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Conversations with the
President



Constitutional Court's humanistic jurisprudence a source of pride

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

ACROSS many parts of the world, human rights are under threat, and constitutionalism is increasingly being tested.

In March this year the UN Human Rights Council said the world is facing 'a moment of profound instability' – characterised by conflict, democratic backsliding, declining respect for the rule of law, right-wing populism, attacks on civil society and judicial independence being undermined.

The Council stressed the need for countries to strengthen democratic institutions charged with safeguarding fundamental rights and freedoms.

As South Africans we can be proud that we continue to strive

to live up to this obligation.

Even as we face numerous challenges, our democratic order is in good health, anchored in a progressive constitution and a Constitutional Court that continues to safeguard the rights of all.

This year marks thirty years since the Court convened for the first time, marking a new, bold chapter of our democratic journey.

The imperative for the establishment of a specialised constitutional court was a key facet of the multiparty negotiations that preceded the democratic transition.

Whilst some believed that existing structures such as the Supreme Court could perform this task, the African National Congress (ANC)

advocated for a new court that was untainted by the past.

Just as drafters of the constitution itself drew heavily on the experiences of other countries – when considering the model of the court we looked to other jurisdictions for inspiration. One of these was Germany's Federal Constitutional Court that was established in 1951.

Retired Constitutional Court Judge Richard Goldstone recalls how the 11 members of the new court met for the first time in the German city of Karlsruhe, the seat of the Federal Constitutional Court. Retired Judge Johann Kriegler recalls how they learned skilled adjudication of constitutional issues from their German colleagues.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT



In this respect, this proud institution of our democracy is the product of constitutional solidarity.

It draws on the wisdom and support of international partners, yet remains uniquely South African in its outlook, its orientation and values.

The court's first case in 1995, on the constitutionality of the death penalty – set the tone for a humanistic jurisprudence grounded in human dignity that endures to this day.

In his judgment, one of South Africa's finest legal minds South Africa's first black Chief Justice Ismail Mohamed immortalised the vision of the new court.

"The South African Constitution is different," Justice Mohamed writes. *"It retains from the past only what is defensible and represents a decisive break from, and a ringing rejection of that part of the past which is disgracefully racist, authoritarian, insular and repressive, and a vigorous identification of and commitment to a democratic, universalistic, caring and aspirational-ly egalitarian ethos."*

Over the past 30 years the Con-

stitutional Court has advanced this aspirationally egalitarian ethos in far-reaching ways.

It's landmark judgments are well-known on issues such as the death penalty, access to HIV/ Aids treatment, prisoners' right to vote, and others.

Yet its less well-known judgments that have had equally dramatic impact on matters such as upholding the rights of pensioners to not having their old age grants disrupted, the rights of small-holder farmers to not have their livestock impounded under colonial-era ordinances, the rights of women in customary marriages, and upholding the rights of rail commuters to safety.

The composition of the Constitutional Court bench, particularly with respect to judges with different backgrounds and different views on the law, has played an important role in shaping the court's jurisprudence.

In 2007 former Chief Justice Pius Langa highlighted the centrality of judicial diversity, saying this was not confined solely to an appropriate racial or gender mix, but

that a wide range of views and life experiences are represented. Judicial diversity, Justice Langa said, is likely to increase judicial dissent, and hence improve the quality of decisions.

Throughout its proud history the Court has carried out its work without fear or favour, not hesitating to hold even the most powerful in society to account.

An Ipsos poll released earlier this year found that most South Africans view democracy, human rights and the rule of law as universal values that all nations deserve and must aspire towards.


The majority of respondents also believed that South Africa is a good example of a democracy, and has a responsibility to be a moral leader in the world.

This confidence is a result of the abiding trust the public has in our Constitutional Court.

As we celebrate this milestone, we should honour the proud history of the court by continuing to work together as all of society to realise the full promise of our Constitution.

WITHOUT UNITY WE ARE DOOMED

Speech delivered by the **ANC SECRETARY-GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**,
on the occasion of the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) CEC Meeting

 On behalf of the leadership collective of the African National Congress, I wish to extend our revolutionary greetings to the entire membership of SAMWU throughout the length and breadth of our country. I also wish to salute members of the SAMWU CEC here present.

In his 1852 treatise on the *“The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte”*, Marx is instructive on how to navigate the conditions that we encounter today, when he argued that we don’t conduct the struggle in conditions of our choosing, instead, we are constantly confronted by challenges, curve balls and setbacks. In this regard, he succinctly declared, and I quote:

“Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just as they seem to be occupied with revolutionizing themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing



from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language.”

Comrades, we are here as SAMWU and as the ANC, as the SACP, as COSATU and as SANCO, because those who walked this path before us determined that without unity of purpose, we are individually helpless against the forces determined to perpetually oppress us. All the Alliance partners and their components or structures were formed on the appreciation of the principle of unity and solidarity.

Unity is our bulwark against the concerted efforts by counter revolutionary forces here and inter-

nationally. That is why in the first instance counter revolution has our unity as the first target, same as communication installations are the first target in any war, to cause confusion and scatter into disarray the enemy forces. That is precisely why propaganda remains an important part of our revolutionary course, because those who dominate the means of production and of communication utilize these to misinform and dominate our people.

Therefore, composite to the importance of unity is the importance of propaganda, to counter the misinformation about who we are, what we have achieved, and the challenges that lay ahead of us. We must communicate directly amongst ourselves as the

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progressive forces within the alliance as well as directly with the masses of the people that we lead.

There is no idea or strategy that will prevail in the political terrain with which the ANC is pre-occupied or the shop floors with which as the union movement is your terrain, without unity supported by effective communication.

Communication must mean not just informing each other but robust political and ideological engagement on the concrete conditions that we are faced with both on the shop floor and in society at large. The clarion call that workers of the world unite rings true even today as we continue to forge ahead with the National Democratic Revolution.

That is why we deeply appreciate this gesture for direct engagement, which, as I will later outline, must not be limited to such august occasions, but must be a continuous pre-occupation.

The ANC suffered what we called a strategic setback in the 2024 National and Provincial Elections.

Consequently, we had to contend with the fact that we were dealing with *"circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past"*. The triumphs and setbacks of the past had come to bear in the outcome of the 2024 National and Provincial Elections.

Despite the fact that the 30 Year Review Report compiled by government at the end of the 6th Administration and 30 years of democracy could speak of strides hardly achieved in any similar post-colonial society and within their first thirty years of freedom. There was nonetheless the legacy looming large of outstanding economic inequality compounded by corruption, factionalism and division within the ANC and the union movement. Economic inequality is what is holding back economic growth, as the majority of our people are kept out of the mainstream economy.

The economic disengagement by the majority of our people, whilst serving the interest of those seeking to preserve the legacy of the past in terms of race, gender and class, it nonetheless betrays the very objectives of robust eco-

nomic activities and therefore of economic growth.

We have previously attempted to bridge the economic divide through measures such as Employment Equity, BBBEE and so forth, but all these were undermined either by corruption or legal and systemic opposition from those who have monopolised our economy. The answer to this is radical and rapid socio-economic transformation, hence the importance, amongst others, of the Land Expropriation Act.

Many workers bear the burden of extended families on diminishing real income as the cost of living spirals upwards. Unless we create more employment and economic opportunities, the livelihood of our people will continue to face harsh economic realities. That is why we must accelerate doing away with the tender system and ensure all municipality workers are employed in decent and secure jobs. Municipalities must be capacitated to execute all the service delivery tasks, especially easy tasks such as water provision through tankers, which as you know has been at the cen-



tre of corruption and poor service delivery.

Likewise, we must accelerate doing away with the labour brokers who feed on the hard sweat of our people. Similarly, we must confront the criminal challenges of extortionists, who blatantly rob our people of their hard-earned entrepreneurial undertakings. These criminals are partly responsible for poor economic growth in the areas where the majority of the working class live as our people are afraid to invest. We fully support the decisive Police approach to violent criminals who rob our people and undermine our economy.

Our tasks as the current leadership of the ANC, was premised firstly on acknowledging that many things went wrong on many fronts, and that our starting point must be organisational renewal and rebuilding. We then went about strengthening structures including the Integrity Commission, and setting up frameworks that would ensure we have an effective revolutionary movement capable of delivering on the promise for a better life for all.

However, the ANC cannot achieve the objectives of creating a better life for all working alone, hence the ever importance of SAMWU and the Alliance in general. It is why we maintain that unity of purpose amongst the motive forces for change is indispensable or else we may as well close shop.

As we meet here today, it is our submission to you as the ANC, that we must all of us heed the call for unity, without which we are variously and collectively doomed. Any arrogance or miscalculation in that we can survive



on our own will certainly have as result of that, a weaker ANC, a weaker COSATU, a weaker SACP, a weaker SANCO and a weaker Alliance.

We need as leaders of the ANC, the SACP, COSATU and SANCO, appreciate that at the height of adversity it is not the time to give in to divisions. That is why we laboured hard for the unity of SANCO leading to their National Conference that has elected the current leadership.

Differences of views and even on strategies and tactics, must never be excuse for fracturing neither the ANC nor the union movement. When each Alliance component is weakened, the other cannot join the hovering political vultures and counter-revolutionaries but rather seek ways to strengthen each other.

As we must convene the Alliance Political Council soon, we must evaluate the strengths and weakness of each of the Alliance partners and seek ways to build stronger and united organisations. This is partly the basis of our bilateral engagements with the SACP, COSATU and SANCO, to build a stronger alliance and stronger components capa-

ble of delivering on the promise of the NDR.

True leaders and revolutionaries do not collapse when the going gets tough, we dust ourselves up and get back to the business of driving revolutionary change for that is the very reason for our existence, it is what we live for.

We must move on from the disappointment of the 2024 National and Provincial Elections. We are now focusing on the 2026 Local Government Elections. Our people want efficient and effective service delivery. They want a better life for themselves and their children.

SAMWU is better poised to spearhead rapid and effective service delivery. There is none within the progressive circles with a better appreciation of the challenges involved on service delivery than SAMWU. And perhaps we must create a hotline between SAMWU and the ANC, wherein all challenges pertaining to workers as well as service delivery are speedily attended to. Where workers' rights are undermined, we must respond with deserved urgency. Similarly, where service delivery is shortcoming, we must respond with deserved urgency.



We have the Local Government Intervention Unit, to which I would propose that you fully participate in. We must move beyond words and intentions and walk the talk.

As the ANC, we fully appreciate that workers are not mere nuts and bolts in a production machinery, but human beings with human and worker rights. The essence of the Alliance is premised on the fact that the interests of the workers are tied with the interests of the ANC, which is to improve the livelihood of all our people across race, gender and class.

Whilst the ANC is not a class organisation, it is nonetheless biased towards the working class and this is by virtue of the fact that the motive forces for change are by and large constituted of the working class.

As we look forward to the outcome of your fruitful deliberations, I also wish to assure you that the ANC, your liberation movement, continues to consider you, the labour movement, a critical pillar and partner in our efforts to strengthen state capacity and drive social transformation.

We rely on you to ensure effective service delivery. On our part

as the governing party in many municipalities, it remains our duty to resolve the challenges that workers face in the workplace.

I do not have to tell you that the current phase of our struggle is a deeply contested one. The counter revolution forces here and abroad has been emboldened more than ever, following the strategic setback we suffered in 2024. A weakened working class can only result in a compromised and weakened ANC and by extension a weakened democratic dividend for the majority of our people.

Accordingly, the capacity and impact of the South African State on the lives of ordinary South Africans hinges on the unity, strength and ideological influence of organized labour, in shaping and driving a progressive agenda. If labour fails to hold state actors accountable, then you risk diminishing your own legitimacy in the eyes of your members and that of society more broadly. And when you fall, we too shall fall, hence a strong SAMWU is not only in the interests of the workers but also of the ANC and by extension the NDR.

The current global context is a lesson on how easy it is for the

interests of the people to be hijacked and subjugated by those of the wealthy and privileged.

The Global Context

The geopolitical environment continues to tilt, in what we believe is increasingly a leaning towards our shared ideals of a multipolar and by extension a multilateral world. The last kicks of a dying unipolar world continue to wreck sporadic but unsustainable havoc, as the global South continues to assert itself with the headway of Chinese economic rise, supported by the consolidation of BRICS amongst other. Militarily, the world has become a dangerous place, with continued acts of impunity by the State of Israel, as it continues undeterred with the genocidal ethnic cleansing in Gaza.

As you know, we continue to stand by Palestine, as we also continue to call for peace in Sudan, South Sudan and the DRC. The withdrawal of our forces from the DRC is not to abandon but strengthen the peace process in that country.

Similarly, we continue to call for peaceful resolution of the Ukrainian conflict.

We also continue to call for an end to the Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara, an end to the Cuban blockade, democratization in eSwatini.

As we are poised to host the G20 Summit, we will be sharing with the world our values for a just international order premised on the sovereignty of States and the universal respect for human and socio-economic rights.

In July we will be hosting the **Liberation Movements Summit** which remains an important platform to forge solidarity in the region against forces sponsored to reverse the gains of our political freedom.

Local Government

As I conclude, allow me to re-iterate the importance of the sphere of local government in improving the lives of our people. You are at the coalface of meeting the basic needs of our people in various ways. Although there are some encouraging signs, it is no exaggeration to suggest that our Local Government System is in a bad state. It requires a fundamental reset and overhaul in a variety of areas including: Capacity, performance, leadership, connection with local communities and general internal relations.

As we approach the next Local Government Elections, we wish to call upon SAMWU and the ANC at Provincial and Regional level to start working together in crafting local campaign issues that respond directly to the needs of our communities. As I have indicated, we should interface at the highest levels, to ease cooperation on the ground. The General Secretary of SAMWU and I should be able to talk directly to

resolve mutual and various challenges facing our workers and the communities that they serve.

I therefore take this opportunity to remind you that you are also a critical partner of the revolutionary Alliance between the ANC and the progressive labour movement. In that capacity, SAMWU has a revolutionary obligation to facilitate and actively drive transformative change where it operates. The ANC-led municipalities will never turn the performance and service delivery corner without the active involvement and participation of our partner on the ground, SUMWU. Some of the key areas of immediate cooperation include the following:

- Working together in identifying and attending to the most pressing reforms required to strengthen the sector.
- Work together on municipal delimitation (Demarcation) issues, including making frank proposals with respect to economically and financially non-viable municipalities.
- Work collaboratively in the policy discussions around the grading of Municipalities. In this regard, we should always be guided by the growth and developmental interests of

our communities.

- Collectively find solutions to the budgetary shortfalls confronting many municipalities, especially where such shortfalls have impacted salaries.
- The relationship between the ANC and SAMWU is primarily a relationship between fellow comrades and partners, pursuing a common objective of national liberation and socio-economic development. This relationship is above and should inform and guide the employer-employee dynamic.

The unity of the ANC and the unity of the labour movement are indispensable for the viability of each and of both. If one fails, the other will certainly be affected. The ANC needs SAMWU. And I am certain that as SAMWU you would not want to contend with a reactionary governing party.

**Long live SAMWU long live!!
Long live the ANC long live!
Long live the SACP long live!
Long live COSATU long live!
Long live SANCO long live!**

Long live the revolutionary alliance long live!

Amandla!





A VISION THAT INSPIRED GENERATIONS

*Message by the ANC on the occasion of the
70th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter*

Delivered by the **1ST DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL** of the ANC,
NOMVULA MOKONYANE

THE people of South Africa struggled for centuries to end an oppressive system, declared a crime against humanity. In the process of struggle, the ANC adopted a Bill of Rights in 1923 and the African Claims in 1943.

Both these documents are important contributions to the evolving rights based and democratic vision of South Africa, including the focus on our country as a sovereign state, within the broader community of nations.

It was however the Freedom Charter, adopted at the Congress

of the People on 26 June 1955, that captured the imagination of generations, informed the first Constitution of a democratic and free South Africa, the foundations of governance during the first three decades of democracy and the freedoms we continue to fight for, side by side.

The reasons for this does not merely lie in its revolutionary content and foresight. Its durability as a vision for the future is how it was developed – with the involvement of thousands of people, peasants and intellectuals, men and women, rural and urban dwellers, workers and the petty

bourgeoisie, black and white.

Rising to the occasion, women came together in 1954 to launch the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), and on this occasion also adopted the first Women's Charter. This Charter advocated for women's equality, and for the inclusion of not only political rights, but also social and economic rights, taken forward in the Freedom Charter the next year.

The contributions from across the country and various sectors were collated into themes and on 25 and 26 June 1955, as over 3000



delegates gathered at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, the demands and aspirations were read out and discussed. The police stopped many from attending and eventually raided the event, trying to seize all copies of the Charter. But the Freedom Charter prevailed, as a year later 156 ANC and Congress Alliance leaders were charged with Treason Trial.

The Freedom Charter was adopted by the ANC as its statement of principles in 1956, elaborated at its 1969 Morogoro National Consultative Conference, and 1980 was declared the **Year of the Charter**.

The Charter went on to inspire generations of youth, student, civic, women, rural, religious and trade union organisations, rallying behind its vision of a society of freedom and equality, and the aspirations of each sector.

As mass struggles, the armed struggle and the international isolation of the apartheid regime intensified towards the end of the 80s, core ANC documents during this period, including the **Harare Declaration** (1988), **Ready to Govern** (1991), the **Constitu-**

tional Principles for a Democratic South Africa (1992) and the **Reconstruction and Development Programme** (1994) reflected the vision and aspirations of the Freedom Charter.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER AND A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

The anniversary of 70 years of the Freedom Charter takes place in the context of 31 years of democracy, when we committed in 1994 to use the transition to democracy as a beachhead to advance the vision of the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter's mission and aspirations therefore also informed our programme of transformation and governance over the last thirty years.

The Charter and the Constitution

The first critical task for our new-found democracy, was the drafting of the Constitution, through a democratic Constituent Assembly, leading to its adoption in 1996.

Retired Constitutional Court Judge Albie Sachs observed "... as much as some individuals, in-

cluding politicians would like to discount the critical role played by the Freedom Charter, the people of South Africa would never allow the Freedom Charter to be relegated to the dusty archives of South African history. After all, its principles are firmly entrenched in the Constitution of South Africa".

Another member of the ANC Constitutional Committee, Cde Brigitte Mabandla and one of our post-apartheid Ministers of Justice and Constitutional Development, explains: *"The final Constitution of 1996 embodies the Charter's ideals in law. Its Preamble, founding provisions, and Bill of Rights translate the aspirations of Kliptown into enforceable rights and state obligations. From the right to dignity and equality to access to housing, education, and healthcare, the Constitution echoes the Charter in both spirit and structure."*

The South African Constitution therefore, in its commitment to political, social and economic rights for all, to a government based on the will of the people, its call in the preamble for redress to heal the wounds of the past, and to build a South Africa that belongs to all, echoes the aspirations of the Freedom Charter.

The People Shall Govern!

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws. All the people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country. The rights of the people shall be the same regardless of race, colour or sex. All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

Thirty years later, we have laid the foundations for a peoples government that reflect the will of the people.

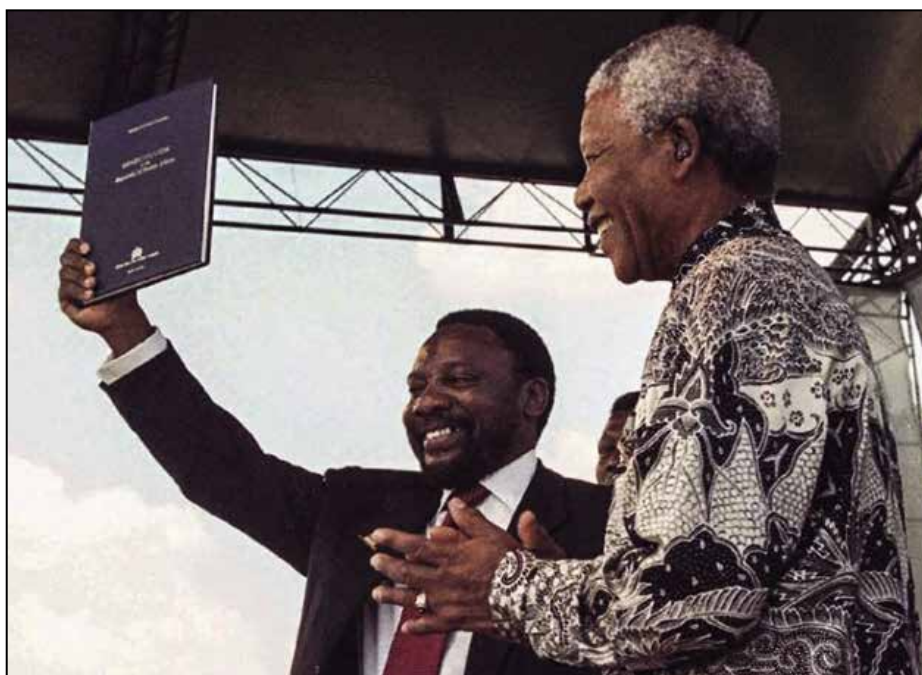
The Constitution guarantees free and regular elections, freedom of association and speech, freedom of the press and information. Laws and institutions have been put in place, including Chapter 9 and other institutions like the IEC and ICASA, to ensure these rights are promoted and defended. Over 31 years, our country held seven national and provincial elections and six local government elections that were free and fair.

We have through laws and practices, seek to build participatory democracy in communities. Local government has elected wall-to-wall ward councilors in over 4,000 wards across the country, who are required to hold regular community meetings. Our laws allow for any citizen to attend a Council meeting and ask questions. Local government is required to consult residents on the integrated development programme (IDPs), before they adopt their Council budgets each year.

The system of traditional leadership, that played such a critical role in resistance to colonialism and apartheid, and in the formation of the ANC, has been integrated into our system of governance, from local to national levels.

All laws, policies and regulations of government are published, and Parliament and Legislatures are required by the Constitution to do public outreach and receive public submissions.

The Freedom Charter sub-clause also speaks to the participation



of all people in the administration (public service) of the country. From many racially divided and patriarchal departments, we now have a single national and provincial public service, as well as local administrations, and through employment equity and affirmative action, ensured that it reflect the demographics of the nation. Employment equity has been extended to the private and non-government sectors, to address the legacies of discrimination and the colour bar. Initially voluntary, the 2022 Employment Equity Amendment Act gives the Minister of Labour and Employment powers to set targets across different economic sectors, public or private.

However, we are also seeing democracy under challenge, with declining trust in public institutions, poor voter registration and turnout especially amongst young people, and the organs of peoples participation established are not working optimal, to ensure peoples voices in development and governance.

The capacity of the state, at all

levels, but especially local government remains a challenge, and although we aimed to build a capable developmental, there are major fault lines in the role, capacity, responsiveness and ethical foundations of the post apartheid state.

Many citizens feel disillusioned with the political process. The National Dialogue is a critical and timely process to reignite popular and citizen-led participation in resolving the pressing issues facing communities, sectors and the country and agreeing on a common vision for the South Africa we want.

All National Groups Shall Have Equal Rights!

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races. All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride. All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture and customs. The preaching and practice of

national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime. All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

Apartheid colonialism sought to racially segregate people, and to divide by assigning differential though still very limited and discriminatory rights to some.

The vision of the Charter of a South Africa that belongs to all, and where all national groups have equal rights, informed the struggle for non-racialism by the Congress movement, the building of the ANC as a non-racial and non-sexist movement formalised at its consultative conferences in Morogoro (1969) and Kabwe (1985).

It inspired non-racial youth, women's, students, trade unions and other movements, as a powerful antidote to the racist and sexist chauvinism of apartheid. The vision of non-racialism and non-sexism is therefore a central feature of our Constitution and policies.

It provided the foundations to dismantle apartheid and patriarchal laws, policies and institutions, within the context of a rights-based Constitution, and for the creation of democratic institutions representing all the people. We passed affirmative action laws, implemented BBBEE, and ensure access to education and training, opportunities and other basic services to all, regardless of race and gender.

The struggle for non-racialism, and the social cohesion of our country after three decades of freedom, still finds expression in the material conditions, and therefore inequalities, ex-

perienced by different national groups. Sadly, it also find expression in the domestic rightwing, who has been emboldened to claim a 'white genocide', not recognising their continued position of intergenerational privilege.

We must therefore continue to address the national question in all its dimensions and build non-racialism and non-sexism, with a common sense of belonging, solidarity, equality and patriotism.

All Shall be Equal before the Law!

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial; No one shall be condemned by the order of a Government official; The courts shall be representative of the people; Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance; The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people; All laws which discriminate on grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

Strides have been made in ensuring that there is access to justice for all, building more courts, including specialist courts and through the provision of legal aid. Over the three decades of democracy, strides have been made to "...create courts representative of all the people". In 1994, the Judiciary comprised of 165 judges: 160 white males, three black men and two white women. There was not a single black woman judge in 1994!

Today, there are about 252 Judges in all the Superior Courts: 131 men and 121 women judges; 175

Black and 77 Judges White. The Magistracy has fared better in terms of gender transformation: of the 1,724 magistrates, 934 are women. This means that 54% of the total number of magistrates are women. Access to justice, however, is still limited by factors such as the high costs of litigation and legal advice; long delay in resolving legal disputes and court cases; and many South Africans still live long distances away from courts.

Socio-economic standing thus limits access to courts and therefore justice. This is a stark reminder that the pursuit of substantive equality before the law cannot be separated from the material well-being of the people.

The Land Shall Be Shared Among Those Who Work It!

Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger; The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers; Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land; All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose; People shall not be robbed of their cattle, and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.

The foundations of colonialism and apartheid were based on the dispossession of the majority of South Africa's indigenous people, and after the Union of South Africa, advanced whole scale dispossession through the Land Acts, the Group Areas Acts, the bantustan system, removing millions of people from their land, homes and livelihoods.

South Africa's colonial past is probably one of the most brutal and the one of the most violent across the entire European settlement in Africa. Land dispossession was a violent encounter.

The Preamble of the 1996 Constitution recognised the imperative to heal the wounds of the past through redress, whilst Section 25 of the Constitution provides a framework for land reform and food security. *"The 1996 Constitution reflected parts of the Charter's vision, and land reform (therefore) became a central promise of the new democratic state. A three-part program was introduced: restitution, redistribution, and tenure reform. The Restitution of Land Rights Act (1994) was the first step. It gave people displaced after 1913 the right to lodge land claims."*

In terms of the land restitution, government created the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights to solicit, investigate and attempt to resolve land claims. Between 1994 and 2024, a total of 83,067 claims have been settled, leaving 5407 outstanding claims to be settled, as a cost of R25 billion on restitution of the 3,9 million hectares. An additional R22.5 billion was spent on financial compensation to settle land claims.

With regards to redistribution and tenure reform pillars, government introduced three programmes through which government managed to redistributed 5,2 million hectares between 1994 and 2024. This helped to strengthen the tenure security of vulnerable persons, labour tenants, farm dwellers, and promote the asset accumulation of women and youth.

On the agrarian reform, the agricul-



tural output has more than double, and exports grew five times between 1994 and 2024. The South African agricultural products are marketed in 181 countries across the world, implying that the ANC government has created new and better opportunities for agriculture post-apartheid era.

Despite the adoption of technologies and machinery to improve productivity and efficiency in the past 30 years, agricultural employment has remained stable at around 845,000 people, accounting for 6.3% of total employment. A fundamental drawback is that the growth has been exclusive and the black farmers' contribution to total agricultural output equates to just 10.1% in 2019.

While the land transfer target of 30% has not yet been achieved, a significant amount of hectares has been restored to their rightful owners despite the challenges of inflated land prices and maladministration coupled with complex bureaucratic systems.

All Shall Enjoy Equal Human Rights!

The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise,

to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children; The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law; All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad; Pass laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

Apartheid colonialism, to maintain such a highly exploitative and oppressive system, was deeply violent and invasive of basic rights.

The Constitution and laws of a democratic South Africa guarantees basic rights, such as freedom of movement and speech, freedom to organise, to worship, to travel.

It furthermore recognises other forms of discrimination – against persons with disability, LGBTQI and so forth – and the need to outlaw and advocate and act against them.

The vicious powers of the police, to invade homes, to detain without trial, to torture were also curbed, and public safety policing

transformed.

These, however are not freedoms that we can take for granted. We must work side by side to promote these freedoms, defend and advance them, working together with Chapter 9 institutions, civil society and as political parties and movements.

There Shall be Work and Security!

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers; The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits; Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work; There shall be a 40-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers; Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work; Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

Workers today have freedom to form trade unions, to collective bargaining, employment benefits, including unemployment benefits, sick and maternity leave, the national minimum wage for vulnerable workers, skills development, not to be subjected to sexual harassment in the work place. However, outsourcing, informal employment, immigration and impact of new technologies have introduced new challenges of precariousness for workers, with the working poor making up close to 20% of the employed.

The fragmentation in the labour movement is a real and current

challenge, manifested in union duplication at sector and company levels, competition and weakened solidarity, declining membership, internal conflicts, and challenges of organising vulnerable workers and the informal sector.

COSATU President cde Zingiswa Losi, in reflections on the Charter and workers rights wrote:

"COSATU as leader of the progressive trade union movement is often challenged on what workers have achieved since the democratic breakthrough and through the Alliance.

Under our progressive Constitution and labour laws workers have the right to unionise and collective bargaining, to be protected from unfair discrimination and to equal pay for equal work, to work in a safe environment, and receive financial support when on maternity or parental leave, when retrenched or dismissed, or injured or in the event of death at work.

Child labour has been criminalised. In 2019 the National Minimum Wage Act came into effect raising the wages of 6 million farm, domestic, construction, hospitality, security, transport and other vulnerable workers.

Yet many workers struggle to exercise their hard-won labour rights, especially when facing a 43.1% unemployment rate. Recent moves by government to drastically expand the number of labour inspectors are a bold step towards ensuring the rights of all workers are respected. Employers who break the law must face consequences."

Indeed, the aspiration of the Freedom Charter for Work, has been

a challenge since 1994. Although the numbers of people in employment have increased from 8.3 million in 1996 to 17 million in the last quarter of 2024, the number of jobs have by far not kept pace with the growth of the population and the labour force.

Thus, with unemployment reaching crisis levels over the last decade at over 30% and more than 50% for young people, it fundamentally undermines this aspiration of the Freedom Charter.

Inclusive economic growth that create jobs and economic opportunities for all therefore remains an urgent priority, in everything that we do, including the commitments we made in the 2024 ANC Manifesto for a National Jobs Plan and Building an Inclusive Economy through industrialization. It is an issue that should be top of the agenda for the Government of National Unity and the upcoming National Dialogue.

The Doors of Learning and Culture Shall be Opened to All!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life; All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands; The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace; Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit; Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education

plan; Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens; The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

Apartheid education was not just racist, unequal and patriarchal, but was part of deliberate underdevelopment of the majority, characterized by grossly unequal spending per learner based on race, and with high levels of adult illiteracy.

Since 1994, government has invested in basic education, with spending per learner more than 100% higher in real terms in 2016 than it was in the final apartheid years. This also meant that we moved from 13 racially-based departments to a single system of education and training, built new and renovated schools across the country, equalized teachers' pay and benefits, introduced new national curriculum, a national school nutrition programme, no-fee schools and scholar transport.

By 2024, close to 100% of children up to the age of 15 years were in school (around 12.5 million in 2024), with 62% of young people completing Grade 12 in 2024.

Over the last decade or so, first with the introduction of Grade R and now the incorporation of ECD into DBE through BELA, there are about 3 million children accessing learning.

Curriculum reform has been ongoing, and currently the Department of Basic Education (DBE) is introducing a "Three Stream Model" to provide diverse learning pathways, to address the mismatch between skills taught in schools and the economy: academic, technical vocational, and technical occupational.



Similar advances have been made in the post school education and training sector (PSET) to open the doors of learning to all, especially with free higher education for poor students through NSFAS.

There are however challenges, including infrastructure and teacher backlogs; slow introduction of mother-tongue education and curriculum reforms; and the challenges of the PSET system with NSFAS.

The struggle to open the doors of learning therefore remain relevant today, within a new context. The campaign by the South African Students Congress (SASCO), for a Students Charter is an important initiative, building on the struggles of the Fees Must Fall Movement, to articulate the issues faced by students as we keep pushing to ensure that the doors of learning are open, and leaves no-one behind.

The Doors of Culture: Many of the creative legends of our land, Miriam Makeba, Jonas Gwangwa, Thami Mnye, Letta Mbuli, Hugh Masekela, Gerald Sekoto, to name but a few amongst many, saw culture as a powerful instrument for liberation. Furthermore, as one of our cultural activists wrote, "*the Free-*

dom Charter did not separate cultural liberation from economic liberation – rather it seems to have understood them as interconnected."

Despite insufficient resources for artists, creatives and the art over the last 30 years and a fast-changing industry that can be very exploitative, we have seen a creative renaissance in South African arts and culture: in literature and the performing art, in music, dance, craft and art.

Our Constitution furthermore recognises the diversity of our languages, with institutions such as the Pan South African Language Board established to promote all languages, especially indigenous African languages.

We now recognise twelve official languages, including the most recent South African Sign Language. Attempts are also made to rescue the Khoe and San language from extinction, through such initiatives as a dedicated public language radio station as well as developing dictionaries.

Through the public broadcaster SABC all our languages are carried on television channels and through eleven dedicated African Language Radio Stations, serving millions of the population

with news, information and entertainment, and contributing to the development of our languages. Culture and language remain a terrain of struggle, as we are reminded about the important contribution that the creative sector and culture, as well as community culture, not only to our sense of identity, but also to social cohesion and the economy of our country.

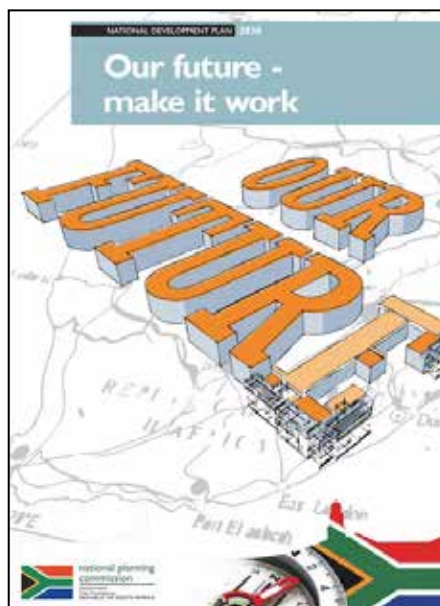
The People shall Share in the Country's Wealth!

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people; The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole; All other industries and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people; All people shall have equal rights to trade where they choose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

Democratic South Africa inherited an apartheid and patriarchal economy in crisis, with low GDP growth, high public debt, inequality, poverty and unemployment.

The labour market was racialised and gendered and Apartheid policies barred black South Africans from entrepreneurship, capital accumulation, and land ownership. Thus wealth and economic power were in the hands of a small minority of white-owned firms, which dominated all major sectors of the economy and with high levels of concentration.

To transform the economy, South Africa's development path over the three decades was characterised by the following major policy thrusts:



(a) fiscal policy that promotes sustainability and intergenerational equity, (b) inflation-targeting monetary policy, (c) a market-determined exchange rate, (d) regulation of the financial sector, (e) redress through the Black economic empowerment and small business development (f) reforms to labour laws, (g) strengthening competition policy and (h) integrating the economy internationally. These found expression in such plans as the **Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)** in 1996; the **Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA)** in 2006; the **New Growth Path (NGP)** in 2010, the **National Development Plan (NDP)** in 2010 and more recently the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan.

Between 2000 and 2009, the economy grew by around 3.6%, however since 2010, this dipped below 2% and for the last decade averaged below 1%. This trend also had an impact on jobs, unemployment above 30%, and with the number of employed persons growing from 8.9 million in 1994 to 17 million by the final quarter of 2024.

As a result of poor economic growth and high unemployment and inequality, per capita growth has been stagnating. The situation is particularly dire for young people, with unemployment for black youth at over 50%.

Programmes to ensure economic inclusion like affirmative action, asset transfers, access to education and particularly free higher education for the poor through NSFAS, as well as broad-based black economic empowerment and SSME development, has seen the growth of a black middle class, which now represents over 50% of the total strata.

Other efforts led to the introduction of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act of 2002, and the Mining Charter of 2004. In keeping with the Freedom Charter's call that "the mineral wealth beneath the soil... shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole", the MPRDA bestowed the mineral resources under the custodian of the state for the benefit of all South Africans.

It is encouraging that black ownership in the South African mining industry increased from 02 percent in 2004 to over 30 percent in 2024. Whereas the coal mining is largely black-owned and managed, black ownership is emerging in sectors such as manganese, gold, and platinum group metals (PGMs).

Well over 70,000 women are now active participants in the industry, some of whom hold executive positions in multinational companies.

Despite these advances, the deep legacy of Inequality remains a persistent and defining

challenge, with our Gini coefficient worsening to 0.64, reflected in stark inequalities based on race and gender in income, assets and wealth.

It is for these reasons that the ANC 2024 Manifesto emphasised a National Jobs Plan, and Inclusive growth through Industrialisation and Infrastructure development as central, to ensure that the Wealth of the land is genuinely shared amongst the people.

There Shall be Houses, Security and Comfort!

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security; Unused housing space is to be made available to the people; Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry; A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state; Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children; Slums shall be demolished, and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres; The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state; Rest, leisure and recreation shall be the right of all; Fenced locations and ghettos shall be abolished, and laws which break up families shall be repealed.

The generation of 1955 recognised the deep wounds of poverty and underdevelopment inflicted by apartheid on the people. The clause calling for Houses, Security and Comfort therefore finds expression in the foundations for the social wage laid over the last 30 years.



Amongst the lead Presidential programs announced by President Nelson Mandela in 1994 was the plan to build a million houses for the poor (RDP houses), expanded over the last three decades to encompass a comprehensive human settlements programme.

By 2019, government built 3,2 million houses and in the sixth administration (MTSF 2020-2024) delivered a further 239,874 BNG houses, 231,000 sites serviced, 13,286 rental housing built, 25,873 households receiving funding through FLISP and 623 informal settlements upgraded. With disasters such as fires and increasing floods, emergency housing has been incorporated into the mandate of human settlements.

The programme of building settlements by government have significantly slowed down over the last decade, and therefore not able to keep pace with a growing population, rapid urbanization and decreasing household size. The department in 2024 reported that there were 3 million households registered on the National Housing Needs Register. According to the latest General Household Survey 2024, we have also made

steady progress with 84,1% of all households living in formal dwellings, 11,7% lived in informal dwellings.

Nationally, three-fifths (60,1%) of households owned (paid off or being paid off) the dwelling they lived in. A further 25,1% rented their dwellings. Nationally, nearly a third (30%) of households live in government-subsidised housing.

Under apartheid, African women were regarded legal minors and marriage laws generally made it near impossible for women to own property without consent from or unless jointly with their spouse. Since 1994, deliberate programs are in place to ensure women's access to property. Thus, in 2016, 27.8% of women owned housing individually or jointly, single women accounted for 30% of the property owners in 2019, and recent reports from the property market shows that women increasingly dominate the market in townships as new home buyers.

Linked to the provision of housing, has been the programme to ensure progressive access to other basic services. The General Household Survey 2024 recorded progress in access to

electricity, water and sanitation, refuse removal and internet.

The above shows progress, but should not hide the immense challenges of basic services due to ageing infrastructure, the need for new bulk infrastructure to keep up with population growth and urbanisation, as well as poor expertise and expenditure on maintenance by local municipalities.

Critical other aspects of the Freedom Charter's commitment to this aspiration, include other sub-clauses referring to access to basic services, recreation, transport, health, social security and food security.

The social assistance program has grown substantially in 30 years, covering: Foster Care Grant; Child Support Grant; Care Dependency Grants Old Age grant; War Veterans Grant; Grant in Aid; Disability Grant totaling 18 million people, on average and with the extension of the SRD grant, the total grant recipients average 27.7 million.

In 2024, 73,1% of household members first consulted personnel at a Public Clinic or hospital while 25,3% turned to the private sector, whilst only 15.5% of individuals are covered by medical aids.

The implementation of the NHI is therefore important to ensure that distribution of resources between the public and private health sectors are more equitable, towards universal health coverage. According to the General Household Survey 2024, nationally, 22,2% of households considered their access to food as inadequate or severely inadequate. Food insecurity particularly affects children, with child

hunger and stunting that remain a challenge. Interventions such as the school nutrition programme, public responsibility for early childhood development and the first 1000 Days programme are therefore critical, as well as community level programmes to ensure no child is left behind.

There Shall be Peace and Friendship


South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations; South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation-not war; Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all; The people of the protectorates – Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland – shall be free to de-

cide for themselves their own future; The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close cooperation.

The African National Congress (ANC), the leading and oldest liberation movement in South Africa is renowned for its progressive and forward looking political philosophy and ideals. From the date of its formation in 1912 the ANC has been a future oriented sophisticated conveyor of modern ideals on human rights, diversity and international cooperation.

In our international relations and policy, we sought to remain true to the prescripts of the Freedom Charter.


Since 1994, South Africa has advocated for respect for the independence and integrity of



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Peace is not just the absence of conflict; peace is the creation of an environment where all can flourish, regardless of race, colour, creed, religion, gender, class, caste, or any other social markers of difference.

Nelson Mandela
Former South African President & 1993 Nobel Peace Prize Winner



all sovereign member states of the United Nations (UN) and the OAU/AU. South Africa has not attempted to invade any country, overthrow any government nor to wage war. We assert the independence of our democratic state.

Since 1994, we played leading roles in promoting peace and negotiated settlements – in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Madagascar, Northern Ireland and closer to home in the Kingdom of Lesotho, as well as Timore Leste, Palestine and Sri Lanka. All these initiatives confirmed the continued importance of the Freedom Charter support for peace and negotiation.

South Africa has made efforts to secure regional and continent wide cooperation and peace, through its commitment to the African agenda, through the OAU and its transformation into the African Union, through its role in SADC, as well as the development of key continental frameworks such as the Constitutive Act of the AU, the NEPAD programme and Agenda 2063 and other frameworks, including the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Since 1994, we have also advocated for progressive multilateralism, for a just and equitable global system, and played an important role in structures of the Global South such as the Non Aligned Movement, the G77 and BRICS+, as well as North-South forums such as the G20.

Our Programme to Celebrate 70 Years of the Charter

We are therefore launching today a six-month celebration of this iconic document, including the ANC National General Council at the beginning of December 2025



and culminating in our 114th anniversary in January 2026.

The objectives of these celebrations are to:

- **Reflect on Progress and Challenges:** Assess achievements and shortcomings in realizing the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter since 1994, since the dawn of our democracy in 1994, engage in critical discussions about the socio-economic inequalities that still exist and how they are tackled.
- **Mobilize Grassroots Participation:** Strengthen grassroots presence through local events, fostering community involvement and dialogue. Encourage branches to take ownership of the celebrations, ensuring that they reflect local realities and aspirations.
- **Reinforce Unity and Solidarity:** Promote a sense of unity among South Africans, emphasizing collective responsibility in achieving the Freedom Charter's vision as we participate in the National Dialogue. Build alliances with civil society organizations, youth groups, and other stakeholders who share a commitment to social justice and equality. Also link the Freedom Charter to the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Africa We Want.
- **Educate and Inspire Future Generations:** Raise awareness about the Freedom Charter's significance and its relevance to contemporary South African society. Inspire youth and future leaders to engage with the principles of the Charter and to take an active role in shaping South Africa's future.
- The activities that we will embark on, will speak to these different objectives.
- The major kick-off event will be the **national Freedom Charter Anniversary Public lecture on 7 July 2025** in Kliptown, that will be delivered by President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa. The lecture will be joined virtually by ANC branches and structures through out the country. It will be an important event of pub-

lic conscientising on the Freedom Charter, its history and implementation over the three decades of democracy, and as mass political education of members and supporters.

- The ANC Veterans League on **28 June 2025** will host an **Intergenerational dialogue on the Freedom Charter** with young people, members and leaders of the Progressive Youth Alliance, including the ANC Youth League, the progressive student movements COSAS and SASCO, the Young Women's Desk and other youth formations. The aim is to use the Freedom Charter and its mission and aspirations, to cross the bridges between generations, in an event of mutual learning.
- The Freedom Charter clause, that ***There shall be Peace and Friendship***, is very relevant in a world in turmoil today. Already the ANC International Relations department on **25 June 2025** held a **Colloquium** with the **Frederich Eubert Stifting** on **Progressive Multilateralism**, which tackled these issues. On **27 June 2025**, the ANC Gender and Equity Committee will have another **Dialogue and exhibition on Women in Diplomacy and the G20**.
- The ANC will launch the first in a series of **e-books on 70 Years of the Freedom Charter, Reflections on the Charter** today, with contributions of historians like Cde Z Pallo Jordan, veterans like James Ngculu, Brigitte Mabandla, Rob Davies and Norman Levy (who were at the Congress at the people) as well as younger and middle generations.
- We welcome the many contributions already received and encourage all South Africans

and ANC members, to submit their reflections on the Freedom Charter today and to the future.

- The Freedom Charter will be linked to the various focus months of our nation, including of the Founder of our Democracy Nelson Mandela in July, the August Women's Month, September Heritage Month, Celebrating the legacy of OR Tambo and Albertina Sisulu and others in October.

THESE FREEDOMS WE SHALL FIGHT FOR

The Freedom Charter remains an inspiration and a vision for the South Africa we want, in its political, social and economic dimensions. Thirty-one years into democracy, we have come a long

way, but we still have many more hills to climb.

As we therefore celebrate and reflect on 70 years of the Freedom Charter, we must recommit to fight side by side, until we have won all our liberties.

Conclusion – Side by Side

We call on all South Africans to remember and take lessons from the generations of 1955 who had this foresight and vision that led to the drafting of the Freedom Charter, as we participate in the National Dialogue.

We must all vow to work tirelessly, sparing no effort, until we have won our complete liberty, politically, socially, culturally and economically!



Towards another 70 years of Progressive Internationalism

■ By **ANC 1ST DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL NOMVULA MOKONYANE**

THIS week is an important one for our country wherein we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Freedom Charter.

The ANC therefore saw it fit that we should host this Colloquium as part of our Freedom Charter celebrations where South Africans and as members of the ANC we reflect on the clauses of the Charter.

The Charter remains a seminal document for our movement and for our country.

Our constitutional dispensation – that South Africa belongs to all who live in it – is based on the prescripts of the Charter.

However, it is also fitting that we reflect on the lines of the Charter at this time when there is so much turmoil in the world and when geopolitics has become so fragmented and complexed but still requires, and even demands, a progressive internationalism.

Of course, as we share the objectives of this Colloquium we must recall the father of progressive internationalism, Comrade President O.R. Tambo.

We pay tribute to him and use him as a guide as to how to mobilize the international commu-



nity not only against colonialism and apartheid no matter where it is found but also to advance the very clauses of the Freedom Charter that Comrade O.R. personified.

The current global landscape is marked by rapid, profound and complex shifts, challenging existing power structures and forcing nations and political movements, such as the ANC, to reassess and adapt their foreign policies strategically.

The ANC, since its establishment in 1912, approaches these global changes from a progressive internationalist perspective with its foundation deeply rooted in principles of pan-Africanism, anti-imperialism, international solidarity, human rights, active non-alignment, multilateralism and peace-

ful resolution of conflict.

Globally, a multi-polar order is rapidly supplanting the unipolar dominance established post-Cold War by the United States and its allies.

This shift is reflected through the rising geopolitical prominence of China, Russia, and emerging markets; challenging traditional Western hegemony.

However, despite the fragmentation of Western consensus, unilateralism and disregard for international law persist, undermining global trust in institutions like the United Nations.

The global south, including South Africa, must therefore increasingly advocate for a fairer multi-polar multicultural and multi-civi-

lizational system that respects diverse cultures and civilizations, seeking equality consensus and cooperation.

Africa today stands at a critical crossroads.

Our continent's immense resource wealth, coupled with its youthful energy, holds vast potential.

Yet, paradoxically, these same resources have frequently become sources of conflict and exploitation rather than engines of prosperity.

As a result, the ANC, together with our partners FES, found it necessary to convene a colloquium to reflect on the state of progressive internationalism within the current and future fluid and challenging state of geo-politics.

The objectives of this colloquium include:

- to define progressive internationalism in the current era of struggle;
- to explore global challenges and the progressive internationalists' response to the current geopolitical and geo-economic challenges;
- to promote international solidarity;
- to foster collaboration amongst progressive internationalists parties, organizations, movements and governments i.e. progressive internationalist state and non-state actors;
- to reflect on the current balance of forces of progressive internationalist parties, organizations and movements.

Given that the South Africa is celebrating 70 years of the Freedom Charter this year, it is appropriate



that we highlight the international aspects of this document as the policy framework of the ANC for the last seven decades and in particular, the ANC's foreign policy.

The Freedom Charter, the views and aspirations of all South Africans in 1955 though subject to its material conditions at the time, insisted on the following:

- the respect of the principle of self-determination as well as the independence and sovereignty of each nation state, especially in Africa;
- negotiated peace settlements and avoidance of war; and,
- peace and friendship among the family of nations with each upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all.

Given the current tensions and

conflicts globally, and in particular in the Middle East as well as in some parts of the continent, the clauses of the Freedom Charter could not ring truer.

For example, while the international community rightly condemns the flagrant violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iran by Israel and the United States, we must acknowledge that there is general consensus on this violation and its breach of international law...

Extract from the Opening Remarks of the First Deputy Secretary General and Chairperson of the NEC Subcommittee on International Relations at the Colloquium on Progressive Internationalism co-hosted by the ANC and FES.

WHY SOUTH AFRICA'S UNEMPLOYMENT NARRATIVE NEEDS A RECKONING

■ By **NOMAKHOSAZANA METH**

IN June 2025, Capitec CEO Gerrie Fourie suggested that South Africa's real unemployment rate might be closer to 10% than the official 32.9%, the reaction was swift and unforgiving. Critics accused him of "*madness*," misunderstanding labour metrics, and trivialising the economic struggles of millions. But amid the furore, Fourie touched a nerve, one we can no longer afford to ignore.

We need to be forthright. Any figure of the unemployment rate represents an enduring crisis that continues to erode our democratic dividend and undermine our efforts to build a more equitable and prosperous society for all South Africans. At the same time, we must all visit the fundamental assumptions guiding our understanding of the problem itself.



Minister of Employment and Labour,
Nomakhosazana Meth

What if the way we measure unemployment is not just analytically contested but structurally flawed? What if the very tools we rely on to understand our labour market are obscuring its most vi-

tal dynamics? This is not to say that our government, through Statistics South Africa, has been dishonest or missed the point through the years, but rather that the instruments and definitions used, while internationally accepted, may not fully capture the unique complexities and realities of South Africa's diverse economy, particularly its significant informal sector.

South Africa's massive informal sector fundamentally challenges standard unemployment metrics. Millions officially classified as 'unemployed' are actively engaged in vital, though precarious, economic activities, such as street vending, waste recycling, home-based production, subsistence farming and numerous micro-services. These generate essential income and sustain communities, forming a vast parallel economy.

Therefore, standard definitions, which prioritise formal employment structures like fixed hours, registered businesses, and regular wages, fail to capture this fluid, irregular, and self-directed work, misrepresenting significant economic participation as idleness. The fact that one is not seeking employment, is discouraged, or does not report any 'income' or 'wage' in the conventional sense, should not imply economic inactivity or irrelevance.



Our unique economic landscape, shaped by historical exclusion and inequality, demands context-sensitive metrics. The rigid employed-unemployed binary obscures critical nuances, including underemployment, sporadic work, unpaid family labour and discouraged workers who actively survive informally. Relying on tools designed for smaller informal sectors misdiagnoses exclusion and risks policies that fail to support or integrate this vital economic segment.

Admittedly, the official unemployment rate, derived from Statistics South Africa's Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS), uses International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards, as rightly confirmed by our Statistician-General, Risenga Maluleke. It is important to acknowledge that although the ILO provides a standardised framework for measuring unemployment, it has limitations. A key limitation is the exclusion of "*discouraged workers*," those who have stopped actively seeking work, from the official count. This can lead to an underestimation of the true extent of unemployment, particularly among women. Additionally, the ILO definition relies on individuals actively seeking work in the past four weeks, which may not capture those who have been unemployed for extended periods and may have become less active in their job search.

These standards are internationally recognised and sound in principle; however, they have limitations. They were likely designed for economies where formality dominates, yet they tend to undervalue the reality of emerging markets where survivalist and informal economies are not only widespread but essential.



It is necessary to emphasise that South Africa has a particularly complex labour market: sophisticated in parts yet exclusionary in others. Many South Africans are not unemployed in the literal sense; they work long hours selling food on the roadside, fixing shoes, braiding hair, or delivering packages via digital platforms. However, because their activities often lack legal status, banking records, or employer verification, they are statistically invisible.

This invisibility is not benign. As Michel Foucault noted, how a state "*sees*" its citizens, through censuses, surveys and indicators, is not just descriptive but political. It determines where resources flow, which sectors are prioritised, and who is included in the policy imagination.

Across the Global South, countries with expansive informal sectors report strikingly low unemployment rates. India, with an informality rate above 90%, records unemployment rates under 5%. Mexico, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia – despite structural challenges – report similarly low rates. South Africa, with an informal economy estimated to com-

prise 40% of total employment, somehow reports the highest unemployment rate in the world.

There is a profoundly troubling reality in our labour market, mirroring trends across the Global South: the relentless informalisation of the African worker. As scholars like Guy Standing illuminate, this creates a growing '*precariat*' or workers stripped of stable contracts, benefits and legal protections, existing in perpetual insecurity. This is evident in models like Shoprite's Sixty60 delivery service. Reports suggest deep labour rights transgressions and potential circumvention of migration laws, potentially relying heavily on vulnerable foreign nationals and drivers operating without proper licensing.

While such practices may fuel corporate profits and boost tax collections, they fundamentally erode worker dignity and flout our migration laws.

Enhanced tax revenue may be problematic when achieved through the systemic exploitation and informalisation of labour. We urgently need businesses committed to ethical conduct, recognising

that loyal and honest citizenship demands treating workers with dignity, not as disposable cost centres.

This crisis reflects our nation's unresolved struggle: building a vibrant economy that simultaneously protects labour rights. Our history is one where economic progress was built upon the foundation of cheap, exploitable black labour. Disturbingly, many companies remain anchored in this unpalatable logic. Their substantial profits are too often subsidised by poverty wages and resistance to adhering to labour laws, perpetuating a modern form of exploitation. The Shoprite case highlights a critical flaw in our current statistical lens: even those formally recognised as 'employed' can face severe decent work deficits – insecure incomes, unsafe conditions and denied benefits – which our rigid metrics fail to capture. Formal employment status, in such contexts, offers no guarantee of dignity or security.

The human cost of this informalisation extends far beyond wages into wellbeing and visibility. Informal wage workers at the foot of the formal economy, such as

Sixty60 riders, face significantly heightened health and safety risks due to unregulated work environments. In South Africa, informal workers experience injury rates 2-3 times higher than their formal counterparts, alongside severe psychological stress, with women disproportionately affected.

Critically, this precarity is structurally reinforced, since only 10.7% of informal enterprises hold municipal licenses, thereby denying workers access to basic infrastructure and legal recourse. Unlike the often entrepreneurial, family-driven informality seen in parts of West Africa or South Asia, South Africa's informal sector reflects not prosperity, but our dogmatic fixation on formality. Suppressing informality does not create formality; instead, it traps workers in a vulnerable, invisible underclass.

The Sixty60 paradox, characterised by soaring profits and tax contributions alongside alleged deep-seated worker indignity, exposes the dangerous fallacy of equating state revenue with societal well-being or ethical progress. True dignity requires labour security and voice, neither of which is inherent in precarious gig work. To

turn moral clarity into action, we will work with other government entities, including Statistics South Africa and the National Treasury, to address our concerns. We will also ramp up our labour inspection efforts to improve enforcement and compliance.

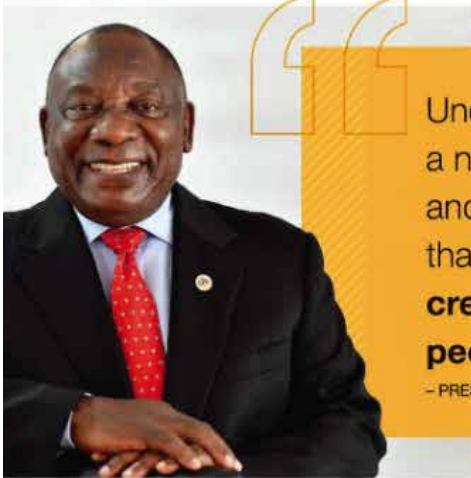
Our view is that this disconnect is not purely economic but methodological. We could be using the right tools for the wrong terrain.

Again, we must stress that this is not about pushing the black majority further into an abyss; we acknowledge vast swathes of surplus labour that continue to characterise the South African labour market. However, our immediate concern is solely whether the statistical measures accurately reflect the nature of economic activity, particularly informal survivalist efforts, within this complex reality.

As the Department of Employment and Labour, we are addressing this definitional challenge. In our internal policy discussions, we are advancing a more nuanced classification of employment, distinguishing between formal unemployment (individuals actively seeking or available for formal sector work) and economic participation (those actively engaged in the informal economy or self-employed outside regulated sectors). This is not an attempt to mask the crisis or rewrite history. Instead, it is a genuine bid for clarity, so that policymakers, economists and communities alike can operate from a shared and realistic understanding of South Africa's complex labour market dynamics.

Yet, our data underscore a profound crisis: official unemployment stands at 32.9%, rising





Unemployment among young South Africans is a national crisis that demands urgent, innovative and coordinated solutions. It is therefore essential that we implement a comprehensive plan to **create no fewer than 2 million jobs for young people within the next decade.**

— PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

to 43.1% under the expanded definition (which includes discouraged job seekers). Youth unemployment (15–24 years) is staggering at 62.4%, while graduate unemployment stands at 11.7%, revealing deep-seated structural challenges, even for the educated. Furthermore, there are currently 3.8 million young people classified as NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). These figures demand urgent, comprehensive reform and a labour market framework that recognises the diverse forms and complex realities of all economic activity, both formal and informal. Behind each statistic lies a human story of effort, ambition, exclusion and resilience.

It is essential to stress that this resilience should not be mistaken for success; the informal sector is not thriving, but merely surviving under conditions of precarity and exclusion. Research from the UCT-Harvard Growth Lab identifies South Africa's informality rate as “*abnormally low*” relative to peer economies, not due to prosperity, but rather to state-imposed constraints, including hostile zoning laws, bureaucratic red tape and over-policing.

Crucially, unlike entrepreneurial,

family-driven informality in West Africa or South Asia, South Africa's informal economy is predominantly employee-based, precarious and excluded from support systems. This vulnerability is strikingly illustrated by the fact that only 10.7% of informal enterprises held a valid municipal licence in 2023. These figures demand urgent, comprehensive reform and a labour market framework that recognises the diverse forms, complex realities and systemic barriers facing all economic activity, both formal and informal.

We need to distinguish between informal and illegible. Just because someone is not counted does not mean they are not making a contribution.

If we want a policy that reflects the realities on the ground, we need new tools. A hybrid data ecosystem, combining the QLFS with alternative indicators such as mobile money flows, anonymised bank transaction data and digital platform work patterns, can provide a more complete and human-centred picture of labour in South Africa. Crucially, unlocking this invisible economy requires collaboration. Private sector players, including Cap-

itec, which processes billions of township-based transactions annually, may hold part of the key to decoding our invisible economy. However, this must be done with ethical safeguards, public oversight and institutional collaboration, not in corporate isolation.

Gerrie Fourie may have overstated his case, but he also illuminated a critical truth: our unemployment narrative is not just technical; it is moral. A country that fails to see the economic contributions of its people, no matter how unorthodox, fails to recognise and thus harness its potential.

We are at a crossroads. Either we continue to wage policy wars based on partial metrics, or we build a statistical framework that honours the full complexity of labour in South Africa. One pathway leads to ongoing crises, while the other results in inclusive renewal.

Let us choose to see. Let us choose to count. Let us choose to act.

Nomakhosazana Meth writes in her capacity as Minister of Employment and Labour.



CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER AS EMBODIED IN THE CONSTITUTION

■ By **SEPHOKA DAVID SEKGOBELA**

IT is possible for people to look at the same thing, but see something different from each other's perspective, because we are looking at things through different lenses – others are clear, whilst there are those lenses that are scratched and blurry. The Freedom Charter has throughout the years been looked upon through such different lenses. Whether right or wrong about it, depends on through which lenses one is looking at it.

As the revolutionary programme of the ANC, what was the Freedom Charter, as adopted at the Congress of the People at Kliptown on 26 June 1955, initially meant for? It is said that, "*Delegates who gathered at Kliptown were workers, peasants, intellec-*

tuals, women, youth and students of all races and colours". In the wake of its 70th anniversary, "*the good, the bad, and the ugly*", i.e. the successes and failures of the Charter need to be critically, but objectively analysed, because, despite all the good intentions as enshrined in the Freedom Charter and adopted in the Constitution, the face of poverty in South Africa still remains black. Perhaps, as South Africans are gearing themselves to National Dialogue in August 2025, they would come up with better or updated version of Freedom Charter?

There is a saying that, "*Prescription without diagnosis is malpractice*". Proper diagnosis of the issues at stake should enable us to identify the nature, causes and

circumstances of the problems, and responses should enable perspectives and techniques to interrogate new ways of thinking about identified challenges. The said perspectives and techniques may help close the gaps, if any, minimize inequalities and offer directions towards resolution of poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

The foundation of current Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was laid on the principles of the Freedom Charter. Though based on the tenets of the Freedom Charter, every democratic system, including the current Constitutional Democracy, could be subjected to abuse. What was good at the time of the adoption of the Freedom Charter, though

coupled with the best intentions, may not be helpful or produce positive results under the current situation. It is trite that, when opening the window to let fresh air in, even unwanted elements like the mosquitoes may creep in. Hence talking about adulteration and/or betrayal of the Freedom Charter.

For instance, the **Preamble of the Freedom Charter**, especially the first lines of the Charter declare that, **“South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white”**, found its way into the Constitution. Hence, with the benefit of hindsight, part of the **Preamble to the Constitution** is not properly worded, especially where it says **“...South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity”**. It should be rephrased to read, **“South Africa belongs to all its own citizens, who were born in it, black and white, united in their diversity”**.

Misinterpretation of the Freedom Charter led to open-ended rights for “everyone” to be included in the Constitution. Rightfully, the rights of non-citizens, in particular, illegal or undocumented immigrants, should be curtailed, and not be equated to those of South African citizens. In fact, the Constitution should be inward looking, and instead of using words like “Everyone”, “Every”, etc. should qualify sentences by stating, “Every South African Citizen”, “Every South African Child”, etc. The Bill of Rights, in particular, is littered with such rights guaranteed to “everyone”, and not only South African citizens. Hence foreigners, including illegal and undocumented immigrants, always drag South African authorities to courts to claim their undeserved rights in a foreign country.



On the other hand, minority and/or rightwing groups are making use of the current Constitution to reverse even the little gains attained by the ushering of the democratic dispensation in 1994 – land restitution, affirmative action, BBBEE, employment equity, etc. In a Constitutional Democracy, the rights of the minority seems to be more protected than anyone else's, and the beneficiaries are aware of that. The wick-ed know that the Constitution is giving them power, and are optimally using it to their maximum advantage in a destructive manner. Every slight move they run to

the courts, and the judiciary upholds their rights.

In a Constitutional Democracy, not even the parliament is sovereign. The judiciary seems to be. Actions of the President, the legislature and the executive could be, and are in fact often struck down as being “invalid”, “unconstitutional”, “irrational”, “unlawful”, etc. by the courts. Parliament makes laws, and the other arm of government, the judiciary, reverses them. The courts seem to have an upper hand amongst other arms of government. There is no clear separation of powers.

OPINION

The lines are blurred, in what seems to be *“judicial overreach”*. Judicial overreach poses a serious threat to the rule of law and effective democratic governance. Judicial overreach *“refers to the claim that courts are overstepping the boundaries of judicial authority by interfering in areas that according to the doctrine of separation of powers, are the prerogative of the executive or legislature”*.

The principle of separation of powers is about the functional independence of branches of government – the judiciary, the executive, and the legislature, whilst the principle of *“checks and balances”* is more about ensuring that the three arms of government do not usurp powers from one another, or encroach onto each other’s territory, and *“checks and balances”* is mainly to *“ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness”*.

Our Freedom Charter-based Constitution might have been promulgated with the best intentions, but it is turning out to be the worst piece of legislation against own citizens or good governance. The courts are misusing it even to promote illegality, e.g. granting the right for illegal undocumented foreigners to remain in the country, whilst declaring actions of Minister of Home affairs *“illegal”*, *“unconstitutional”*, and *“irrational”*.

However, to avoid being all over and waffling about the Freedom Charter, it is important to zoom into the specific clause of the Charter, and analyse it. For instance, Freedom Charter states that, ***“The People Shall Share in the Country’s Wealth”***. This is one of the elements of the Freedom Charter that has

not been done justice to. It was adulterated and/or betrayed. It is disheartening that, seventy (70) years down the line, South Africa is still declared by the UN to be the most unequal society in the world. The government has not fully restored the wealth of the country to indigenous people as envisaged. The country’s mineral resources, financial institutions and monopoly industries like the subsidised bus sector, have not been transferred to ownership of previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs), such as SMME bus and taxi operators.

One of the main challenges that faced the present government when it assumed power in 1994 was to deal effectively with the legacy of unjust policies of the past, because it inherited apartheid system that entrenched inequalities in opportunities among

different race groups. As a result thereof, South Africa has one of the world’s most unequal patterns of distribution of income and wealth.

The 1994 democratic breakthrough provided the ANC as a liberation movement with the opportunity to pursue economic policies, which hold inclusive growth, development and wealth distribution at its core, in order to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor within the country. The government had the opportunity to redistribute wealth, boost the SMME sector, and to have sustainable and meaningful black economic empowerment (BEE) implications. Regrettably, more than three decades after the dawn of democracy in South Africa, no meaningful and/or remarkable progress seems to have been made towards attainment of total



FREEDOM CHARTER
26 JUNE, 1955 - AS ADOPTED AT THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE, KLIPTOWN

3 THE PEOPLE SHALL SHARE IN THE COUNTRY'S WEALTH

The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth argues that the country's natural endowments, including South Africa's mineral wealth, banks, industries, and trade, should belong to the people, not just a few, to ensure the well-being of all. It also emphasizes the right to enter any sector, trade, craft, and profession.

This clause forms the basis of our economic transformation programme - to build an inclusive and growing economy where management, ownership and control do not belong only to a few.

liberation of the majority of our people and creation of non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

Apartheid policies left a sad legacy that resulted in control of the economy in the hands of a few individuals, mainly white males.

The South African economy is characterized by concentration of ownership of resources in the hands of a few wealthy shareholders. The majority of blacks, Africans in particular, are still trapped in shackles of the so-called triple challenges – unemployment, poverty, and inequality. They are still economically marginalized and/or languishing in the periphery and outside the mainstream economy, and those that are in the economic mainstream are the poorly paid unskilled and semi-skilled persons. Poverty, illiteracy, lack of skills, limited ownership of factors of production, typically coincide with being indigenous African in South Africa. Access to markets and capital are still major problems to the majority of the entrepreneurs from the disadvantaged background.

The government should be actively and/or directly involved in facilitating the immediate entry of suitably qualified and deserving African entrepreneurs into the economic mainstream of the country through procurement reforms and other related activities. By this, does not refer to few serial BEE beneficiaries, who are all over economic sectors, and feel entitled to every opportunity, to the exclusion of majority of entrepreneurs from disadvantaged background, who remain marginalised and lingering outside the economic mainstream of the country.



Defending **BBBEE** and **Employment Equity** Against **White** **Entitlement**

■ By **STAN ITSHEGETSENG**

WE have begged, reasoned, explained, and tolerated for far too long. Now we draw a line. We are done apologising for fighting to correct 350 years of white theft and economic exclusion. If this upsets white South Africans and their political proxies in the DA, then so be it. BBBEE and Employment Equity are not favours – they are a constitutional necessity, an economic strategy, and a revolutionary act. And those who oppose them are not fighting for fairness – they are fighting to keep their stolen privilege.

Let me be clear: the Constitution of South Africa demands transformation. It is not optional. Section 9(2) of the Constitution

says the state must take “*legislative and other measures*” to “*advance persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.*” That is precisely what the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act 53 of 2003) and the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) do. They are not policies for “*reverse racism*” – they are the only tools we have left to undo the structural violence of apartheid economics.

Still, the Democratic Alliance and its white business backers are running to court, crying about “*quotas*” and “*discrimination.*” But where were they when Black South Africans were locked out of land, business, education, banking and property under racist

laws? Where was this concern for fairness when white families got a 400-year head start and left us with the crumbs? Today, white people control over 68% of top management positions in South Africa. They make up less than 8% of the population. Yet they scream when the law asks them to share. That is not democracy – that is greed.

Let's talk enforcement, because this is where the ANC and government must stop tiptoeing. The BBBEE Act, especially after its 2013 amendment, is very clear: companies that want state contracts, licences, or approvals must comply with transformation scorecards. The BBBEE Commission has the power to investigate and prosecute companies that lie about black ownership or front black faces to secure tenders. The Employment Equity Act, now strengthened through the 2023 amendments, forces companies to set targets, submit reports, and transform their workplaces – or face fines of up to 10% of their revenue.

And yet, many companies continue to stall, lie, front, and defy. Why? Because they are protected by a political culture of cowardice and courts that often bend backwards to protect capital instead of justice. The DA's legal campaign to block these laws is nothing short of sabotage. They want to turn the Constitution upside down – pretending that redress is racism, and racism is a right.

But transformation is not only legal. It is African. In customary law, the principle of *hlonipha* teaches us that justice is about restoration, not revenge. Our people know that when something is broken, you don't pretend it never happened – you fix it. You repair the damage. You return what was stolen. BBBEE is not about

punishing white people. It's about healing a nation. It's about building a future where the child of a domestic worker and the child of a billionaire stand equal before the economy.

The Progressive Professionals Forum, Black Management Forum and Black Business Council have already made it clear: we don't want window dressing. We want set-asides. That means a fixed percentage of government business must be reserved – by law – for black-owned companies.

No loopholes. No fronting. No excuses.

We want real ownership, not symbolic shares. We want real jobs for black professionals, not backdoor contracts to the same white monopoly networks. We want penalties that bite, not warnings that whimper.

To those in the ANC who still think they can serve both revolution and white capital – you are either with the people or with the privilege. There is no middle ground. If you cannot defend transformation in public, if you cannot enforce quotas with courage, then step aside. We are not afraid to lead.

Where was the concern for fairness when white families got a 400-year head start and left us with the crumbs? Today, white people control over 68% of top management positions in South Africa.

They make up less than 8% of the population.

Yet they scream when the law asks them to share.

That is not democracy - THAT IS GREED.

Internationally, other countries have done this. Malaysia had its New Economic Policy. India uses caste-based reservations. The US had affirmative action, even if their right-wing courts are now trying to reverse it. But South Africa? South Africa is unique. Here, transformation is not a political option. It is the final stage of our liberation. If we don't finish the economic struggle, then we have betrayed the blood of Chris Hani, Ruth First, Solomon Mahlangu and Benjamin Moloise.

White resistance to BBBEE and EE is not just irritating – it is dangerous. It is a spark waiting to ignite an economic explosion.

Millions of young Black South Africans are educated, unemployed, and angry. They are watching us. If we don't defend their right to dignity through jobs, ownership and access, they will not wait politely forever. That is not a threat – it is a warning. Even patience has its limit.

So to the DA and its rich funders: stop weaponising the courts. Stop hiding behind technicalities. You are not defending the Constitution – you are defending apartheid's leftovers. And to black professionals, entrepreneurs, students and workers: rise. This is our moment. Defend the laws that were written for you. Demand enforcement. Report fronting. Hold leaders accountable. Build black businesses, don't just beg to enter white ones.

We are not asking. This is the unfinished business of 1994.

It ends now.

Stan Itshegetseng is a member, of the Vuyani Mabaxa Branch (Ward 27, Zone 10) and an NEC Member of the Progressive Professionals Forum (PPF). He writes in his personal capacity.

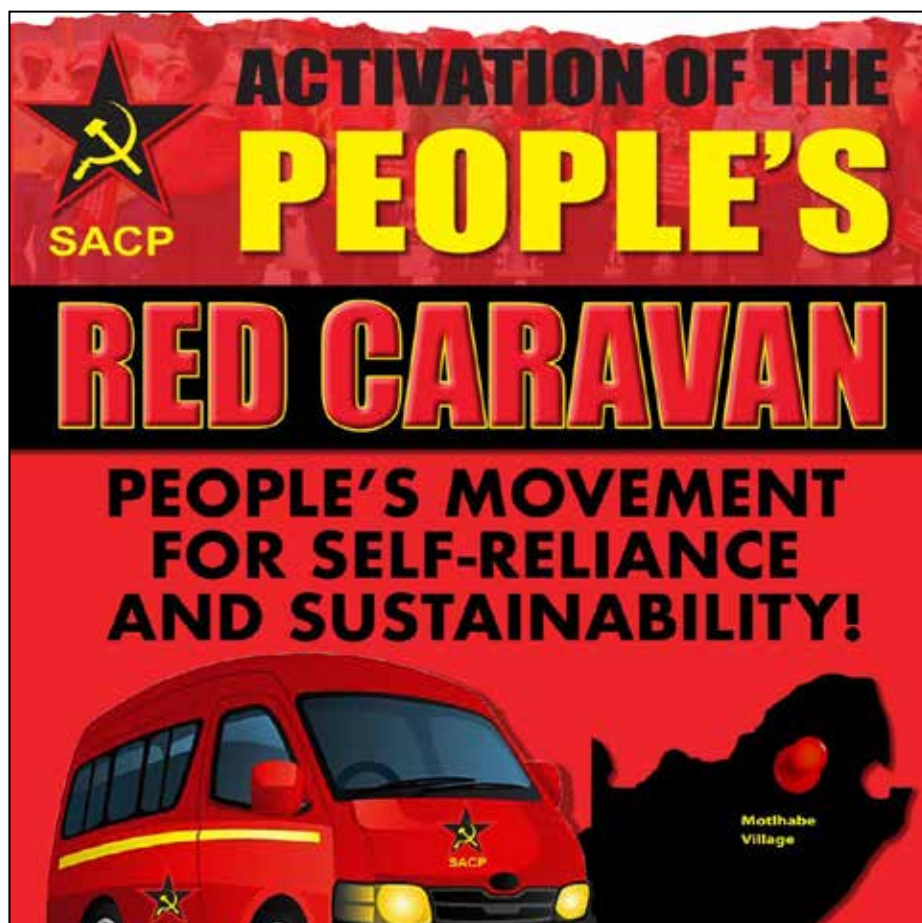
IS THE **SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY**, **A VANGUARD OR A REARGUARD, AT THE** **BACK OF THE RED CARAVAN CAMPAIGN**

■ By **AMBASSADOR PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

THE enchanting intellectual reflections, by Political Economist Analyst, Zamikhaya Maseti, Magister Philosophiae in South African politics and political economy, and Dr FG Tsibani, of the University of Johannesburg Nuclear Research Centre, Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, on the much proclaimed People's Red Caravan Campaign, led by the South African Communist Party, have sparked intense scholarly and philosophical debates, about the historic dialectical question, of the relationship between the vanguard party and state power. The leaps and storms along the revolutionary path, towards the future of our democratic republic.

The fundamental question the South African scholarly has to ask is, whether the leadership of the South African Communist Party, fathom the internationalist character of our nationalism. The question we need to ask is who is behind the wheels of the people's Caravan traversing the dusty streets across the villages and townships, calling for the liquidation of the revolutionary Alliance led by our democratic movement.

Are the wheels of the People's Red Caravan driven by forces of national democratic revolution or



bourgeois democratic forces of social chauvinism? Is the people's Caravan driven by illuminating forces of the revolutionary theory of Marxist Leninism or sloganeers of revisionism, whose atrocious agenda is to vulgarise and distort the theory of national democratic revolution?

On the 17th of February 1917, Vladimir Lenin wrote a letter to

A.M. Kollontai, instructing her to collect a notebook he left in Switzerland, afraid of persecution from the security agents of the Provisional Government, who would have arrested him, should he have come along with back into Russia. The notebook was titled "*Marxism on the state*", criticising Bukharin preposition on the attitude of Marxism to the state.



In the letter he says to her *“if am knocked off, I ask you to publish my notebook Marxism on the State. It is bound in a blue cover. All the quotations from Marx and Engels are collected there, also those from Kautsky against Pan-nekoek, there are a number of remarks, notes and formulas. I think a week’s work would be enough to publish, I consider it important because not only Plekhanov, but Kautsky, too, is confused.”*

The initial notebook was authored using the pseudonym F.F. Ivanovsky. The famous historical thesis of the State and Revolution, were penned in Lenin’s name, as there were no more threats from the deposed Tsarist regime. This was during tremendous times, when the Marxist interpretation on the question of the state, was increasingly gaining significance on the world scale.

Revolutionaries across the world were confoundingly experiencing difficult times, when it became evident that capitalism was salvaging itself through degradation of humanity, the reason Vladimir, found it necessary, to dwell

deeper into the heart and soul of Marxism, guiding the world revolutionary movement. The historical task was the gist of the living soul of Marxism, the necessity of concrete analysis of concrete conditions.

The Cuban revolutionary leader and intellectual, founder of the Communist Party of Cuba, Julio Antonio Mella, spoke of the great fertile moment for socialism in Cuba, but at the same time, warning that in achieving such milestone struggles of the working class, Marxists must not copycat revolutions carried out by other people in other climates. Emphasising on the need to adapt our strategies and tactics, in accordance with the realities of our own political environment.

He taught his follow Cuban revolutionaries of the importance of not following Marxism as a theology, following it to the latter, urging them to *“understand the nature of the capitalist universality, alongside the rich history of each country, developing a dialectical understanding of the universal and the particular, and to*

understand the capitalist social relations, alongside how these emerged in each location”.

In his historical analysis of the origin of the family, private property and the state, the erudite philosopher, Frederick Engels, gives a theoretical preposition that the existence of the state, is as a result of *“irreconcilable antagonisms in society.”*

That *“when society has entangled itself into insolvable contradictions, of irreconcilable antagonism between the classes, in order for society not to be consumed by fruitless struggles, it is necessary to have power standing above society, that will alleviates conflicts and keeps it within the bounds of order, and this power, arising out of society, but putting itself above society, and alienating itself more and more from society, is the state”.*

But let’s go back to the fundamental questions posed, of the attitude of the Communist movement across the world, on the question of its relationship to state power, the historic leadership role of the Communist movement, towards the struggles of the people in the former colonies and semi-colonies, and in this instance of the South African situation, of colonialism of a special type, arising out of the need for the existence of the revolutionary Alliance.

It may be that the far-fetched ideological malice, of the SACP seeking to stand for elections, independent of the forces of the national democratic revolution, demonstrates the complex nature of the very same question, of the relationship between the party and state power, the growing theoretical misconception of the seizure

of state power and the withering away of the state. The task of revolutionary consciousness to appraise concrete analysis of prevailing material conditions of a particular historical period.

Throughout history, social chauvinists and opportunists, have repudiated historical and dialectical materialism, indispensable theoretical fact that the proletariat revolution can only abolish a bourgeois state, that it is only after the victory of the socialist revolution, that the proletariat state can wither away. The withering away of the state is the ultimate stage in the development of human society, rapturing society into a complete democracy.

The worrisome phenomenon is the warmongering attitude of the People's Red Caravan Campaign led by the SACP, preparing itself to contest elections, independent of the forces of national democratic revolution. We are witnessing the defining moment of the tendencies of reckless adventurism and vacillations, with our vanguard party singing to the left and dancing to the right.

In ward 13 in the Polokwane municipality, the famous People's Caravan has picked a candidate to contest the coming ward by-elections, raising the revolutionary red colour from the backyards of the Seshego township. The widespread allegations are that, the benevolent candidate of the SACP, was recently an active member of the Democratic Alliance.

It is not for us to judge people as to where they come from, I am sure that discipline requires of us to respect the fundamental rights of individuals as enshrined in the constitution, of the freedom of speech and belonging.



SACP General Secretary Solly Mapaila briefing party members at the People's Red Caravan launch.

In this regard, I wish to refer all true communists, to stand true to the traditions and values of our revolutionary vanguard, ethos of democratic centralism and dictatorship of the proletariat.

Communists are the most advanced elements in society, guardians of our national democratic revolution, the first to appreciate the balance of forces both domestically and internationally, abiding themselves to the rare, but the most noble principle, of the few but the better, comprehending the theoretical synthesis, of the majority being the few, who understand better the cause of the struggles, into our socialist future. True Communists distinguished by unending commitment, to the cause of the struggles, into the future of socialism.

Pondering on the perpetuating ignorance, on the very same fundamental theoretical questions, of contradictions of the relationship between the party and state power, I am much convinced, that the very same social chauvinists and opportunists, by virtue of the lack of the depth of the very same question, of the abolition of

the bourgeois state and withering away of the proletariat state, are the first to revolt against the moral foundations of our socialist revolution.

Our people do not know the difference between the SACP and African National Congress, and the rest of the revolutionary Alliance formations. Without question, the bulk of the SACP leadership represents the true reflection, of the deep seated political and moral decay, of corruption and other malfeasance, some of them, having become, distinguishable testimonies, of incorrigible rampant acts of looting of the state.

The question I throw into the political auditorium of our esteemed revolutionaries and all other progressive forces is, what do we do of the impending political catastrophe? Do we fight from within or unban the Communist Party of South Africa? The South African working class is awaiting for its Lenin.

Ambassador Phatse Justice Piitso is a member of the African National Congress. He writes in his personal capacity.



From Astoria to Athlone: Lessons from Zohran Mamdani for Building Peoples Power in Local Government

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

I have spent almost 4 decades in the trenches of South African politics, organising high school youth in the Cape Flats, standing on protest lines during apartheid, endured political detention, post-Apartheid developmental bureaucrat, party secretary, negotiating hope in Parliament, and now walking the reflective road of reinvention. Politics, for me, has always been about people. About how we show up, serve, and struggle with and for our communities.

So when I read about Zohran Mamdani's recent victory not in a general election, but in the Democratic primary for Mayor of New York City, I didn't just see another young progressive making headlines. I saw a mirror. A message. A movement that speaks to what

we must become again, here in South Africa, especially in the build-up to our 2026 Local Government Elections.

This is not a celebration of a foreign figure. It's a reflection on what is possible when politics remembers its purpose. And it's a call to all of us, especially those who dream of holding office, to rethink how we campaign, how we organise, and how we govern.

Mamdani story tells us that people are hungry for leaders who fight for their daily lives not for their careers. It tells us that politics is not dead trust is. And trust is rebuilt not through slogans, but through presence, performance, and principle.

To outsiders, New York City may

appear as a distant, complex metropolis a cultural capital, a business hub, a symbol of American diversity and dysfunction. But the mayor of New York is not just a municipal executive; it's one of the most powerful local government roles in the world, with jurisdiction over more than 8 million residents, a \$110 billion+ annual budget, and responsibilities that touch everything from housing to policing to the subway system.

Bread-and-Butter Politics Must Be Our Frontline

Zohran didn't win because he was flashy. He won because he was focused. His campaign revolved around a simple, hard-hitting set of demands:

- Freeze the rent. People before Profits.

- Make public transport free and fast.
- Provide childcare and protect working-class families. Social Wage
- He didn't chase ideological purity. He anchored his politics in the daily pain and possibility of ordinary New Yorkers. And that clarity gave people something rare in politics today: **trust**.

His strengths include: **Moral Clarity and Popular Legitimacy.** If elected, he would command an unprecedented mandate from a movement hungry for transformation. **Ability to Inspire Civic Engagement:** His campaign has created political energy in a disengaged electorate. That could translate into stronger civic participation; **Symbolic Leadership:** His win would signal a generational and ideological shift in NYC politics, especially in light of disillusionment with centrist Democrats.

Here in Cape Town, our poor and working-class communities face the same structural burdens:

- Rising food prices and transport costs. Unaffordable electricity, rates and tariffs. Cap electricity tariffs for indigent households
- Homelessness, Unaffordable Housing, gentrification Informal evictions and backyarder neglect.
- Water cuts in the poorest wards, while swimming pools in affluent suburbs stay blue. Stop water disconnections
- Ensure public crèches in every Voting District in every ward.

And yet, our local politics too often feels aloof, abstract, or adversarial. We speak at people, not with them. We bring manifestos, not listening ears.

Mamdani's victory teaches us that to win hearts and minds, we must start where people are, and speak to what they feel. Service delivery isn't just a bureaucratic function. It's the ground of dignity, belonging, and survival.

Real Power Is Built, Not Handed Down

What impressed me most about Zohran's campaign wasn't his policies. It was his process.

He didn't wait for endorsements or elite donors. He and his team:

- Mobilised over 22,000 volunteers that did voter registration, canvassing, phone banking
- Knocked on 450,000 doors.
- Held listening tours and town halls in churches, mosques, schools, and housing blocks.
- Used digital platforms not just for marketing but for organising.

This wasn't a campaign. It was a people's movement, embedded in the fabric of daily life.

In South Africa, particularly in the ANC, we have often relied on our

liberation credentials, legacy networks, and party machinery to secure votes. But those days are fading. Our people are tired of being mobilised only when it's time to vote, then forgotten afterward.

We need to build continuous, community-rooted structures of accountability and care. Each ANC branch must evolve into a Ward Organising Hub. Each councillor must become a chief servant, not a gatekeeper.

Politics is not about distributing T-shirts. It's about showing up when the toilets are blocked, when the water is cut, when the shack burns down and staying present long after the cameras have left.

Digital Literacy Must Marry Organising Discipline

Zohran's team understood something many older politicians still don't: platforms shape power.

His campaign used:

- TikTok videos to explain complex budget issues in plain language.



- Instagram stories to profile community struggles and victories.
- WhatsApp groups for real-time volunteer coordination.
- Interactive maps and voter data to target outreach with surgical precision.

This wasn't slick marketing. It was strategic, story-driven, participatory communication. It made politics feel personal again. Simplicity sells in politics.

We cannot ignore this in South Africa. Our young people are online. They are shaping narratives, making memes, and organising movements. But too often, progressive forces lag behind in that terrain.

We must train our next generation of ANC candidates and activists not just in slogans and structures, but in navigating the digital public square with discipline and creativity. A meme can reach 50,000 people in five minutes. A livestreamed budget breakdown can shift an entire ward's consciousness.

And let me be clear: digital doesn't replace door-to-door it amplifies it. The future belongs to those who can walk the street and trend the hashtag in the same breath.

Have the Courage to Stand Where It Matters

Mamdani wasn't afraid to speak up for Palestine. He was arrested alongside taxi workers. He challenged his own party when it strayed from its values. He didn't hide behind spin. He led with conviction.

In our context especially in Cape

Town this is crucial. We live in a city run by a DA that polices poverty, sanitises politics, and prioritises the rich while criminalising the poor. It is also a city where the ruling party has refused to condemn Israel's war crimes in Gaza and continued to offer soft denialism of apartheid spatial injustice.

We must develop ANC candidates who don't just campaign but confront injustice wherever it shows itself. In housing tribunals. On police brutality. In council chambers.

Stand boldly for working-class interests. Speak clearly on:

- Land redistribution.
- Local corruption.
- Global solidarity (especially Gaza).
- Water and electricity access.

We must stop playing to opinion polls and start playing to our people's pain.

Let our councillors be those who:

- March with waste pickers and backyarders.
- Hold live Facebook updates after council sessions.
- Track every blocked drain and burst pipe on a public dashboard.
- Call out corruption, whether it's in the city or in our own ranks.

That kind of courage doesn't require permission. It requires purpose.

Start Governing Before We Are Elected

Perhaps the boldest move Mamdani made was this: he didn't wait to win before acting.

His campaign teams helped ten-

ants fight evictions. They translated legal language into everyday guidance. They ran local issue-based meetings with real deliverables. They modelled what governance could look like before they even had formal power. We must

This must be our model too.

We must encourage all prospective ANC councillors to prove their politics through action, not ambition. Let every candidate deliver a small pilot project before selection:

- Clean 100 drains.
- Organise a community watch in 3 blocks.
- Mobilise donations for school shoes or food parcels.
- Reopen a dormant crèche.

Let our message be clear: You don't run for office to lead. You run because you already serve.

From Cape Town to the Country: A National Programme of Renewal

Zohran Mamdani's campaign is not a template to copy it's a catalyst to reimagine.

Across South Africa, from Gugulethu to Giyani, Mitchells Plain to Mthatha, we must initiate a national project to rebuild the profile and practice of local public leadership.

What kind of ANC Councillors are we looking for: peoples person; rootedness; lived in ward for 5+ years; known in local community; active community involvement; record of struggle; credible; can mobilise and organise; leads/organises at least 2 community efforts; can run a basic WhatsApp campaign; make a short video; understands how ward budgets;



service complaints and ward based plans; upholds ANC values and serves the people first. Unafraid to speak truth to the party and to power.

People Before Party Councillor Academy

Train 1,000 candidates across 9 provinces in:

- Service delivery basics;
- Political education;
- Budget oversight;
- Conflict resolution;
- Digital activism; and
- Participatory governance.

Mini-Ward Governance Projects

Each subregion identifies 5 high-need wards and begins delivering:

- Pre-election service fixes;
- Transparency dashboards; and
- Youth, housing, or safety pilots.

Digital Volunteer Corps

Recruit and train 10,000 youth in every province to:

- Build ANC TikTok and

WhatsApp campaigns

- Monitor local government failures
- Help councillors engage more transparently; and
- Countering DA/Zionist misinformation.

We don't need to wait for 2026. The work begins now.

Closing Thoughts: Let Us Lead Like the People Are Watching

Comrades, friends, fellow South Africans, Zohran Mamdani's campaign reminds us of something we used to know: politics is sacred work. It is about lifting people, not just lists. It is about earning trust, not just chasing votes. It is about speaking to pain, delivering dignity, and standing for justice.

We must now raise a new generation of leaders who are as committed to delivery as they are to dreaming, as grounded in the ward as they are bold on the mic. We need to recruit not celebrities,

but servants. Not managers, but mobilisers. Not technocrats, but transformers.

Mamdani may not yet be mayor – but he has shown what honest, movement-driven, practical politics can look like in the 21st century. He has reminded the world that organised people can still defeat organised money. That a city, like a country, belongs to those who live in it, not just those who buy it.

In 2026, South Africans will not vote based on loyalty. They will vote based on lived experience.

We can no longer deliver slogans where people need sanitation. We cannot offer internal factional games when people want their streetlights working. We cannot wait for voter registration weekends to show up in our own communities.

Faiez Jacobs is a Political Strategist, former ANC Member of Parliament and Western Cape Provincial Secretary.

ANC ORGANISATIONAL RENEWAL REFERS TO ITS TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENDA

■ By **LUTHANDO GILBERT BUSO**

IN this political article (not academic), one strongly argues that the African National Congress (ANC) Organisational Renewal strictly refers to ANC Transformational Agenda which must be carried out by transformational leadership in a more effective, efficient and transparent manner.

In the context of the ANC as a political organisation, transformation must be understood as referring to a significant and fundamental organisational change which involves tremendous shift in building organisational branches that should, by nature of their existence, be aggressively touching ground with the masses to address their problems and work with them to find solutions for such problems, and also to work with them to build a better society that participates in making South Africa a better country that is non-racial, non-sexist and democratic, a country that belongs to all who live in it. It is undeniably correct to categorically and unambiguously state that this transformation is triggered by internal dynamics which the leaders know and also triggered by the greatest desire to adapt to evolving societal demands for a better life in this country, with its status of a developmental state.

It is a fact that the 53rd National Conference of the ANC affirmed the tasks of the ANC to be, just to mention few:

- (a) To transform society and build social cohesion through organisational values, organisational integrity, exemplary leadership in society and by winning the battle of ideas in a convincing manner.
- (b) To select and deploy capable leaders and public representatives that hold greatest degree of integrity, capacity and the correct orientation and expertise to drive and implement organisational programmes.
- (c) To develop cadres that are schooled in organisational

values and policies, cadres with capacity to be agents of change wherever they are deployed.

As an author of this article, it is important to state that one adopted the fundamental theme of qualitative approach, a phenomenological one, where the author's perspective is the empirical point of departure and should be understood as a focus upon the real-life experience of the people.

In so far as 53rd National Conference of the ANC resolutions are concerned, the organisation has done little to implement the resolutions. The missing point, which the 53rd National Confer-





ence failed to discuss and resolve on, is the quality of branch leadership with acceptable level of “education”, leadership that is schooled in organisational values and policies, cadres with capacity to lead ANC branch at a Ward level. ANC is vulnerable at the branch level and this is the undeniable fact. The Foundation Course is a good prescription for this sickness, but the manner in which it is carried out in certain quarters, defeats the actual objective of the existence of the programme. Monitoring and evaluation by a dedicated team in every region, is recommended. ANC has a pool of cadres who are retired civil servants and individuals from faith based organisations, people who do not have interest of holding positions in the organisation. The empirical evidence is clear, regional and provincial leaders want branch leaders for conferences, in disregard for quality, loyalty to the organisation and people’s revolutionary cause. Level of education must be a requirement (policy matter) and not a recommendation.

In the situation like this, Vladimir Lenin would ask, what must

be done and where to begin, he would do so to understand the current state of affairs and to identify the necessary revolutionary actions. In the light of this, one has a revolutionary duty to argue as follows:

- (a) The ANC is ashamedly and unceremoniously vulnerable at the grass root (branch level). The opposition is exploiting such weaknesses to their advantage. Opposition branch leaders are quality leaders who clearly articulate their parties’ ideology, policies and programmes.
- (b) The remedy to this is; the ANC, through its Electoral Committee, must adopt a process of subjecting all those who have desire to be elected as leaders to tough interview process, whereby each cadre will have to demonstrate his/her understanding of the ANC, his/her experience in the organisation, detailing his/her branch activities carried out to solve community problems and how many executive and general meetings in a year did his/her branch hold. The candidate must indicate in

the interview as to how many times did the branch make the Ward Councillor account to the organisation and how many Ward Meetings were called by the Ward Councillor. This process must be effectively managed so that the system can quickly detect a lie.

- (c) It is a fact that poor performing Ward Councillors and Branch Leaders dented the integrity of the ANC in the eyes of the communities hence this 40% the organisation obtained in the May 2024 National and Provincial Elections. The ANC has no other option, but to build capacity at the branch level.

People have lost confidence in the ANC, and this has been brought about by social distance at a branch level, negative tendencies, personal greed, declining quality of leaders and members and deployment of not up to standard Ward Councillors.

Luthando Buso writes in his personal capacity as a member of the ANC and not as ANCVL RTT Coordinator in Eastern Cape, Alfred Nzo Region.

ANC REMAINS THE TRUE CUSTODIAN OF LIBERATION: EXPOSING THE POLITICAL THEATRE OF ANC BREAKAWAYS

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

IN recent years, we have seen the emergence of several political formations led by individuals who once held prominent positions within the ANC. These breakaways, rather than offering coherent policy alternatives or principled leadership, often clothe themselves in ANC symbolism to mask political opportunism. They claim to be the true heirs of the ANC's legacy – invoking the Freedom Charter, wearing the colours, and quoting the speeches of our revolutionary icons.

The MK Party is the most recent and, arguably, the most brazen of these formations. Launched amid personal grievance rather than political clarity, it has presented itself as a custodian of ANC values whilst openly stealing symbols belonging to the ANC and claiming the legacy of known ANC stalwarts. But when subjected to even minimal scrutiny, its contradictions become clear. We must ask: what truly makes them better than the ANC they so readily vilify?

Since its short existence, the MK Party has had no fewer than seven Secretaries General – a rate of turnover unheard of in any serious organisation. What explains this instability if not the autocratic concentration of power



in a single individual? The party's constitution allegedly gives its leader unfettered powers to hire and fire at will, with no checks, no balances, and no respect for collective leadership. Can this be called democratic? And more importantly, how does this compare with the ANC's time-tested system of conferences, elected structures, and consultative leadership – even in moments of internal contestation?

For all our imperfections, the ANC remains anchored in its constitutional values. We have institutions that work, and a tradition of self-correction. Our debates are robust, sometimes messy, but ultimately reflective of a living organisation rooted in the

people. The same cannot be said of a party that trades in political theatrics while failing to uphold the most basic tenets of internal democracy.

One of the most troubling developments was the MK Party's recent endorsement of Morocco's position on Western Sahara – an abrupt departure from South Africa's longstanding support for the Sahrawi people's right to self-determination. This shift is not only ideologically inconsistent with ANC foreign policy, but it also raises serious questions about the motivations behind it. Allegations have surfaced suggesting that this policy shift may have been driven by financial considerations.

Even more concerning is that the allegation of financial mismanagement and the siphoning of millions of rands from MK Party coffers was not made by an outsider – it was made by the party's own former Secretary General. This raises a fundamental question: if this is how they manage internal party finances, how could they ever be trusted with the public purse should they find themselves in government? For a party that claims to be ready to govern at various levels, these revelations should alarm every citizen.

In Parliament, where accountability and policy direction should be tested, the MK Party has shown neither discipline nor coherence. Confused speeches, and hollow slogans have replaced the work of legislation and oversight. Their presence in Parliament is not felt through ideas but through incompetence and chaos. How does this build the democracy we fought for? And most importantly, how does it serve the people who voted for them in protest and pain?

Let us ask plainly: is it honest to criticise the ANC for its shortcomings, only to replace it with a structure that has no constitutionally driven leadership, no policy platform, no economic plan, and no commitment to internal accountability? How do you speak of saving the ANC when your very project is built on misleading people into believing they are voting for the ANC when, in fact, they are voting for its opposite?

And here lies the curious irony: many of the foreign tendencies that had taken root within the ANC – factionalism, infighting, endless court battles – have now taken root within the MK Party. Perhaps, in hindsight, their departure from the ANC is not a

tragedy, but an unintentional act of renewal. It is possible that they have taken with them the source of much of our internal instability.

But let us not ignore the voters who were misled. Many South Africans cast their votes for MK in protest. That frustration must be respected, but it must also be engaged. The ANC must lead efforts to politically educate our communities and correct the falsehoods that masquerade as revolution. We must guide those voters back, not through condemnation, but through truth, delivery, and principled engagement.

The ANC must also reclaim the narrative – firmly and unapologetically. We are the custodians of the Freedom Charter because we live by its values, not because we chant its lines. We continue to build a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous South Africa, grounded in justice and human dignity. Leadership is not declared. It is earned over time – through service, sacrifice, and struggle.

Those who accuse the ANC must answer for their own record. What makes them different – let alone better – than the ANC they abandoned? If their politics are driven by personal ambition, secrecy, and transactional relationships, how can they claim moral superiority? If their internal governance is marked by authoritarianism and financial scandal, how can they preach accountability?

This is not just a political debate – it is a moral one. The future of our country depends on honest leadership, credible institutions, and a shared commitment to justice.

The ANC, for all its setbacks, remains the only political movement with the historical depth, democratic processes, and social base to lead this country forward.

Let us affirm our role with clarity. Let us speak the truth without fear. And let us continue the long walk to freedom, with the knowledge that the people of South Africa still look to the ANC not only for leadership – but for hope.



STRONG MINDS, SAFE COMMUNITIES: ENDING GBVF BEGINS WITH MEN

■ By **ADOLPH MAREMA**

JUNE marks Men's Mental Health Awareness Month, a vital opportunity to address an often-overlooked crisis affecting millions of men across South Africa. This month is not just about raising awareness it's a call to action for men to prioritize their mental wellbeing, speak openly about emotional struggles, and seek professional help without shame or fear.

In our communities, we continue to witness the horrific impact of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF). The victims are predominantly women and children, but the crisis begins long before any act of violence. It begins in the mind and heart of a man who was never taught how to process pain, how to manage anger, or how to ask for help.

Men are not born violent. But too many are socialized into silence, toughness, and emotional repression. The result? Broken families, fractured communities, and cycles of abuse that repeat across generations. If GBVF starts with men, then it must end with men.

This Men's Mental Health Awareness Month, we challenge the dangerous myths around masculinity. We reject the idea that asking for help is a weakness. We encourage every man regardless of age, background, or status to take that first brave step: speak



out, reach out, and seek help.

Mental illness, depression, anxiety, and trauma are not signs of failure; they are health conditions that require care, compassion, and professional support. Whether it's seeing a therapist, joining a support group, or confiding in a trusted friend, healing starts with acknowledging the need for help.

We must also create safe spaces for men to talk without judgment. Churches, community centers, workplaces, and families must all play a role in changing the narrative. Our sons and brothers must grow up knowing that strength includes vulnerability, and that true manhood means choosing peace over violence, and healing over harm.

Ending GBVF is not only a fight for women it is a fight by men, with men, and for men. If we truly want safer communities, it starts with men who are mentally well, emotionally intelligent, and deeply accountable.

Let June be the month where men rise not in defense, but in reflection and transformation.

Because GBVF starts with men.

And it must end with men.



DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL UNIFORM IN MVEZO

■ By **NKOSI ZMD MANDELA**



On Thursday 26 June 2025, 100 school uniforms were distributed to learners at the Makgatho Lewanika Mandela Primary and the Mandela School of Science & Technology. Fifty learners from each school will benefit from this initiative.

Too many rural learners still go to school barefoot and in tattered clothes. Many walk miles from their poverty stricken villages to distant schools much like their parents and grandparents have done for decades before. This phenomenon is indicative of the lingering inequality that still permeates the South African reality. We have come a long way but we will have to work together to do more to bring about the transformation we desire for our beautiful country and our beloved continent.

We thank the sponsors for this wonderful contribution. This humble act of philanthropy means a lot to learners who will wear these uniforms with immense pride. We trust that others will emulate their example and make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate.

The founding father of our democracy was a great believer in the transformative power of education and as an avid sportsman and athlete himself considered sport an important tool of nation building. We are thus extremely grateful to the MEC and the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture Ms Sibulele Ngongo for their hygiene packs contribution which have brought joy to our learners and for making our event a great success.



The founding father of our democracy President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela said: "Education is the greatest weapon you can use to change the world." We have gone to great lengths to provide access to the educational infrastructure here in the village but education requires textbooks, equipment, clothes and shoes.

These learners will wear these uniforms with pride and it will motivate them to strive to even great levels on their path of education and learning.

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our sponsors Sasol, the Office of the Premier of the Eastern Cape, the MEC of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (Eastern Cape) for bringing much needed joy to learners of the Makgatho Lewanika Primary School and the Mandela School of Science and Technology.

The donation of uniforms is an act of kindness and benevolence and a demonstration of good corporate citizenship by our sponsors Sasol and

should serve as an encouragement and motivation to other corporates to emulate this good example during the **Nelson Mandela International Day 18th July**.

A special word of thanks to the Corporate Social Investment (CSI) unit of Sasol for their efforts in making this initiative an overwhelming success.

A special word of thanks to the Premier Oscar Mabuyane and his office for always supporting our work at Mvezo and for honouring the living legacy of President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

On behalf of the Royal House of Mandela (RHoM), the management and staff of our education institutions, learners and their families, we thank all who contributed in making this initiative a success.

The Royal House of Mandela (RHoM) is dedicated to upholding the life and legacy of President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and supporting the causes to which he dedicated his life.

A Luminous Archive of Resistance: A Tribute to Rashid Lombard

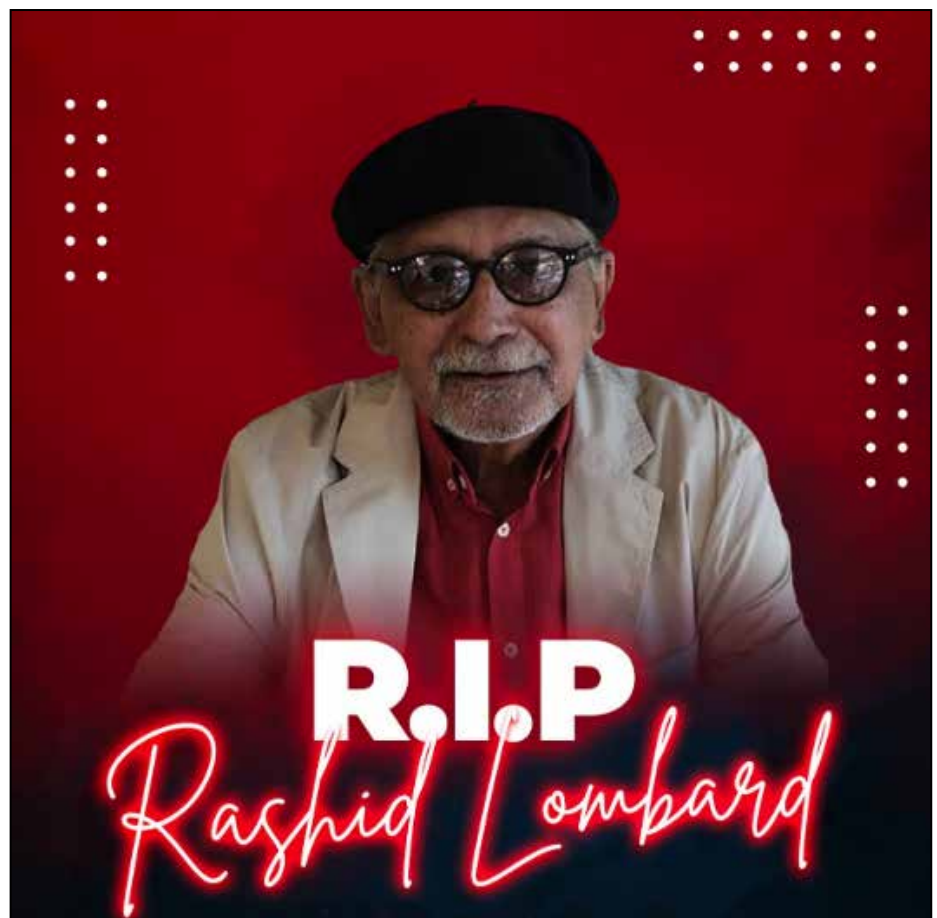
■ By **ANDILE LUNGISA**

THERE are lives that echo long after the final shutter clicks, whose legacies stretch across canvases of memory, music, and movement. Rashid Lombard was such a life, a man whose eye captured the turbulence and triumphs of a nation in flux, and whose soul orchestrated a symphony of cultural awakening.

Born into a country split by fault lines of injustice, Rashid did not merely witness the apartheid era, he archived it. With a camera in hand, he bore silent witness to unspeakable resistance, weaving visual narratives that became both indictment and inspiration.

In the shadow of oppression, he developed an artistry that did not seek applause, but accountability. His photographs are not just images; they are irrefutable truths frozen in time, etched proof of courage, community, and the ceaseless pursuit of dignity.

Yet Rashid's contribution cannot be confined to the frame. He understood that the arts were not decoration, they were liberation. They were not peripheral to development; they were its beating heart. In post-1994 South Africa, when the nation staggered out of its long night into the brightness of democracy, it was voices like Rashid's that reminded us that

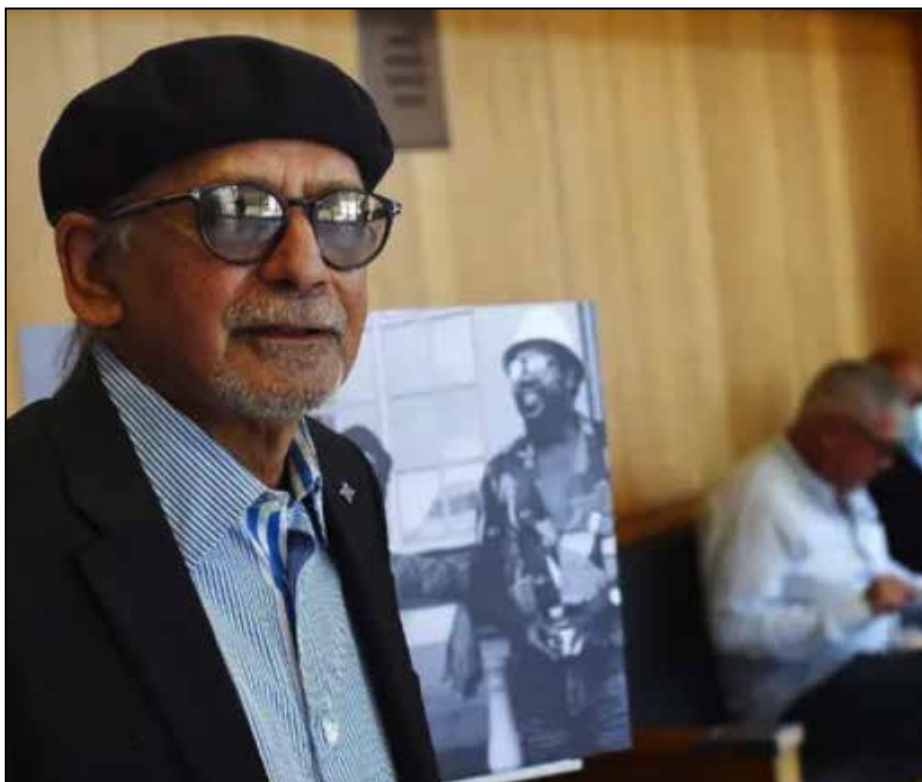


freedom must be felt, in song, in rhythm, in the joyous noise of our collective identity.

His founding of the Cape Town International Jazz Festival was more than an act of cultural curation, it was an act of nation-building. Jazz, that art form born of struggle and syncretism, became a bridge across generations and geographies. Under Rashid's visionary stewardship, the festival became Africa's grand stage,

a place where the wounds of the past were soothed by saxophone, where improvisation mirrored resilience, and where heritage found harmony.

In linking the Cape Town festival with the North Sea Jazz Festival, he placed African artistry on a global map, asserting with clarity and courage that our stories, too, belonged on the world stage. He did not merely export talent; he exported testimony.



Rashid was not alone in this mission. His collaboration with giants like Dr. Sam Mangwane of the Moretele Tribute Concert, Peter Tladi of Joy of Jazz, China Mpololo of the Home Coming Jazz Festival, and Morris Roda of Morris Roda Production, was not a coalition of promoters, it was a fraternity of cultural architects. Together, they reimagined South Africa's sonic skyline. Through the South African Music Promoters Association and his work with the National Arts Council, Rashid pushed tirelessly to ensure that the arts were not just funded, but valued; not just celebrated, but protected.

And still, he was more: a historian of feeling, an archivist of change, a cultural activist whose work braided together resistance and renaissance. For Rashid, art was not something to hang on walls, it was something that held up walls, that built homes for memory and imagination.

To speak of his legacy is to speak

of the progressive role of the arts in human development, not merely as entertainment, but as evidence. As energy. As emancipation. Rashid Lombard did

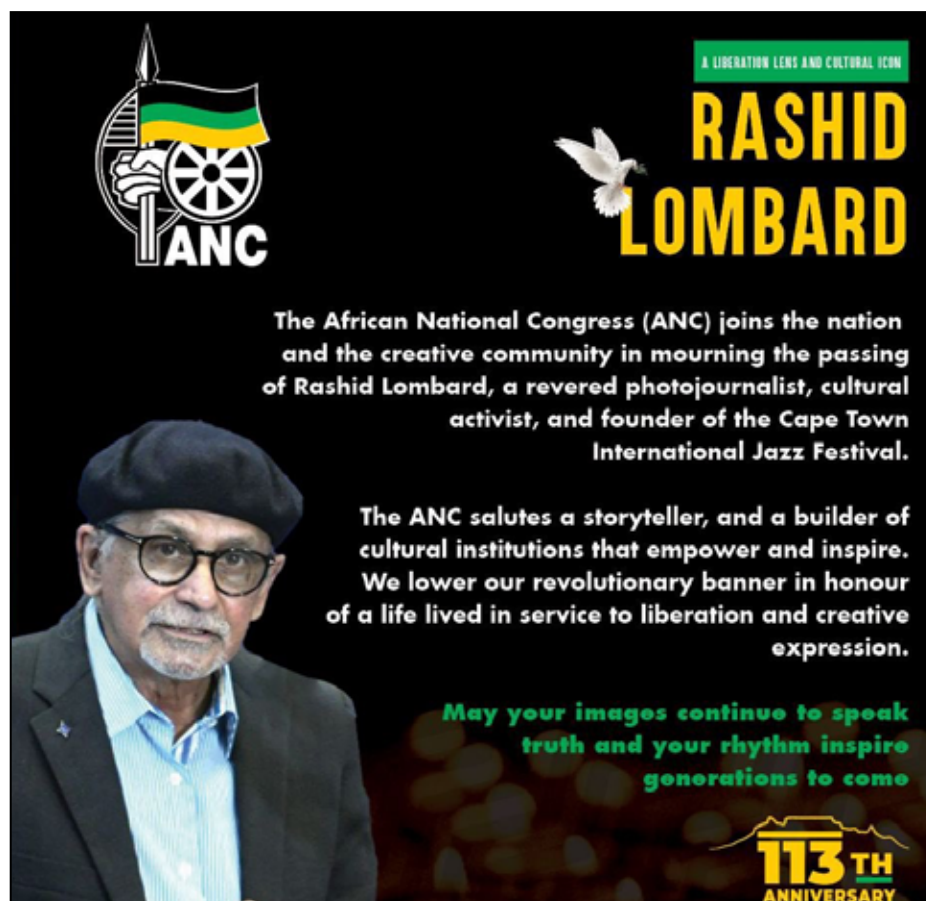
not just document the nation's journey, he shaped it, with every image, every festival, every collaboration, every silent act of defiance and every resounding chorus of celebration.

Today, we stand inside the living gallery he helped build. The music still plays.

The archives still speak. And through them, Rashid still teaches, that art is power, that culture is resistance, and that to preserve beauty in the face of brutality is one of the highest acts of courage.

May his name echo in every downbeat, every lens click, every page turned, every stage lit. May we continue to honour his truth: that in the soul of a nation, it is the artists who write history's most enduring verses.

Rest in radiant peace, Rashid Lombard.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

28 June — 4 July 2025

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday, The Africa Factbook and Amazwi SA Museum of Literature

28 June 1984

Assassination of Jeanette Schoon and daughter



Jeanette Schoon and her daughter Katryn (age 6) were killed by a letter bomb in Lubango, Angola. Schoon was an activist of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), and vice president of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) in 1972. She was part of the group that founded the Western Province Workers' Advice Bureau in 1973. She moved to Johannesburg in 1974, became a founder of the Industrial Aid Society, later working as an archivist for the South African Institute of Race of Relations collecting information on trade unions and leaders of the labour movement. She was arrested under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act in 1976, after which her family went into exile, settling first in Botswana and then Angola. The letter bomb was delivered by apartheid spy Craig Williamson, pretending to be a family friend. The younger

Schoon son, Fritz (age 3), was also in the house when the bomb went off, but was not injured. Williamson received amnesty from the TRC for the murders.

28 June 2002

COSATU and TAC table HIV Treatment plan in NEDLAC

On 28 June 2002 the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) tabled a national HIV/AIDS treatment plan in the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac). This was intended to allow Cosatu to declare a dispute with government and business should there be no agreement reached in Nedlac on the implementation of the treatment plan. A key aspect of the plan involved making antiretroviral drugs available in the public health sector for those with HIV.

28 June 2011

Artist Ronald Harrison passed on

Ronald Harrison, artist born in Athlone, Cape Town died of cancer, just before he was to exhibit his latest work. Harrison was famous for his painting Black Christ done in 1962, where he depicted Nkosi Albert Luthuli as Jesus, with apartheid leaders Verwoerd and John Vorster as Roman soldiers who crucified him. The painting not only challenged the



apartheid system, but also the notion that Jesus was white. Harrison was arrested and the painting banned. The painting was smuggled to the United Kingdom and was only returned in 1997, now hosted in the South African National Gallery. Besides numerous exhibitions, Harrison also wrote a book, *The Black Christ. A Journey to Freedom* in 2006, published by David Phillips.

29 June 1914

Ellen Kuzwayo born



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Nnoseng, Ellen Kate Kuzwayo (29 June 1914-19 April 2006) was born on this day in Thaba Nchu, Free State. She is the author of *Call me Woman* and other books, and after completing training at Fort Hare, worked as a teacher from 1938-1952. She went on to train as a social worker at the Jan Hofmyer School of Social Work, sharing a bench with another famous social worker, Winnie Mandela. A young Kuzwayo was also active in the youth movement, firstly in the South African Association of Youth Clubs, later as General Secretary of the national Young Christian Women's Association (YWCA), in the ANC Youth League in the 1960s, and the only woman on the 1976 Committee of Ten. In 1994, she was elected to the first post-apartheid South African Parliament as an ANC MP.

29 June 1976 Entebbe stand-off

A hijacked Air France A300B airbus which was traveling from Tel Aviv to Paris, lands in Entebbe Airport, Kampala Uganda on 29 June 1979. The hijackers (from Palestine and Germany) demanded the release of 53 Palestinian political prisoners. In the stand-off, 148 non-Israeli passengers are released, whilst 94 Israeli citizens along with the Air France crew are kept hostage at the Entebbe airport building. This starts of an international incident when on 4 July, the Israel Defense Forces launches a rescue mission, freeing the hostages. In the process 20 Ugandan soldiers, 3 of the hostages and all of the high-jackers were killed. To date two movies have been made about the incident: **"Raid on Entebbe"** in 1977 and more recent **"7 Days in Entebbe"** in 2018.

29 June 1998 Protea botanist Maria Vogts passed away

Maria Vogts, a botanist and pioneer of the South African protea industry passed away. Vogts did her PhD on the King Protea (1979), and studied and promoted protea plants as a lecturer at Paarl, and then went on to promote the growing of proteas as an industry, herself owning a farm. According to Cape Flora, a marketing organisation established in 2015 to promote proteas and fynbos, in 2016 about 712 hectares of protea flowers were planted in the country, with over 7.7 million stems of these flowers exported in 2018/2019, mostly to EU and Russia, the UK, Far East and Canada.

30 June 1921 SA Reserve Bank founded

The South African Reserve Bank opens its doors for business for the first time, after the passing of the Currency and Bank Act of 1920 by the Union Parliament, making it the oldest central bank on the African continent.

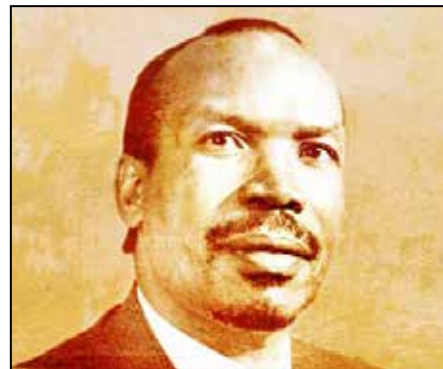
30 June 1968 Queen of Gospel Rebeca Molopa born



Rebecca Malope was born in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga and rose to fame when she won the Shell Road to Fame talent search in

1987, with a soulful rendition of the spiritual Sizwe Zako composition, *Shine On*. Initially singing Afropop, like Brenda Fassie and Yvonne Chaka Chaka, she switched to gospel with great success, not just at home but across the continent. She was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2003 from the University of Natal (now University of KwaZulu Natal – UKZN) for her contribution to music.

1 July 1921 Botswana founding President Seretse Khama born



Sir Seretse Khama was born on 1 July 1921 in Serowe in the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland, now known as Botswana. He studied in South Africa and graduated from Fort Hare College with a Bachelor of Arts in 1944. In 1966, he became the first president of the Republic of Botswana. Under his leadership Botswana developed from an impoverished and internationally obscure protectorate inherited from Britain to an increasingly democratic and prosperous country with a significant role in Southern Africa. He served as president until his death on July 13, 1980, in Gaborone.

1 July 1938 South African Press Association formed

The South African Press Association (SAPA) is formed as a not-for-profit platform for local newspapers

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

to share national and international news. With changes in the industry, SAPA closed shop and sent out its last story on 31 March 2015; its archives bought by Sekunjalo Investment Holdings.

1 July 1960

Ghana becomes a republic

Ghana, the first African country to gain independence from Britain in 1957, became a republic on 1 July 1960. Kwame Nkrumah became its first President, the country remained a member of the British Commonwealth and became one of the founders of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963.

1 July 1960

Democratic Republic of Somalia founded



On 1 July 1960, the independent Somali Democratic Republic, commonly known as Somalia, was formed out of former British and Italian territories, with Mogadishu as capital and Aden Abdullah Osman Daar as its first president. Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland, situated on the eastern coast of Africa and bordered by the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, were occupied by the two colonial powers since the early 19th century. In 1956, in accordance with a decision by the United Nations, Italy grant-



ed its territory internal autonomy which evolved into independence in 1960. The same development took place in British Somaliland when Britain ended its protectorate in June 1960.

1 July 1966

African Development Bank starts operations

The African Development Bank (AfDB) created by a treaty signed by 23 African nations in 1963 begins operations at its headquarters in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Initially only African countries may join the bank, but in 1982, non-Africans are allowed to join. Today, the AfDB has 54 African member countries and 26 non-African members. The AfDB board is split according to the size of each member's share, currently 60%-40% between African and non-African members. The top ten shareholders are Nigeria, USA, Egypt, Japan, South Africa, Algeria, Germany, Canada, France and Cote d'Ivoire.

1 July 1970

Key African universities founded

This is a key day in the development of the university sector in Africa: the University of Nairobi, founded in 1956, becomes the first national university in Kenya. After being established as an affiliate college of the University of London

in 1961, the University of Dar es Salaam is founded in post-independence Tanzania. The University of Benin becomes a fully-fledged university, on this day. On 1 July 2005, the South African Walter Sisulu University, main campus in Mthatha, E Cape is created out of the merger of the Border Technikon, Eastern Cape Technikon and University of Transkei.

1 July 1975

Ethiopia nationalizes urban land

Ethiopia's Derg government nationalizes all urban land, including rental houses and apartments. Three million urban residents are organised into urban dwellers associations.

1 July 2010

East African Common Market Protocol launched

The Protocol, which permits free movement of workers, capital, goods and services is launched by the East African Community Chairperson, Kenya President Mwai Kibaki.

1 July 2011

Kingdom of Morocco reforms

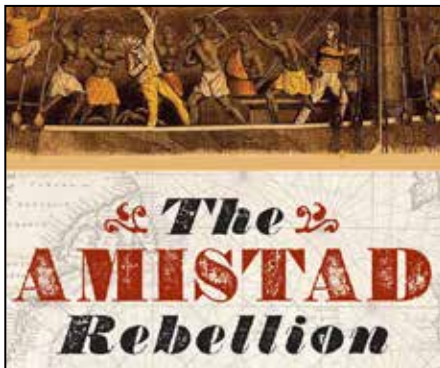
Morocco voters approve political reforms proposed by King Mohammed VI, giving more power to the legislature, making the

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

prime minister head of government and not the King, greater judicial independence from the monarchy and making the local Berber language the second official language besides Arabic.

2 July 1839

Armistad slave revolt



African slaves aboard the *Armistad* revolted in a bid to be free. The slaves were mainly from Sierra Leone, part of millions of Africans taken during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Their revolt was led by a young Mende man called Sengbe Pieh, popularly known as Cinque. Cinque on 2 July managed to free himself from his shackles, helped to free other slaves and they took charge of the ship, killing the captain. A US Confederate captain, Lt Thomas Gedney highjacked the ship, taking it to Connecticut, where slavery was still legal. The US anti-slavery movement came to their rescue and the matter taken to the courts. They eventually won their freedom. In January 1842, the surviving 35 *Amistad* Africans who survived returned to the continent. In 1997, Steven Spielberg directed the movie *Amistad*, based on these historic events.

2 July 1867

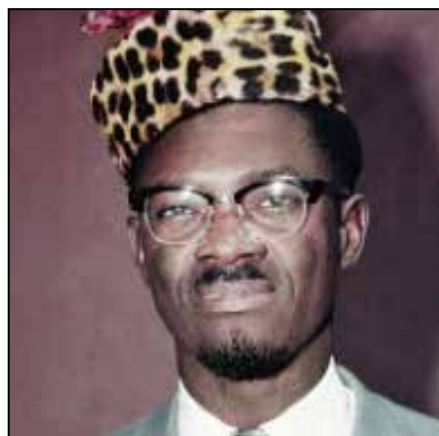
Griqua leader Andries Le Fleur born

Andries Abraham le Fleur, Griqua leader and visionary, was born in

Herschel, CC. He was the son of Abraham le Fleur and one of the leading figures in Griqualand East. Both he and his father were extremely active in the 1890s on behalf of the Griqua who claimed that they had lost their land unfairly. His father, Abraham de Fleur was part of the commission appointed by Adam Kok II (1811-1875) to find alternative land for the Griqua, and served as Kok's secretary. He married into the Kok family, and after the death of Adam Kok IV, he assumed the position as Paramount chief of the Griquas. In April 1898 Andries le Fleur was sentenced to fourteen years' hard labour for sedition, but was released early in 1903. Le Fleur is also known as 'die Hervormer', the Reformer. A legendary figure, his grave is venerated among the Griqua people.

2 July 1925

Patrice Lumumba born



Patrice Emery Lumumba was born in the Katakombes region of the Kasai Province of Belgian Congo. Lumumba became involved in politics as a young man and in 1958 founded the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC). As MNC President, Lumumba helped win Congo's independence from Belgium in 1960. He was elected Prime Minister of the Republic of the Congo. After

only 12 weeks in power, the new government was deposed in a coup which led to Lumumba's arrest. He was executed by a firing squad on 17 January 1961. It later emerged that Lumumba's death had been orchestrated by Belgian and US forces who opposed his vision of a united Congo.

2 July 1991

NUSAS disbanded

The National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) decided to disband on this day. NUSAS was formed in 1924, organizing university students. It was open to members of all races; and also called for the end of Apartheid and all discriminatory policies. In 1969, Steve Biko led black students in a walk-out from NUSAS to form SASO, feeling that the organisation did not represent their issues. NUSAS played an important role in mobilizing white youth and students against apartheid; including many playing a role in the trade union movement. In the 1980s, NUSAS adopted the Freedom Charter, became a member of the United Democratic Forum (UDF) in 1981, and formed a non-racial student alliance with COSAS and AZASO (fore-runner to SASCO). NUSAS was also represented (by Leila McKenna) in the Provisional National Youth Committee (PNYC) formed in 1990 to relaunch the ANC Youth League. NUSAS members decided to dissolve the organisation ahead of its merger with black student organisation, SANSCO in September 1991 at Rhodes University, to form SASCO.

2 July 2012

30 June stadium opens in Cairo

The 30th June stadium was built by the Egyptian Air Force for its

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team. The stadium opened on this day and was used during the 2021 Africa Cup of Nations.

2 July 1991

Burna Boy born

Damini Ebunoluwa Ogulu MFR, known professionally as Burna Boy, is a Nigerian singer, songwriter and record producer. He rose to stardom in 2012 after releasing "Like to Party". During his world tour in 2023, he was the first African artist to sell out an American stadium when he performed in Queens, New York on July 8 and in June 2023, he was the first African artist to sell out a stadium in the United Kingdom.

3 July 1992

South Africa rejoins FIFA

South Africa's membership of the Football International Federation Association (Fifa) is reinstated on this day, 31 years after being expelled for its racial segregation policy in sports. Clubs were divided according to race, and in 1956 the apartheid government introduced its first racist policy on sport, and the South African Football Association (SAFA) became a federation of only white clubs. FIFA ruled that SAFA was not a 'real national association', and in 1961 South Africa was expelled. Before the readmittance in 1992, SAFA united into a non-racial federation for all South African footballers.

3 July 2007

AU Accra Declaration on the Union Government of Africa adopted

At the conclusion of the "Grand debate on the Union Government of Africa", held in Accra, Ghana the African Union Heads of State and Government resolved that

"the ultimate objective of the African Union is the United States of Africa with a Union Government as envisaged by the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity and, in particular, the visionary leader, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana;" and agreed to accelerate African economic and political integration of Africa.

4 July 1864

Extinct Dodo bird featured in Alice in Wonderland

Lewis Carroll children's classic Alice in Wonderland is published on this day, featuring the Dodo bird from Mauritius. The last dodo bird was killed by European settlers in 1681, rendering the species extinct, after first recorded mention of the bird in 1598 by Dutch sailors.

4 July 1874

Birth of South Africa's claimed oldest person



Birth of Granny Moloko Temo, South Africa's claimed oldest person who lived until the age of 135 before passing on in July 2009.

4 July 1979

President Ahmed Ben Bella released from prison

Algerian liberation icon, socialist and former President Ahmed Ben Bella is released from prison after



14 years. He was Algeria's first prime minister after independence in 1962 and elected president in 1963. Along with Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Mobido Keita (Mali) and Sekou Toure (Guinea), he supported liberation and anti-colonial movements in the rest of the continent, including South Africa. He was at the founding conference of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. He was deposed in a coup in 1965 and arrested, until his release in 1979.

4 July 1994

Rwanda Patriotic Front enters Kigali

After the Rwanda Genocide that started in April 1994, the RFP enters Kigali, ending the Tutsi led genocide, which saw in the space of less than two months nearly a million Rwandese, mainly Hutus and moderate Tutsis, being massacred.

4 July 2019

Advocacy for Kiswahili

The African Academy of Language joins the advocacy for Kiswahili to become the official Pan-African language. On the basis of this recommendation, the East African Community announced a partnership with the African Union to promote kiSwahili as "a language of wider communication."

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

28 June — 4 July 2025

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



JULY 2025
MANDELA MONTH

28 June

International Body Piercing Day

The day celebrates all forms of body piercing, which is practiced in cultures across the world. The earliest known body piercing was in a stone relief found in Iraq, dated around the 9th century BCE. The day is celebrated on the birthday of Jim Ward, an American credited with being the father of the modern body piercing movement, pioneering many jewelry designs.

29 June

World Industrial Design Day

Industrial design refers to instruments or objects designed for mass production and it is a largely 20th century phenomenon, with German architect Peter Behrens regarded as the first industrial designer, working as artistic adviser to AEG and a founder member of the Deutsche Werkbund, an arts, design and craft society of artisans. To become an industrial designer usually requires a bachelor's degree in either industrial design, engineering or architecture.

29 June

International Day of the Tropics

The tropic is one of Earth's climatic regions, which surrounds the Earth's equator. The tropics represent 40% of the Earth's total surface, 95% of the world's mangrove forests, 54% of renewable water

sources, and generally have much higher levels of biodiversity than other regions. Countries in the tropics are also amongst the poorest in the world, number of people living in slum conditions and the most under-nourished. According to the State of the Tropics Report (2017), over 70% of global infrastructure gaps occur in the tropics, 20% do not have access to reliable water and only 30% have access to reliable electricity. The report also indicated that climate change is likely to disproportionately affect tropical regions.

30 June

Africa's Scientific Renaissance Day



do indigenous knowledge systems provide ways to heal ailments, know how to read weather patterns to plan for food security and even know how to tell someone's medical condition with no blood tests and examinations? Such indigenous knowledge is

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typically not taught and unknown to Africa's youth. The Africa's Scientific Renaissance Day highlights the importance of indigenous knowledge in the continent, past and present.

30 June

International Asteroid Day

Asteroids are small, rocky objects that orbit the sun. Although asteroids orbit the sun like planets, they are much smaller than planets. They are studied for what they can tell us about the universe, for their resources, for future exploration and finally how to protect Earth from asteroid impacts.

30 June

International Day of Parliamentarians

The day coincides with the establishment of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) which was formed in 1889. The day celebrates parliaments and the role parliamentarians play in advancing democracy and the well-being of society. The following facts about parliaments are worth noting: every country in the world has some form of representative government; parliaments can be bicameral (with two chambers of parliament) or unicameral (with one chamber). There are 193 countries in the world with parliaments and over 46,000 members of parliament. The oldest parliament is the Althingi, the Icelandic Parliament, founded in 930.

30 June

World Social Media Day



World Social Media Day highlights the role of social media as a game changer and key tool for connecting friends, families, colleagues and people from across the world and for communications. It helps businesses, community workers, entrepreneurs, writers, artists, musicians, sports people, philanthropists and other influencers grow their brand. It allows for easy sharing of information and aid journalists to cover important news events.

Plastic-free July

Single-use disposable plastics (bags, cups, straws, packaging) are amongst the worst pollutants in our modern world. According to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) around the world 1 million plastic water bottles are bought every minute, and 5 trillion single use plastic bags bought and disposed every year. The plastics end up in landfills, in our oceans, lakes and rivers, in the natural environment and in our communities. Plastic-free July is a campaign for all of us to try and for one month, to eliminate single-use plastic use.

1 July

International Reggae Day



This international day started in Jamaica, the birthplace of reggae music, and was inspired by a speech by Winnie Madikizela in Kingston, Jamaica in 1992, when she admired the capacity of reggae *"to encourage, inspire and unite people."* According to Folklife, an online music magazine, *"roots or reggae music, through its close association with the philosophy and culture of the Rastafari, and inspired by Pan African Marcus Garvey, played a major role in transforming Jamaica's national identity from one of an Anglophilic British post-colony to a 'conscious' Black nation with a proud African heritage."* It has since become an international day for lovers of the genre the world over.

1 July

International Joke Day

Laughter is an important part of human interaction and emotion, and jokes have been around for a long time. Laughter has many social benefits, helping us to connect with people, build bonds, relax, release stress and is good for your health. The first comedy club is said to have been established 320 BCE in Greece.

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2 July**International UFO Day**

The day draws attention to humankind's belief that there are other living and possibly sentient beings, somewhere in the universes. The day is celebrated on the anniversary of the supposed UFO crash in Roswell, USA in 1947, and on this day, those who belief in UFOs share their stories, whilst watching the skies. You can also celebrate the day by watching movies about or reading about space.

3 July**International Plastic-bag free day**

Single use plastic bags are amongst the most insidious pollutants across the globe, dirtying our cities, towns and rural areas, the lakes, rivers and

oceans. Alternatives to single plastic bags are available, with bags made of hemp and other reusable products. To date, Bangladesh (2002), Rwanda (2008), Kenya (2017), New York State (2020) and Thailand (2020) are the countries in the world that have completely banned plastic bags. Seventy seven (77) other countries have introduced partial bans.

**“**

We believe that South Africa belongs to all the people who live in it, and not to one group, be it black or white.”

NELSON MANDELA