctimonious twaddle.

The ANC (with its Alliance partners) is the only liberation party that has emancipated the people of South Africa from an apartheid regime to the democracy we have today, and no other political party can claim this.

To impugn a 112 year old ANC as a six year old political party is laughable. ANC has a track record and it's been in leadership for the past six administrations. I will leave the rest to the 30 Year Review which will be released soon.

Elections are about the pursuit of power. Now, how does the African Transformation Movement (ATM) plan to run the country?

The ANC has 30 years experience doing so. It had its own ups and downs – and some moments it's not proud of – but it continued in its pursuit of ensuring a better life for all; hence the complaints from various sectors and communities because they now know the difference between a mediocre life and a better one.

If they did not know any better, they would not be complaining because they'd be used to the squalid life they'd be accustomed to.

Sooner or later people will realise that these political parties are fighting a war they don't understand and cannot win.

**STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS**

**WE REMAIN STEADFAST IN OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY AND ITS PROMISE OF A BETTER LIFE**

**OUR ECONOMY IS THREE TIMES LARGER TODAY THAN IT WAS 30 YEARS AGO**

<b>EMPLOYMENT:</b>	1994 (8 MILLION)	2024 (16.7 MILLION)
<b>BLACK OWNERSHIP</b>	2004 (2%)	2024 (39%)
<b>BLACK FARMERS' OWNERSHIP</b>	1994 (2%)	2024 (39%)
<b>POVERTY REDUCTION</b>	2010 (60.9%)	2020 (55.5%)
<b>INCREASE IN FEE-EXEMPT SCHOOL LEARNERS</b>	2018 (71%)	2021 (75%)
<b>NSFAS FUNDING FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS</b>	2018 (R21 BILLION)	2023 (R50 BILLION)
<b>MATRIC PASS RATE</b>	2014 (75.8%)	2024 (82.9%)

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Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli House, HQ

## OPINION

# Tintswalos need to move from volatility to facing the polycrisis

■ By **YACOOB ABBA OMAR**

**I**N the 2000s planners worldwide were trying to make sense of the effects of several forces pounding nations and the globe. Volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity became the favoured words to describe the general conditions humanity found itself in.

President Cyril Ramaphosa's opening of parliament speech, the state of the nation address (SONA), was an expression of another term creeping into public policy debates – polycrisis. Thomas Homer-Dixon of Canada's Cascade Institute explains that many of the world's critical systems are tipping into negative territory simultaneously, requiring us at national and global levels to look at interactions among these systems.

The Global Risks Report 2023 of the World Economic Forum (WEF) described the term as “a cluster of related global risks with *compounding effects, such that the overall impact exceeds the sum of each part*”.

Homer-Dixon's colleague, Michael Lawrence, suggests that a “*polycrisis requires strategies that are multidisciplinary, systemic and cross-sectoral, as efforts to reduce one problem can easily worsen others*”.

Adam Tooze of Columbia University has helped soothe our collective nerves by suggesting that “*what the polycrisis concept says is 'relax, this is actually the condition of our current moment'.*”

Viewing our problems through the polycrisis lens forces us to dissect the various issues being faced, appreciate the connections between and within the different elements, often requiring responses at local, national and

global levels simultaneously, as well as considering immediate and long-term strategies.

This requires a shift in mindset of the Tintswalos Ramaphosa referred to in the SONA in describing the generation that has benefited from a post-1994 democratic SA.

Foremost among the risks to humanity is that of rising inequality, climate change and the just tran-

### TINTSWALO HAS MULTIPLIED

I am Nomatu Nkomo-Ralehoko, whose journey commenced in the tranquil Eastern Cape and unfolded amidst the dynamic vibrancy of Gauteng.

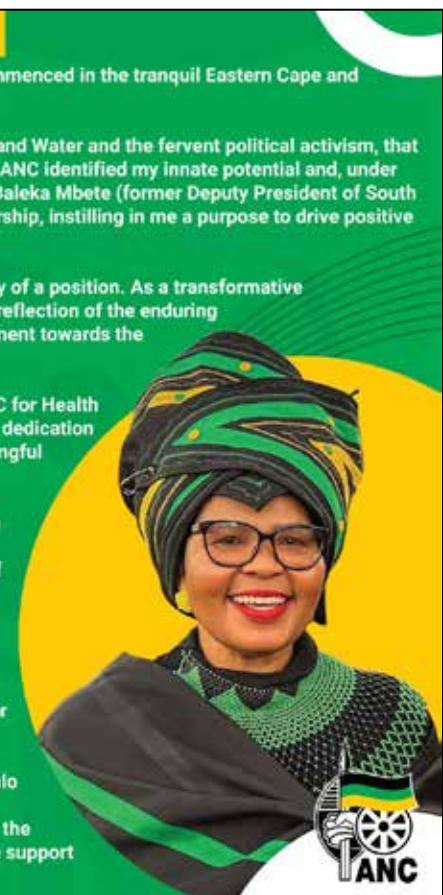
It was here, inspired by my father's dedication at Rand Water and the fervent political activism, that I found my calling for societal transformation. The ANC identified my innate potential and, under the guidance of revered leaders such as comrade Baleka Mbete (former Deputy President of South Africa), shaped me into a figure of impactful leadership, instilling in me a purpose to drive positive change.

Today, my role extends beyond the mere occupancy of a position. As a transformative agent in the communities I serve, my efforts are a reflection of the enduring influence of mentorship and the profound commitment towards the betterment of our society.

Embracing the significant responsibility as the MEC for Health and Wellness, my work is a testament to the ANC's dedication to fostering individuals capable of making a meaningful difference in our nation's health and well-being.

This trajectory from a serene setting in the Eastern Cape to a key role within Gauteng politics is not solely my own achievement but a demonstration of the collective impact of passionate, dedicated leadership, supported and celebrated by the ANC. It's a narrative that not only highlights my personal growth but also the effectiveness of the ANC's belief in the transformative power of nurturing potential for a more prosperous, healthier future for all.

In embracing this journey, I carry the name Tintswalo with pride—a symbol of gratitude and resilience, encapsulating the essence of my commitment and the depth of my journey, underscored by the invaluable support and credit due to the ANC for my success.





## OPINION

sition to a low-carbon future. The World Economic Forum (WEF) 2023 report indicated respondents identified the cost-of-living crisis as the most severe immediate risk, and the failure to mitigate the climate crisis as the biggest risk 10 years in the future.

Ramaphosa captured the implications for SA in one sentence, saying, *“We are implementing a just energy transition, not only to reduce carbon emissions and fight climate change but to create growth and jobs for our own people.”* This is probably at the core of the issues that will shape Tintswalo’s generation.

The geopolitical tension arising from the rivalries among global powers serves as a reminder of the fragile state of our polycrisis world. In his speech, Ramaphosa emphasised SA’s idealistic approach by saying that *“we are guided by the fundamental principle of human rights and freedom”* and *“we engage in peace efforts because we believe that even the most intractable conflicts can be brought to an end through negotiations”*, a proud tradition that Tintswalo will have to bear.

Another source of existential threats to humanity arises from technological advancements that have made possible ever more intelligent weapons systems as well as incredible breakthroughs in medicine and biotechnology. Our Tintswalos have grown up in a world with the latest technology at their fingertips, where – due to the ubiquitous effect of artificial intelligence – they have to navigate between fake news and deep fakes before they can even access the truth about anything.

Tintswalo will also have to wrestle with growing polarisation along

ideological lines as we see the consolidation and ascendancy of right-wing, racist forces in many democracies worldwide. They will have to do so when state capacity is eroded, and the possibility of a failed or fragile state looms large.

Despite the negative image of the public service after years of state capture, the polycrisis will require the Tintswalos to reshape the government so it is truly re-

sponsive to citizens’ needs.

In his conclusion, Ramaphosa said: *“As we continue the journey together, we are inspired by democracy’s children, by their energy, by their creativity and by their enthusiasm”*.

Here’s to the rise of the Tintswalos!

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

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# Reflections on the ICJ decision

■ By **SIKHUMBUZO THOMO**

**W**HETHER invented in India or Egypt, chess is now a worldwide game. In chess, there rarely comes a time when a simple pawn is able to upset the whole chessboard. This is usually through a move in the back rank whose effect simply cannot be calculated. Yes, a pawn can impose a checkmate. This is where we are geopolitically right now. The cascading effects of a single move on the chessboard coupled with our stunning and carefully calculated move at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has the effect of putting an end to eight decades of genocide of Palestinians by Israel. Not to mention the reduction of the much-lauded Israel legal team presentations to irrelevance by team South Africa.

This single move has proven to be mightier than any missile or bullet. South Africa has put forward a compelling case and sterling arguments before the ICJ for humanity and the People of Palestine to see. This development has moved a lot faster than anyone had expected within the space of international relations, given the usual snail's pace of the ICJ to attend to critical matters of importance. Usually, it takes months before the first ICJ hearing and we have witnessed a record two weeks for the first time. What that means is that the court foresaw that there was a palpable degree



of urgency in South Africa's application.

Watching the presentations, one concluded that Israel seems to have a view that the court and the proceedings are some legal authority that hardly concern them. It would seem that international law is too old-fashioned an idea to them and that there are rules binding on everybody else but themselves. In court, they said that they had little or no choice but to use force in the manner that they did to 'defend themselves' regardless of killing innocent lives in the process. Their presentation was nothing more than a cobbling of alibis together to bolster their case. They feebly argued that statements made by the Israel leadership were not a policy of their government. This is clearly not a factual statement because it

was Netanyahu himself who gave that indiscriminate order for airstrikes to rain on all of Gaza.

To be frank, arguments presented by Israel were not arguments at all about the case but only in relation to procedural issues. By simply giving warnings as they argued is not diplomacy at all. This is because diplomacy is about trying to understand the other side's perspectives and working towards finding some common ground, not hurling warnings and threats.

There was a strong arrogation by Israel that somehow South Africa needed their concurrence and permission before approaching the ICJ on the Palestinian genocide, and that Israel should have some say on every decision taken by the ICJ. Clearly, Israel sees itself as an exceptional country that

## OPINION

sees further and stands higher than any other country. It does not want to acknowledge that there are certain norms and standards governing the behaviour of all states. And, according to Israel, if we want to understand the difference between international law and the rules-based international order, then here it is: The rules based international order is what Israel decides it wants to do. What Israel does, it's legal.

That said, South Africa does not need their permission or anyone to approach the ICJ. The Israel Defense Force (IDF) continues to follow in the path where its leader Netanyahu is taking them, which is, indiscriminate killings of the innocent, especially women and children, and purging them out of their land under the guise of hunting for Hamas.

Many have expressed themselves in very critically terms on the Hamas attack. I think Hamas should be ordered by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to release all hostages and vice versa and also the UN must launch an investigation to decide what happened. Israel launched a huge military operation in Gaza to try to defeat Hamas in an act of genocide, even calling on some states to host Palestinians. Since the start of the IDF attacks, there have been thousands of innocent lives lost. The vast majority of these have been women and children, slaughtered, injured and missing.

And as night follows day with all odds stacked against South Africa at the Hague, an interim ruling has been awarded.

For Israel, this was just about the most painful decision that they could have received from

the fifteen judges. On the difficult ceasefire order, it made perfect sense for us in our application to ask the ICJ to order a ceasefire.

To delay the inevitable, ceasefire is simply going to cost more lives unnecessarily. Firstly, it is not a claim that a genocide is under way in Gaza. This is a verifiable fact that is backed by numerous UN Resolutions that the ICJ has seen even long before our application. It would have been illogical for us not to seek an immediate injunction from the ICJ that seeks a ceasefire with immediate effect.

The court, as is known, gave a string of other orders that Israel must comply to in a month. It instructed Israel to take steps to prevent a genocide being committed. Should Israel choose not to comply with those orders, then going forward the ICJ is entitled to make stronger findings against them on their non-compliance and refer all those matters of war crimes to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue warrants of arrest.

This ICJ decision also goes against the least mentioned

third-party Germany that joined the case in support of Israel. Germany shamefully argued that as a country that had committed a genocide in the past, they knew better than anyone what genocide was. This has put Germany in a very perilous position geo-politically and possibly without a reverse gear out of it as Namibia (a known victim of Germany's genocide) has a right to approach the same court on this weighty issue.

I will repeat the famous statement that Field Marshall Gerd von Rundstedt made to General Alfred Jodl of the German High Command in 1944 as Berlin was about to fall to the Soviet Union which was led by General Marshal Georgy Zhukov. Jold telephoned von Rundstedt and asked what they should do to address this catastrophic situation? Von Rundstedt uttered words to this effect: ***"Make peace you fool, what else can you do?"***

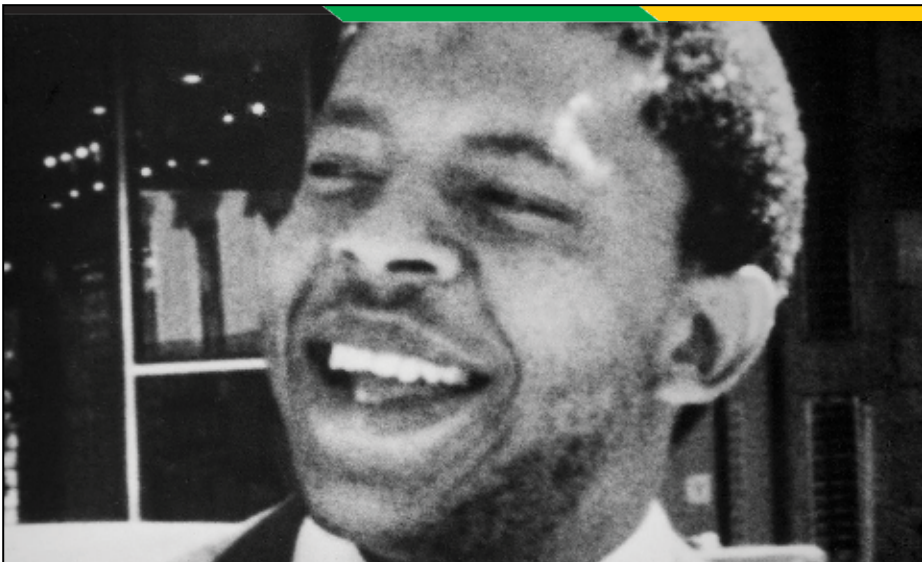
It seems to me that von Rundstedt's advice has become relevant as regards this Israel/Palestine conflict today, and Netanyahu would be well advised to follow it.



# A Brief Reflection of the 30 years of the Democracy Project

## REMEMBERING BHEKI MLANGENI

■ By **BHEKI MLANGENI FOUNDATION**



**The Bheki Mlangeni Foundation remembers Bheki Mlangeni on the 33rd anniversary of his assassination (15 February 2024)**

**M**LANGENI lost his life in his home in Jabulani, Soweto, when he unknowingly activated a bomb that Eugene De Kock and his death squad had built into a Walkman cassette player. Mlangeni was a socio-political activist and lawyer who fought for the removal of the inhumane systems of Apartheid and colonialism in favour of a democratic order.

In 1994, Democracy dawned, replacing over 300 years of systemic displacement, dispossession, oppression, enslavement and annihilation of Black people by White colonial rulers and settlers. There cannot be a more appropriate way to honour Mlangeni's

contribution to the establishment of a new democratic South Africa than to reflect briefly on the past 30 years.

Therefore, the democracy project was to undertake the mammoth task of redressing the legacy of those horrific three centuries, a task that is impossible to correct in just 30 years. While we acknowledge the many positive changes in our country, it would be irrational to claim that enough has been achieved in the 30 of democracy years to mitigate the negative impact of the pre-1994 South Africa.

Many of the laws and policies of the new South Africa have been focused on the empowerment of

the previously oppressed majority, and many in this group have moved up the social strata. Infrastructural development in the townships and rural communities is another noteworthy achievement of the progress made in the last 30 years. That women can now access more job opportunities should be a commendable success of this democracy. There are obviously more examples of the positive strides made in the last 30 years. The main triumph is that there are now attempts to give all South Africans their right to dignity, irrespective of their race, gender or creed.

These accomplishments, however, are undermined by rampant

## TRIBUTE



corruption in both the public and private sectors of our society. Political principals and officials in the public sector are reported to have been involved in corruption activities such as money laundering, looting of government funds, accepting kickbacks and bribery. The private sector is often caught committing crimes of price-fixing, currency manipulation, paying of bribes, fronting, tax evasion, racism and many other similar wrongdoings.

This democratic undertaking has also been challenged by a minority group of separatist South Africans who refuse to contribute towards its development, with the hope of its demise in favour of the return of the Apartheid White minority rule. Some have built a separate "country" with its own currency inside the Republic, whilst others are now currently advocating for an independent Western Cape "state".

These are some of the factors contributing to the erosion of the

democratic initiative. As a result, most Black South Africans still do not benefit from this democracy. It is as if it was meant to perpetuate the benefits of their erstwhile op-

pressors. Crime, violence, poverty and unemployment affect them the most.

It is sometimes tempting to justify the assertion uttered by some of the previously oppressed majority that the conditions under Apartheid were much more bearable.

For the sake of Bheki Mlangeni, Chris Hani, Steve Biko, Solomon Mahlangu, Vuyisile Mini and many more who paid the ultimate price for democracy, we plead with the current political leaders, urging them to return to the values of selflessness, integrity, morality and humility, and to work harder to establish a truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

These are the ideals that Bheki Mlangeni died for. His death and that of many patriots should not be in vain.



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## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

17 – 23 February 2024

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

### 17 February 1951 Patricia de Lille born in Beaufort West



Patricia de Lille, leader of the GOOD party, and Minister of Public Works was born in Beaufort West, Western Cape. She went to Bastiaanse High School and worked as a laboratory technician until 1990. During this period, she joined the SA Chemical Workers Union, became shop steward and eventually regional secretary of SACWU. She was elected onto its national executive in 1983, and in 1988 served as Vice President of the trade union federation, National Council of Trade Unions (NAC-TU) in 1988. She formed part of the PAC delegation at CODESA, served as a PAC MP from 1994-2003, serve on the Parliamentary committees of Transport, Health, Minerals and Energy, Trade and Industry, Communications, the Rules and Ethics Committees and the Code of Ethics. In 2003 she left the PAC to form the Independent Democrats, went into coalition with the DA, and became MEC for Social Development (2010-2011) and Mayor of Cape

Town (2011-2018) in the DA government. She formed the GOOD party ahead of the 2019 national and provincial elections, winning two national seats and one in the Western Cape legislature. De Lille served as Minister of Public Works and later Tourism in the Cabinet of President Cyril Ramaphosa between 2019 and 2024.

### 17 February 1962 Football match called off

On 17 February 1962, the soccer match between Lourenco Marques (Mozambique) club Desportive and Durban City Football Club (South Africa) was called off. A Lourenco Marques newspaper reported that this was because no black and Coloured players would be allowed to play during the game. According to a report by Cape Times, the teams' members themselves decided not to take part in the game.

### 18 February 1857 Nongqawuse prophecy



A period of hardship set in for the amaXhosa after their defeat in the Eighth Frontier War. In April 1856 Nongqawuse, an adolescent girl living in the area ruled by Paramount Chief Sarhili (Kreli), was reputedly addressed by her ancestors. Their message was to tell the AmaXhosa that their ancestors would rise from the dead on a certain day and also to instruct them that all cattle were to be slaughtered. There was to be no cultivation, but people should dig new granaries and erect strong cattle-folds to house what would be received from the ancestors. On that specific day the sun would rise and set again in the east and a whirlwind would sweep all White people into the sea. Sarhili ordered his subordinate chiefs to obey the injunctions. The first date of resurrection was set for 11 August 1856, but as the day dawned and nothing happened, other dates were set, including 18 February 1857. Disappointment followed disappointment, until Sarhili finally renounced all belief in the prophecy after about fifteen months. By then, the amaXhosa had been heavily affected. Tens of thousands died, while about 30,000 streamed across the border in search of food and work. Many held the belief that the true plotters were land-hungry colonial authorities.

### 18 February 1931 Toni Morrison born

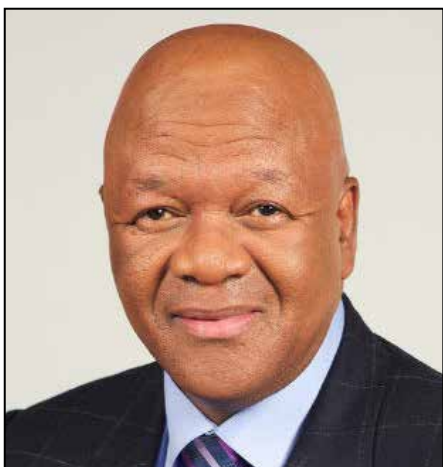
Toni Morrison is one of the most

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

celebrated authors in the world, with a host of novels, plays and children's books to her name. As the first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, Morrison's work has inspired a generation of writers to follow in her footsteps.

### 18 February 1953

#### Jeff Radebe born



Jeffrey Thamsanqa Radebe was born in Cato Manor, where his family lived until they were forcefully removed in 1958 to KwaMashu. An activist since student days in 1976, a member of Umkhonto weSizwe, a lawyer, political detainee, a leader in the SACP, and a long-serving member of the ANC NEC (1991-2022). He was also amongst the cadres from the 1994 parliament and served as Minister of Transport, Constitutional Development and Justice, Minerals and Energy and Minister in the Presidency from 1994 to 2019, when he retired.

### 18 February 1975

#### TPLF formed

The Tigray People's Liberation Front was formed on this day, fighting for greater autonomy within a federal state, eventually playing a leading role in the overthrow of the Derg regime of

Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991. Under Meles Zenawi the TPLF became the dominant faction in the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which governed Ethiopia until 2019 when current Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed abolished the EPDRF and formed the Prosperity Party that excluded TPLF. The situation deteriorated and in 2021 resulted in a violent conflict between the Federal government and the TPLF until the Pretoria Peace Agreement of 2022 to facilitate cessation of hostilities.

### 18 February 2005

#### SA film wins Golden Bear Award

The South African Xhosa film uCarmene Khayelitsha became the second South African movie to compete and first to win the Golden Bear award as the best film at the 55th Berlin Film Festival in Germany. The film was shot in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. The musical, sung entirely in isiXhosa, is about an HIV-positive rural woman and won two other awards, the Human Rights Award at the Venice Film Festival in 2004 and the Best Film award at Pune, India. The lead actress, singer Pauline Malefane, accepted the award in isiXhosa before bursting into song at the request of the film's director, Dornford-May.

### 18 February 2020

#### AfDB funds Nigerian SAPZ

The African Development Bank offers 500 million USD to Nigeria to finance special 'agro-industrialised processing zones (SAPZ) in all four geographical quadrants of the country with loans to farmers to boost agricultural production. As the most populous country in Africa (200 mil-

lion), the country imports most of its food and is seeking to turn this around, spending over USD 6 billion a year on agricultural imports. Across the continent, the African Development Bank by 2023 committed \$853 million to develop more than two dozen Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones in 11 countries.

### 19 February 1897

#### British demolition of Benin City

As British forces carried out the demolition of Benin City, photographers captured the magnificent stone pyramids and fabled stone walls before they were torn down. The photos stand as testimony to the wanton destruction of African art and architecture.

### 19 February 1962

#### Report calls for more say for Afrikaans press in SAPA affairs

The first part of the South African Press Commission's first report was tabled in parliament by the Minister of the Interior, de Klerk. The report, which had taken eleven years to draw up consisted of two volumes totaling 700 pages, with nineteen annexures running to 1,566 pages. It strongly recommended that the South African Press association (SAPA) gives more say in its affairs to the Afrikaans-language press.

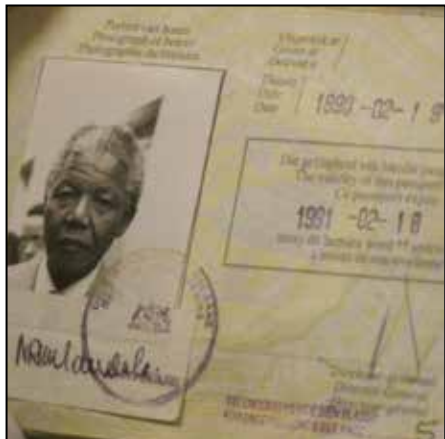
### 19 February 1971

#### Arrests of Unity Movement activists

It was reported that the Security Police had detained about twenty Africans, Coloureds and Asians. The detainees were said to be members of the Unity Movement of South Africa, founded in 1943 by Coloured schoolteachers.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 19 February 1990 Mandela issued with his first South African passport



Nelson Mandela was issued with his first South African passport on 19 February 1990, eight days after he was released from prison. It was this passport that he used to embark on a tour of African states that supported the South African liberation struggle, including Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia.

### 19 February 1996 Largest flood affects Vaal Dam

To date, the largest flood affecting the Vaal Dam, took place from December 1995 to February 1996, when inflow of over 4,700 cubic metres per second (170,000 cu ft/s) was measured into the Dam which was already at full capacity due to good rains. On 19 February 1996, the Vaal Dam's capacity was 118%. The dam has 60 flood gates, and on 21 February 2023, the Department of Water Affairs reported that the dam was 120% full, and that 14 sluices had been opened, causing downstream flooding.

### 19 February 1997 Deng Xiaoping of China died

Leader of the Chinese Commu-

nist Party Deng Xiaoping passed on at the age of 92 in Beijing. He is widely credited for the social and economic reforms since the 1970's that saw the rise of China into the world power it is today. These policies include long-term planning and decentralized economic management to lift millions out of poverty. 'Deng stressed individual responsibility in the making of economic decisions, material incentives as the reward for industry and initiative, and the formation of cadres of skilled, well-educated technicians and managers to spearhead China's development.'

### 20 February 1925 Novelist, poet and activist Alex La Guma is born

Justin Alexander la Guma was born in District Six, Cape Town on 20 February 1925. His father, Jimmy La Guma was of Cuban descent, which made him mixed race in South Africa and was classified as Coloured. La Guma's father was involved in anti-apartheid activism, a path that he would also follow. La Guma was a talented writer and wrote several books, most of them depicting the plight of black people under apartheid. He was arrested several times as an activist, and would use his time in jail to write. He later went to exile in England before returning to his father's native country Cuba, where he became an African National Congress (ANC) representative. La Guma died in 1985.

### 20 February 1940 Dr Abdurahman dies in Cape Town

Dr Abdullah Abdurahman, medical doctor and Cape community leader, died on this day at the age of 69. Founder and leader

of the anti-apartheid African People's Organisation (APO), he was the first Black person to become a member of the Cape Town City Council (from 1905-1940). His death raised concern within the Black, Coloured and Indian communities, as he was a well-known human rights campaigner. The Standard and Imvo Zabantsundu (Black Opinion) hailed him as a great leader who was at all times available to address the needs of oppressed communities. In June 1999, President Nelson Mandela posthumously honoured Abdurahman by awarding him the National Order for Meritorious Service in Gold.

### 21 February 1858 Walter B Rubusana, ANC founder member born



Walter Benson Rubusana was born in Mnandi in the Somerset East district of the then Cape Colony. He was a founder-member of the African National Congress (ANC). His father was a senior councillor (umphakathi) to the Paramount Chief, Sandile Ngqika. Rubusana trained as teacher at Lovedale College, taught for a number of years, and went on to study and was ordained as minister of the Congregational Church in 1884. He transferred to East London, which became his home for the rest of his life. As a rec-



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

ognised Xhosa language authority, he served on the Xhosa Bible Revision Committee, to review the translation by Tiyo Soga in the 1850s. Rubusana supervised its publication in Britain when he accompanied the Thembu king, Dalindyebo, to the coronation of King Edward VII in 1904. In London, he also published his first book, *Zemk' Inkomo Magwalandini* (Defend Your Heritage), an anthology of traditional epic poetry, essays and history. Rubusana by then was active in politics, and in 1909 was part of the African and Coloured delegation to the British King, to plead for inclusions of Africans and Coloureds in the soon-to-be formed Union of South Africa. The delegation included Dr A. Abdurahman, African People's Organisation leader, D Dwanya, Matthew Fredericks, John T Jabavu, D J Lenders, Thomas Mapikela and parliamentarian WP Schreiner. Alfred Mangena who was in London also joined the delegation. The deputation fell on deaf ears, and on their return Rubusana announced his intention to stand for the Thembuland Constituency of the Cape Provincial Council. W B Rubusana ran a most effective campaign, with his church and community roots providing a network to mobilise the voters; strengthened by support of the newspaper *Ilizwi Labantu*. When the results were announced on September 21, Rubusana had won the seat; the first African ever to be elected to serve as a member of the Cape Provincial Council. In 1912, Rubusana was a co-founder of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which later became the African National Congress. In 1914, he went to Britain with the SANNC delegation to protest against the Native Lands Act and was co-ordinator of the ANC 1919 constitution. Dr Walter Rubusana

was not only a gifted intellectual with many talents, but a political activist in the service of his people. Dr Rubusana passed away on 19 April 1936 at Frere Hospital in East London after a protracted illness.

### 21 February 1917 SS Mendi Sinks



The sinking of the SS Mendi on 21 February 1917 became one of South Africa's worst tragedies of the First World War (1914-1919). The steamship sank in the English Channel on the way to France, one of the worst tragedies of the First World War (1914-1919). A total of 616 South Africans, including 607 black troops serving in the South African Native Labour Contingent died.

### 21 February 1973 Israel shot down Libyan passenger plane

A Libyan Arab Airline Boeing 727, Flight LN 114, flying from Tripoli to Cairo via Benghazi wandered off course due to equipment failure and bad weather, into airspace of Israel occupied Sinai Peninsula. Two Israeli fighter jets intercepted the aircraft, shot it

down, killing 108 civilians of the 113 passengers on board. When the jets intercepted the plane, the pilot was already correcting the route and turned back. The incident was condemned by all member-nations of the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

### 21 February 1985 99-year leaseholds introduced for Gugulethu, Langa and Nyanga

Apartheid influx control was aimed at allowing black South Africans into cities only as migrant labour, with impediments against owning land or property in 'white' South Africa. Following the 1973 strikes, the 1976 uprising and pressures from capital for more skilled and stabled black labour, the Black Urban Amendment Act of 1978 introduced a system of 99-year tenure for sites in black townships and villages outside of bantustans. The 99-year leasehold was first introduced for Soweto in 1979. The Cape Town leaseholds deliberately excluded the informal settlements of Crossroads, as the regime continued to try and control movement of black people to the city, with forced removals continuing.

### 21 February 1994 Lusaka Stock Exchange founded

The Zambian stock exchange is based in the capital and financial centre, Lusaka.

### 21 February 2001 Miriam Makeba nominated for Grammy

South Africa's legendary musical sensation, Miriam Makeba, was nominated in the category World Music Album for her album *Homeland* at the 43rd An-

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



nual Grammy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles, USA. The album was released world-wide and featured a collection of songs from buoyant to the plaintive, illustrating the vocal range and power of this celebrated performer. The nomination followed closely upon her being the first Kora Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

### 22 February 1871 John Langalibalele Dube born



First ANC President, writer, publisher, ordained priest, educationist and philosopher was born on this day in Inanda, KZN. With his wife Nokuthela Dube, he built churches and founded Ohlange High School in 1901, the Ilanga Lase Natal newspaper in 1903 and wrote extensively on the history of the Zulu royalty. During

his tenure as ANC President, Dube advocated a need for the congress to work closely with the Coloured people and met at least once a year with the African People's Organisation (APO) led by Dr Abdurhaman. Dube was instrumental in improving the status of black women, especially those involved in the domestic work sector, and acted as a mediator in women's dealings with the Department of Native Affairs.

### 22 February 1914 Teenage political activist passed on

Born to Indian Emigrants from Tamil Nadu, India, Valliamma Munuswamy Mudaliar, grew up in Johannesburg. Valliamma became aware of the oppressive system she and her family were living under. At age 16, Mudaliar joined her mother and a large group of other women in an illegal march from the Transvaal to Natal. In October 1913, once again mother and daughter were part of the second batch of women who marched to Natal. They were arrested and sentenced to three months of hard labour at the Pietermaritzburg prison. Mudaliar fell ill soon after her conviction but refused an offer to be released early. She died on 22 February 1914, soon after her release from prison. Gandhi, who visited her at her death bed, designed the Indian flag with the colours of Mudaliar's sari. Mudaliar's contribution is recognized in India, with a public library, school and commemorative stamp in her honour.

### 22 February 1968 Mixed Marriages Act of 1968 extended

On this day in history, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages



Amendment Bill was adopted – extending the ban on marriages between White and Black people to Coloured people. If South African citizens of mixed racial descent were married outside of the country, the marriage would not be recognized in South Africa.

### 22 February 1989 Ladysmith Black Mambazo wins first Grammy



The famous group led and founded by Joseph Tshabalala, which popularised isicathamiya music, won their first Grammy for Shaka Zulu in the Best Traditional Folk Album category.

### 22 February 1996 Black pupils arrive at school escorted by Police

A few days after the ruling by the Supreme Court to force Potgietersrus Primary School in Limpopo Province to allow Black pupils to enroll, sixteen Black children arrived at school protected by police officers to register. They were subjected to a barrage of racist verbal abuse by some members

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

of the White community whose children attended the same school. The low attendance by White pupils affirmed their parents' stance. Only twenty out of almost 700 pupils came to school on that day. Many White parents threatened to establish their own school, rather than have their children attend a multiracial school.

### 22 February 2002 Savimbi killed

Rebel group UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi was killed during a government operation, bringing an effective end to the civil war which had plagued Angola since independence in 1975.

### 22 February 2018 Anok Yai opens fashion show

The South Sudanese model becomes the second black model to open the Prada fashion house show, since the first by Naomi Campbell, 21 years ago.

### 22 February 2019 Wildlife reserves to benefit local communities

A new Namibian law came into effect giving local communities greater access to the benefits of nature conservation areas. The 83 wildlife conservancies that can handle up to 200,000 guests must now return 50% of their profits to surrounding communities.

### 22 February 2020 Namibian beef to US markets

The USA heavily protects (and subsidizes) its agricultural sector, and after 18 years of negotiations, Namibia is finally allowed to export beef to the USA, the first country in Africa.

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

17 – 23 February 2024

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

### 17 February Global Tourism Resilience Day



For many countries, tourism is a major source of income, foreign currency earnings, tax revenue and employment. Because tourism connects people with nature, sustainable tourism has the unique ability to spur environmental responsibility and conservation. Sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, is a cross-cutting activity that can contribute to economic growth, alleviating poverty, creating full employment and decent work for all.

### 17 February World Pangolin Day

Pangolins are mammals that are covered in tough, overlapping scales made of keratin. They eat ants and termites using an extraordinarily long, sticky tongue, and are able to quickly roll themselves up into a tight ball when they feel threatened. There are eight known species of pangolins – four in Asia and four species in Africa. Pangolins are amongst the world's most trafficked non-human mammals, according to National Geographic, and are therefore under serious threat of extinction. The Asian species are listed as critically endangered and the African species vulnerable. In 2016 – the 186 countries party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES),

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

the treaty that regulates the international wildlife trade – voted to ban the commercial trade in pangolins.

### 18 February

#### World Whale Day

Whales are the largest animals in the world, and they are in every ocean. They are warm-blooded mammals that nurse their young. In size, they range from the dwarf sperm sharks that weighs just over 270 kg and the huge blue whale, that weighs over 180,000 kg (about 33 elephants!) and may be as long as 60 meters, the width of a rugby field. Although they live in water, they breathe air. World Whale Day is celebrated every year on the third Sunday in February.

### 20 February

#### World Day of Social Justice



Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. Social justice is upheld when we promote and advance gender equality, the rights of workers, the poor, homeless, LGBTQI, indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove legal and other barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, sexual orientation or disability. The pursuit of social justice for all is supposed to be at the core of the United Nations' global mission to promote development and human dignity.

### 21 February

#### International Mother Language Day

Languages, with their complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development, are of strategic importance for people and planet. Yet, due to globalization



processes, they are increasingly under threat, or disappearing altogether. When languages fade, so does the world's rich tapestry of cultural diversity. Opportunities, traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking and expression — valuable resources for ensuring a better future — are also lost. At least 43% of the estimated 6000 languages spoken in the world are endangered.

### 21 February

#### International Tourist Guide Day

Tourist or tour guides are persons who guide visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area. The tour guide must have area-specific knowledge and/or qualification, recognized by the appropriate authority.

### 21 February

#### National Armed Forces Day

The day aims to celebrate the contribution of South African men and women in the armed forces and to garner public support for our armed forces. The day coincides with the commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi steamship on 21 February 1917, one of South Africa's worst tragedies of the First World War (1914-1918). South African armed forces is





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ranked 33th amongst 140 ranked countries in the 2024 Global Firepower ranking (down from 26th in 2022), third in the African continent with Egypt (#15) and Algeria (#26). SANDF operations are guided by three objectives, in line with the Constitution: (i) defense of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of South Africa, (ii) promoting regional and continental peace, security and stability in support of government initiatives and (iii) support to the people.

### 22 February World Thinking Day

World Thinking Day is an annual observance day since 1926, introduced by the World Association of Girl Guides and Scouts, to promote international friendship. The day is also used as “an opportunity to speak out on issues that affect young women

and fundraise for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 150 countries.” The theme for 2024 is ‘Our World, Our Equal Future.’

### 22 February Be Humble Day

On Be Humble Day, people across the world, irrespective of their religion, culture, and philosophy come together and stress the importance of being humble. Humility helps one extend more compassion and empathy to others. Those who practice humility are more likely to consider others’ beliefs and opinions. Humility offers the opportunity to become less self-involved and more attuned with the feelings of others, promoting the idea that accepting our errors and faults makes us better human beings.



The Year of United Action  
To Defend Our Freedom and  
Advance a Better Life for All:  
*Forward In A Decisive Victory!*

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# REMINDER FOR SOUTH AFRICANS LIVING ABROAD

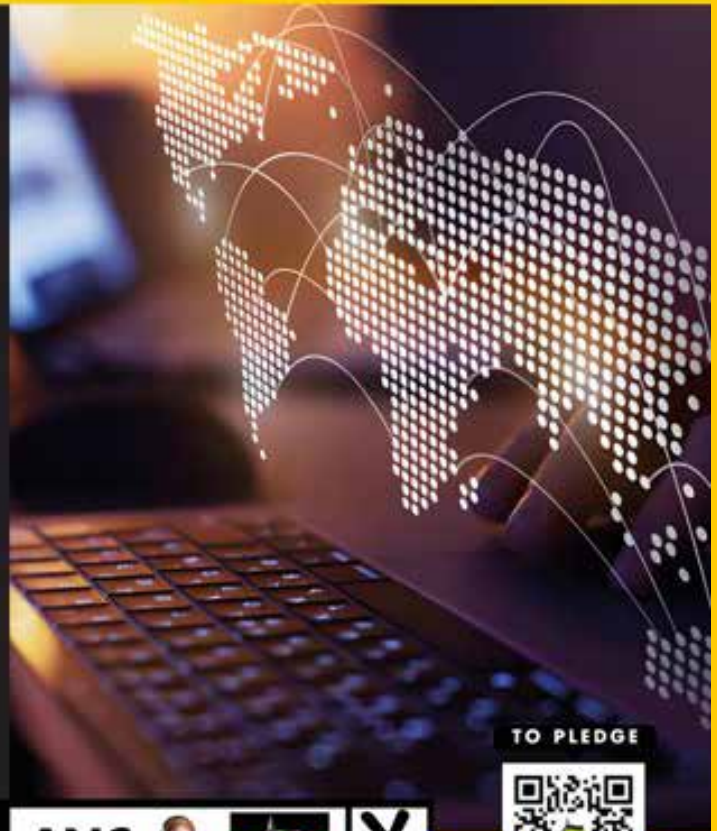


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## Are you eligible?

To submit an application to register to vote out-of-country, you must meet the following requirements

- Be a South African citizen;
- Be at least 16 years (you can only vote from age 18).



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