



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the
President



South Africa must adapt quickly in a turbulent trade environment

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

The decision by the United States to impose a 30% tariff on South African imports highlights the urgency with which we have to adapt to increasingly turbulent headwinds in international trade.

The US is South Africa's second largest trading partner by country and these measures will have a considerable impact on industries that rely heavily on exports to that country and on the workers they employ, as well as on our fiscus.

Domestic sectors such as agriculture, automotive and textiles have historically benefited from duty-free

access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Our trade relations have historically been complementary in nature. South African exports do not compete with US producers and do not pose a threat to US industry. It remains our aspiration that this should continue. Largely, our exports are inputs into US industries and therefore support the United States' industrial base. South Africa is also the biggest investor from the African Continent into the US, with 22 of our companies investing in a number of sectors including, mining, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and the food chain.

South African imports ultimately benefit US consumers in terms of both choice and cost. By way of example, citrus production is counter-seasonal and does not pose a threat to US production. Furthermore, production by US companies has been on the decline for a number of years as the US sector grapples with low yields, a citrus greening disease and other factors unrelated to competition from imports. Imports from South Africa, the world's second largest citrus exporter, have filled a gap and contributed to stable supply and prices for US consumers.

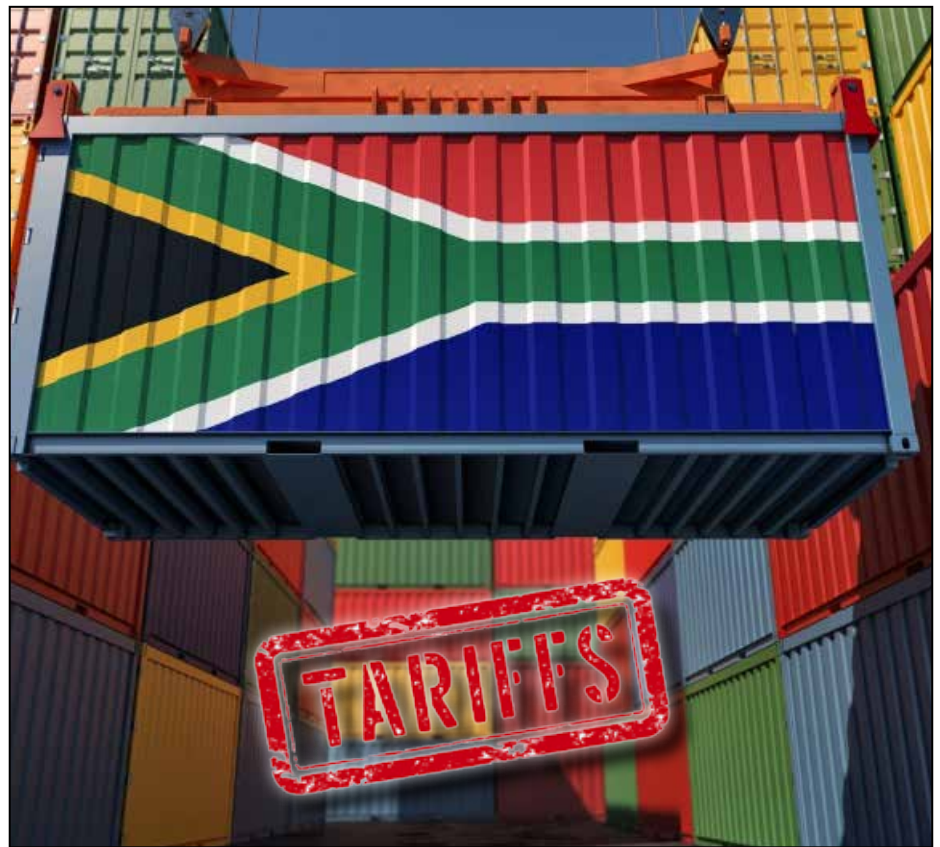
As government, we have been engaging the United States to

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enhance mutually beneficial trade and investment relations. All channels of communication remain open to engage with the US.

Our foremost priority is protecting our export industries. We will continue to engage the US in an attempt to preserve market access for our products. We must also accelerate the diversification of our export markets, particularly by deepening intra-African trade.

With a view to helping our producers and exporters aggressively explore alternative markets, we have established an Export Support Desk to assist affected producers. We will in due course be announcing the modalities of a support package for companies, producers and workers that have been rendered vulnerable by the US tariffs. This intervention will



also play a key role in guiding industries looking to expand into new markets in the rest of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and markets we already have trade agreements with.

Strengthening regional value chains will be key to building resilience for our export markets in the longer term. Much as strengthening and establishing alternative value chains will take time, this moment presents us with an opportunity to push forward with the implementation and expansion of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Reducing over-dependence on certain markets is a strategic imperative to build the resilience of our economy. It will also enable us to expand the frontiers of opportunity for South African businesses, goods and services.

In the coming months we will be scaling up our trade missions into new markets in Africa and beyond, as well as the National Exporter Development Programme whose aim is to grow the pool of export-ready companies.

It is important to understand that South Africa is not alone in facing high tariffs from the US. A number of export-reliant developed and developing economies, including several on the continent, are also grappling with these measures.

The international trading system is changing.

Complacency will not serve us, and building resilience is imperative. As government we remain committed to ongoing engagement with the US and building trade resilience. ■

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“The people are watching, history is calling and the future is waiting.”

CLOSING REMARKS BY **ANC PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**
 TO THE **ANC NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**
 EKURHULENI, GAUTENG
 4 AUGUST 2025

WE have come to the end of a very productive National Executive Committee meeting, having covered a number of areas that are critical for our country, our movement and the people of our country.

We have spent time reflecting on current challenges and opportunities and have identified some of the key actions that we need to take as this leadership to renew and build our organisation with a view of taking this country forward.

We dedicated time to discuss the state of the economy and the actions we need to take to drive inclusive economic growth and job creation.

We characterised our economy as being in a state of emergency that requires urgent action.

Our focus on an inclusive and resilient economy is particularly important as we begin Women’s Month.

The financial and economic inclusion of women is vital to the



empowerment of women and the achievement of gender equity – and is also central to our effort to tackle poverty and advance the interests of all people in our country.

Our discussion on the economy focused on the actions we need to take to give effect to the strategic priority of inclusive growth and job creation as contained in the Medium Term Development Plan, adopted by the government of our country.

We have reaffirmed that industrial policy must be the leading instru-

ment of economic development and transformation, which will in turn help to shape our trade policy.

For this industrial policy to succeed, we need an all-of-government approach.

As the presentation from the ANC Economic Transformation Committee noted, this requires coordinated alignment across multiple centres of state power, not just trade, industry and competition, but also energy and electricity, transport, water, agriculture, land reform and rural development, public works and infrastructure,

NEC MEETING CLOSING REMARKS

public enterprises, higher education, science and innovation, minerals and petroleum, finance, and labour.

We noted that our network industries need to be efficient, reliable and competitive if we are to drive the industrialisation that is so much needed in our economy.

We must therefore ensure that our Integrated Resource Plan advances energy security and emission reduction targets while reducing the cost of electricity to the economy and more particularly to households. We must continue with the restructuring of the electricity sector to ensure increased levels of competition and lower prices.

We must move with speed to implement our Freight Logistics Roadmap so that we enhance the capacity and reliability of our rail and port network.

As we focus on labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction, we need also to be forward-looking, rapidly developing industries like battery storage and electric vehicle production.

We have confirmed our commitment to accelerating infrastructure investment, understanding that it is the backbone of spatial transformation, industrial expansion and economic inclusion.

We must use our infrastructure build and maintenance to create platforms for black industrialists, workers, SMMEs and marginalised communities in urban and rural areas. We must ensure it assists us in localising production of critical inputs such as steel and promotes processing and beneficiation of our rich mineral

endowment.

It is clear that the slow pace of infrastructure roll-out is not simply a lack of money. It is a problem of capacity and execution. This is an area of focus as we seek to grow capacity at all levels of government.

As we work to grow the economy, we must ensure that we are promoting employment and economic inclusion. We have agreed on a stronger focus on youth employment, including the expansion of the Presidential Employment Stimulus and incentivising private sector job creation.

South Africa is confronted by the immediate and damaging punitive tariffs announced by the United States. While we must act with urgency and purpose to limit the impact of these tariffs, we must also undertake measures to

ensure the resilience of our economy and exports into the future.

We will continue our engagements with the United States with a view of normalising trade relations and generally strengthening bilateral relations.

At the same time, we must invest in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area and diversifying our export markets.

The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition is already working on a number of interventions to assist and support various exporters to other markets. We are pleased that the producers and exporters are working with our government to find a solution.

We began a discussion on the issue of monetary policy and specifically the role and value of inflation targeting.



**ANC NEC MEETING
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**CDE PRESIDENT
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

“ We will continue our engagements with the United States to normalise trade relations and generally strengthen bilateral relations. ”

113TH ANNIVERSARY **75TH ANNIVERSARY** **STATE OF THE NATION FREEDOM CHARTER 2008-2014** **ANC**

Everyone understands that it is the Minister of Finance, together with Cabinet, who sets the inflation target in consultation with the South African Reserve Bank. The Reserve Bank then operates independently in pursuit of the inflation target that would have been agreed upon.

We need to have further discussion within the movement on how we give effect to our conference resolutions and manifesto commitments to align monetary, fiscal and trade policy.

Local government has remained the epicentre of infrastructure decline and poor service delivery.

We agreed that we will show greater resolve and urgency in setting municipalities on a new path. The energy and determination being seen in cleaning up and fixing the infrastructure in eThekweni and Tshwane should be translated into a national movement that must sweep through every town and city.

Our cities and towns, and specifically the communities on the ground, must feel and see that we are not going to allow municipalities to do as they wish, while citizens endure the misery of poor service delivery.

The ANC branch remains the most important site of links with our people. This means that each and every one of us must ensure that we build strong activist branches that can represent the needs and aspirations of local communities.

A key part of ANC renewal is to build activist ANC branches that are active in communities to advocate for, engage local government and help resolve the ser-



vice delivery challenges that the people face.

The ANC elections strategy workshop called for the establishment of Service Delivery War rooms in all provinces and municipalities, so that we build a responsive, people centred and sustainable culture of dealing with the issues in all local communities, in line with our enduring commitment to build a better life for all.

The marching order to all ANC-run municipalities and ward councillors is that we cannot proceed as if it continues to be business as usual. We need to undertake extraordinary measures to address challenges at a local government level.

The NEC will be having a special session in a week or two to focus more attention on the challenges in local government.

Preparations for the Local Government Election Campaign are underway. In April we held our Election Strategy Workshop. Work is underway throughout the country to set up our election structures and appoint our election management.

We call on all NEC members to

ensure we give attention to the establishment of election structures and ensure our most seasoned and experienced campaign managers are appointed.

The Electoral Committee has developed draft guidelines for candidate selection which will be further processed and finalised in a special NEC later this month.

We welcomed the comprehensive report from the GNU Task Team that is led by the Secretary General on the assessment of the Government of National Unity since its establishment immediately after the 2024 elections.

The NEC identified a number of areas in which there is substantial progress on the work of the GNU over the past twelve months.

Within Parliament, the ANC has adapted to the complexity of operating in the new political landscape where it no longer holds a majority.

Managing Parliamentary committees has not been an easy process for the ANC. However, our Caucus is developing new ways of building relations with parties with whom we don't always agree.

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The Budget process has taught us many lessons, including being able to build tactical and issue-based voting alliances with other parties.

We welcome the cooperation on the budget, including with parties that are not part of the GNU. This cooperation is a real demonstration of acting in the interests of the people of South Africa.

The overall picture is that, despite all the noise, through the GNU we have been able to safeguard the core progressive policy agenda of the National Democratic Revolution, which is the core pillar of ANC policies.

The NEC's view is that the tactic of GNU has enabled the ANC to continue to execute its agenda for nation-building and fundamental socioeconomic transformation of South Africa, albeit under conditions imposed on us by the strategic electoral setback that we suffered in 2024.

Both the strategic policy priorities and the Budget point to the direction that we should support.

In our assessment, we have concluded that the decision to establish the GNU was correct. Our people appreciate that it has brought stability and enabled progress in addressing their challenges.

The NEC reaffirms the view that the GNU is a correct tactic and remains valid.

Through access to state power in the GNU, we have been able to defend the democratic gains and to advance our transformation agenda despite the pressure and resistance from the global and domestic right-wing forces.



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113TH ANNIVERSARY **7TH ADMINISTRATION** **STATE OF THE FREEDOM CHARTER** **ANC**

We have not retreated from the progressive domestic and foreign policy positions of our movement.

We have extensively discussed how we proceed with respect to the GNU given our analysis and practical experience of the past twelve months. Accordingly, the NEC considered a number of options about how to strengthen the GNU and improve its effectiveness and stability to give full and proper effect to the Statement of Intent that was signed by the GNU parties and the three strategic priorities of the 7th Administration.

As part of this, we have agreed to engage with parties that are willing to play a constructive role in furthering national unity and stability so we can achieve our three strategic priorities, namely: driving inclusive growth and job creation; reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living;

and building a capable developmental state.

In line with the Statement of Intent, we will first begin our engagements with parties currently in the GNU with a view to seeing the extent to which we can extend and advance the GNU with other parties that see themselves participating.

The NEC had an in depth discussion on the decision of the South African Communist Party to contest the forthcoming elections independent of the ANC.

We recognise that the SACP is an independent political organisation that has the right to contest elections as it sees fit.

As the ANC, we have no wish nor do we have any intention to interfere with the decision the SACP has taken.

NEC MEETING CLOSING REMARKS

However, as we have indicated to the SACP, our ally, we disagree with the decision.

We believe that this decision has fundamental implications for the strategy and programme of the National Democratic Revolution and the alliance that has led the struggle for liberation in our country since the 1920s.

While the alliance between the SACP and the ANC has spanned the better part of a century, this is not about the past. It is not about nostalgia.

As the ANC we are seriously concerned that this decision taken by the SACP to participate in elections in their own name and right will weaken significantly the forces for national democratic change.

We will continue to seek to engage with the SACP on how we will run those elections.

We will go out from this meeting to explain our position to our structures at every level of the organisation so that comrades, members of the ANC, are empowered to explain the challenge this poses to our transformation agenda.

We are determined to ensure that these developments do not divide our movement or cause instability.

We reiterate that SACP members who hold ANC membership are full members of our movement, with the same rights and duties as any other ANC member as contained in our Constitution.

We also took time to discuss the National Dialogue. This is a process to enable inclusive dia-

logue, discussion and conversation across the country about the vexing issues facing our nation. The National Dialogue is therefore a protracted series of difficult conversations about the South Africa we want and how we must get to that ideal South Africa.

The first National Convention will be held on 15-17 August 2025, bringing together around 1,000 delegates from more than 30 different sectors.

This National Convention is intended to set the agenda for the National Dialogue and outline how the National Dialogue will unfold in localities across the country over the next 8-10 months.

The National Dialogue is an opportunity to mobilise our people to address the challenges our country faces and restore our

country to the path of transformation, development and progress. It is an opportunity to build on the achievements we have made in the last three decades by defining a shared vision and a common programme to take the country forward.

We must be clear that the National Dialogue does not displace the democratic processes mandated by our Constitution. Its outcomes cannot supersede the electoral mandates that parties carry into Parliament and the Executive.

But it should deliver a social compact that outlines clear commitments and responsibilities for different stakeholders, such as government, political parties, business, labour, civil society, communities and individual citizens.

The task that we have is to ensure



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**CDE PRESIDENT
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

“ Our alliance with the SACP and COSATU is historic, principled and non-negotiable. ”

113TH ANNIVERSARY **FREEDOM CHARTER** **ANC**

The graphic features a yellow background with a red star containing a hammer and sickle, and the SACP logo. Below it is the COSATU logo with the text 'AN UNBROKEN ALLIANCE' and 'INJURY TO ALL'. At the bottom, there are logos for the ANC's 113th Anniversary, the Freedom Charter, and the ANC itself.

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that the outcomes of the National Dialogue can be institutionalised in a manner that informs and guides the direction our country takes.

We have been clear that this dialogue must be as inclusive as possible. It needs to be citizen-led and the outcomes need to reflect the collective views of the South African people. Citizens must be able to freely participate in the National Dialogue as individuals, in organised formations and through representative bodies.

As I conclude, the road ahead requires clear programmatic action.

The NEC was clear that the ANC must continue to mobilise our people. We must urgently implement a recalibrated developmental path centred on jobs, reindustrialisation, land reform, youth empowerment, the empowerment of the women of our country, and the professionalisation of the state.

Political education must become compulsory at all levels of the movement and public service. In this regard, we must welcome the fact that over 100,000 ANC members have now completed the Foundation Course that was launched a few months ago.

A renewed social compact must be pursued—not to protect vested interests, but to secure a national consensus on fundamental economic and social transformation and the battle against poverty, inequality and unemployment

At a time of deep social anxiety, the ANC must again become the organiser of hope, the architect of national unity, and the driver of ethical, capable and activist leadership across society.



We must reconnect our theory of revolution with the daily lives and dreams of our people in practice.

Above all, we must reassert the ANC as the strategic centre of change. The GNU is a transitional and contested formation.

Our alliance with the SACP, COSATU and SANCO is historic, principled and non-negotiable. Our renewal must be organisational, ideological, political and cultural.

We must build a disciplined, activist movement that earns its leadership of society not by decree, but in practice.

Our cadres must embody the values of service, humility and revolutionary commitment.

For if the ANC falters, the revolution that is meant to bring about fundamental change in our country will falter.

But if we act decisively, restore trust, and renew our purpose, then this NEC and this generation of leadership can yet turn the tide to ensure there is a better life for all South Africans.

The people are watching, history is calling and the future is waiting.

This NEC is up to the task and will continue to implement the mandate it was given by our membership at its last conference. ■

**ANC NEC MEETING
CLOSING REMARKS**

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STATEMENT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE ANC NEC MEETING OF 1-4 AUGUST 2025

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE ANC convened its National Executive Committee (NEC) Ordinary Meeting from the 1st to the 4th of August 2025, meeting under the guiding banner of the 70th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter. This historic gathering took place in a period of profound reflection and decisive action, as we continue to implement the resolutions of the 55th National Conference, to advance the commitments of our 2024 Manifesto, and sharpen our movement's posture in delivering the January 8th tasks.

The NEC met during Women's Month, marking the 69th Anniversary of the heroic 1956 Women's March and 30th Anniversary of the national day signifying the advances we have made in women emancipation and transformation.

The ANC reaffirms its unflinching commitment to addressing the triple oppression of women in terms of race, class and gender. We celebrate this month focused on women leadership and economic participation under this year's theme – ***"Building Resilient Economies for All."*** This moment is not only a commemoration of historic victories but also a clarion call to confront persist-



ing gender inequalities, including the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide (GBV-F).

The NEC reflected on several developments characterising the political terrain since our last meeting, including the emerging dynamics in the Government of National Unity (GNU), public opinion trends, the National Dialogue preparations, the critical challenge of unemployment, the high cost of living, infrastructure challenges, and international trade tensions, particularly the unilateral punitive tariffs imposed by the United States.

GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES

The NEC noted with appreciation the report on the Liberation Movements Summit and reaffirmed the ANC's commitment to building a better Africa and a better world. The shifting geopolitical landscape requires that South Africa assert its sovereignty, defend multilateralism, and pursue partnerships that advance inclusive development. The ANC rejects with contempt attempts by domestic reactionaries and foreign forces to destabilise our nation through misinformation and economic coercion.



The NEC welcomes and fully supports the decisive interventions announced by Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation and Trade, Industry and Competition in response to the imposition of punitive tariffs by the United States. These measures reflect a coherent and strategic approach to defending South Africa's economic sovereignty while prioritising the livelihoods of our people. The comprehensive support framework, including the establishment of an Export Support Desk and mobilisation of targeted industrial resilience funds, demonstrates a government that is proactive in shielding its productive sectors from external economic shocks.

These actions are not isolated measures but form part of a broader national effort to restructure our trade relations, promote industrialisation, and ensure that South Africa's engagement in the global economy is anchored in equity, dignity, and national development priorities.

The NEC is particularly resolute that South Africa will not be coerced into reversing its progressive economic transformation agenda or compromising its sovereignty under the guise of opportunistic foreign pressures. The Democratic Alliance's reac-

tion to the Ministers' announcement exposes a mindset that is out of touch with the aspirations of the South African people. Their reckless calls for deregulation and abandonment of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment are a direct affront to the principles of the Freedom Charter, which demand that the people shall share in the country's wealth. The DA's posture reflects a deeply entrenched neo-imperialist mindset that seeks to subordinate South Africa's sovereign right to chart its own economic destiny to the interests of foreign powers and domestic elites. The ANC will not retreat from defending the economic freedom of our people. Our government's principled and deliberate approach remains firmly rooted in the struggle traditions that guided us to liberation and continue to guide us in building a sovereign, inclusive, and a just South Africa

DOMESTIC ISSUES

THE ECONOMY

The NEC acknowledged the resilience of our economy despite the global headwinds and domestic pressures. The work of stabilising Eskom, with the Energy Availability Factor (EAF) now at 70%, is a milestone that speaks to the ANC's determina-

tion to ending load shedding and ultimately load reduction and ensure energy security for all South Africans. We are seeing tangible results of the Energy Action Plan, which must now be replicated in other strategic sectors such as water, logistics, and public infrastructure.

NATIONAL DIALOGUE

Preparations for the National Dialogue are proceeding in earnest. The National Convention sits on the backdrop of the 70th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter, which was the precursor of dialogue and in line with our traditions even during the transition to democracy in the early 90's dialogues we had with all sections of our society that led to our democratic dispensation and the adoption of our progressive constitution. The National Dialogue will be held from 15-17 August 2025, setting the agenda for a nationwide conversation on the future of South Africa. This dialogue will not displace constitutional processes but will build a new social compact to address poverty, inequality, and unemployment. It will be citizen-led, inclusive, and transformative giving the people of South Africa an opportunity to set a new direction for our future. The ANC welcomes the convening of the National Dialogue.



GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY (GNU)

The NEC welcomed a comprehensive report on the GNU, assessing the performance of GNU, since its establishment immediately after the 2024 elections. The NEC identified significant progress in the GNU's work over the past twelve months. Within Parliament, the ANC has adapted to the complexity of operating in a political landscape where it no longer holds a majority.

The NEC reminds our structures that the GNU is not a permanent structure but a tactical necessity to safeguard South Africa's progressive agenda amidst a fractured electoral mandate. The GNU is an instrument for nation-building, governance, inclusive development, and championing the ANC's transformation agenda. It was crafted to ensure stability in government, advance service delivery to our people, and drive transformation with the ANC's strategic leadership at its core.

The NEC resolved to reset the GNU and mandated the Officials to engage with current GNU partners to broaden participation, strengthen the functioning of the GNU, and give full effect to the Statement of Intent. Our movement will not be short-sighted nor allow opportunistic forces to ma-

nipulate this platform for narrow partisan ends. The ANC remains clear that the GNU is a bridge towards the National Democratic Society we seek to build, and it is not an end in itself.

MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL WORK

The NEC noted that ANC membership stands at 1,479,257 with 809,361 in good standing, reflecting a 19.5% increase since June 2025. This is a clear testament to the people's enduring faith in their movement. All branches must ensure compliance with functionality criteria and the completion of the Foundation Course by November 2025. The NEC further directed that Branch General Meetings be quality-assured, attendance verified, and that Regional Executive Committee (RECs) adopt performance-based KPIs as branches must be programme-based and sites of activism where our people can be serviced by our structures. This is a period of renewal and rebuilding. Every member must undergo political education to ensure we build an advanced cadre that is able to meet the demands of this current epoch and its challenges, including aligning personal conduct with the revolutionary ethos of the ANC.

The NEC commended the work

of the NEC Subcommittee on Political Education. To date, 108407 members have completed various modules of the Foundation Course and the work still continues. This is a pillar of our organisational renewal. Every cadre must embody revolutionary morality, service, and humility.

Regional Conferences remain on track, and this year we expect 45 out of our 52 regions to hold conferences by December 2025, which is a cut-off date as we focus on the Local Government Elections. It is mandatory that all comrades attending Regional Conferences must have attended and completed the Foundation Course. No conference will proceed without thorough verification and the mandatory three-day cooling-off period must be observed. The SGO will capacitate the National Dispute Resolution Committee (NDRC) and the National Dispute Resolution Committee of Appeals (NDRCA) to manage appeals efficiently in the ongoing processes from various provinces. It will ensure that the timelines are tightened in line with the Conference Guidelines.

In KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, the Provincial Task Teams (PTTs) have recorded significant progress in rebuilding structures and restoring organisational coherence. The

NEC noted this progress with satisfaction.

The Western Cape, however, demands a reconfiguration of its structures, which will be executed in strict adherence to the ANC Constitution. National Sub-committees will descend on the province to reinforce with political education, organisational discipline, and strategic capacity. The NWC was mandated to process this decision of reconfiguring the Western Cape Province.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Local Government remains at the epicentre of service delivery challenges. The NEC has resolved that it will convene an NEC meeting over a period of two days to focus on the work of Local Government and the interventions that should be made by the ANC in bringing services to the people.

NATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL (NGC)

The National General Council (NGC) will take place from 8 to 12 December 2025. It will be attended by 1600 delegates. We have finalised the theme of the General Council, as well as the Strategic Framework for the NGC, which will be held at Nasrec Expo Centre.

ON THE SACP

The NEC engaged in a frank and principled discussion on the decision of the South African Communist Party (SACP) to contest the Local Government Elections independently of the ANC. As a revolutionary movement, we recognise the SACP's right as an independent organisation to chart



its own electoral path.

However, as a movement that has shared trenches with the SACP in the struggle for freedom, we have communicated our profound disagreement with this decision. It is our considered view that this move carries far-reaching implications for the strategy and programme of the National Democratic Revolution.

The NEC recalled many moments in history in which the SACP's vanguard role was very critical in the struggle. Successive generations of party leaders have always affirmed that the route to socialism will traverse and be approached through the National Democratic Revolution led by the National Liberation movement.

Our shared victories against apartheid, our collective resistance to neoliberal exploitation, and our vision of a just society cannot be surrendered to fleeting tactical divergences. The ANC will act with maturity and fortitude, engaging our allies with humility but also with clarity. Unity is the weapon of the oppressed, and disunity is a luxury we cannot afford.

However, we might have reached a stage were we are unable to persuade the SACP away from its decision to contest elections. We believe as the ANC that this will weaken the National Democrat-

ic Revolution. It is important that the SACP understands the implications of this decision.

INTEGRITY COMMITTEE

The NEC considered the Report of the Integrity Committee, and the issues have been referred to the National Officials for further processing.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

We noted the decisions of the Disciplinary Committee which involve several comrades and that some of the decisions include a pending matter, before the NDC, of Comrade Obed Bapela. The appeal that he had lodged has been dismissed by the National Disciplinary Committee and his disciplinary processes are still continuing.

REBURIAL PROGRAMME

We noted that there will be a reburial programme and that as we met as the NEC, a number of our comrades had passed on. We have passed condolences for our comrades that have passed away.

JANUARY 8 STATEMENT AND RALLY

We agreed that the 2026 January 8th Rally would be hosted in the North West province, reaffirming our principle of rotational celebrations. ■

ANC Condemns Racist Utterances on Open Chat Podcast

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC) joins millions of South Africans in expressing deep outrage at the shocking and dehumanising remarks made about the Coloured community on the Open Chat podcast platform.

These statements are not only offensive, but they run completely counter to the founding values of our democratic society; values of human dignity, non-racialism, and unity, as enshrined in our Constitution and the Freedom Charter.

To generalise and mock an entire community in the manner that was done on this platform is not only deeply hurtful but also a betrayal of the progress South Africans have made, together, in building a nation united in its diversity. We are reminded painfully of the crude stereotypes of our apartheid past, where people were reduced to caricatures to justify exclusion and humiliation.

We must be unequivocal: there is no place in democratic South Africa for racial prejudice, whether disguised as humour, commentary, or “free speech.” What was said is indefensible.

The ANC proudly recalls the heroic contributions of the Coloured community to our struggle for liberation. Comrades like Basil February, Dulcie September, Ashley



Kriel, Cheryl Carolus, Johnny Issel, and Anton Fransch, among many others, fought side by side with fellow South Africans of all backgrounds to realise the vision of a country that belongs to all who live in it.

This incident reminds us that the national question, the struggle for unity, identity, and social cohesion remains unresolved. It requires continuous effort, political education, and responsible discourse. South Africa cannot allow reckless and racist platforms to undermine this work or reverse our gains.

We therefore:

- Call on the podcast hosts to issue an immediate and unreserved apology.
- Urge the platform owners and all in the industry to review their content oversight mechanisms to prevent the spread of hate.

- Call on all South Africans to stand united against any attempt to sow division.

This moment must not be used to polarise our society further. Instead, it must deepen our collective understanding of what non-racialism truly demands of us, honesty, respect, and solidarity in action.

The ANC will remain firm in defending the values of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and united South Africa. We will not allow our people to be devalued, ridiculed, or pitted against each other.

Let us use this moment not to retreat into outrage alone, but to recommit ourselves to a common future.

One South Africa. One people. One shared destiny. ■

OPINION



Becoming the ANC the People Deserve

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THE 2024 election was not merely a warning shot; it was a historic reckoning. The message from the people was not vague. It was not ambiguous. It was painful, deliberate, and precise: **“We want better. And we expect better from you, our ANC.”**

The NEC meeting of August 2025, convened under the gravity of our new position in the GNU and in society, made it clear the ANC must now show not just intention, but transformation. We must not seek to return to power for its own sake. We must become worthy of power again.

As someone shaped by our liberation tradition, grounded in the realities of working-class struggle, and committed to practical, real and meaningful transformation I believe the time has come to ask ourselves a simple but fundamental question: **What kind of ANC**

do the people truly deserve in this moment of history?

This is not about branding or election slogans. This is about soul. About substance. About showing our people through our behaviour, structures, and decisions that the ANC can grow, listen, reflect, evolve and lead again.

The Crisis Beneath the Crisis

We often speak of service delivery, unemployment, and corruption as the crises of our time. And they are. But underneath all of these is a more dangerous crisis one we seldom name directly:

The ANC is struggling to think, listen, and act with coherence and humility.

We have policy, but not always direction. We have slogans, but not always outcomes. We have

branches, but not always real community connection. We have leadership structures, but not always the culture of learning, dialogue, and innovation required for this new era.

That is the deeper challenge: our internal culture is out of sync with our external mission. And unless we address this disjuncture, no tactical realignment or campaign strategy will restore the trust that has been broken.

The ANC the People Deserve: Five Transformations

If we are serious about renewal, we must become different, not just sound different. I offer five shifts that must define the ANC the people deserve.

1. From Reacting to Reflecting
The ANC must stop operating in

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panic mode. We are constantly reacting to crises – court rulings, service failures, media exposes, electoral setbacks. But very rarely do we pause to reflect deeply and systemically on what is going wrong and why.

The people deserve an ANC that thinks before it acts, learns before it legislates, and reflects before it reacts.

We need space for strategic depth. Not just crisis response. This is what will create coherence in action.

2. From Speaking at Communities to Hearing Them

Too often, we arrive in communities with pre-packaged answers.

We call meetings not to listen, but to convince. But the people are speaking – in protest, in abstention, in silence.

The people deserve an ANC that listens deeply, even when it is uncomfortable – especially when it is uncomfortable.

This requires real feedback loops. Not manipulated consultations. Not top-down mandates. Genuine listening as a tool of leadership.

3. From Defending the Past to Building the Future

We owe our forebears reverence. But we must not let nostalgia become a prison. Too much energy is spent defending decisions, comrades, or processes that no longer serve our people.

The people deserve an ANC that is brave enough to change – even when it means admitting past mistakes.



Let us honour the past by transcending its limitations. Not defending its stagnation.

4. From Internal Battles to Public Service

Factionalism. Gatekeeping. Slate politics. These are not just internal matters. They are experienced by communities as neglect, dysfunction, and decay.

The people deserve an ANC that is focused on solving their problems – not its own.

We need a political culture that rewards impact, not compliance; contribution, not closeness to power.

5. From Compliance to Courage

Our systems too often reward loyalty over innovation, compliance over conscience. But in today's South Africa, courage is the rarest and most needed political commodity.

The people deserve an ANC that empowers its members to speak the truth, fix what's broken, and

lead with integrity.

This will require changes in how we select, support, and hold accountable our representatives at every level – from branch to Cabinet.

Rebuilding from the Inside Out

Renewal will not come from resolutions alone. It must come from a different way of being – inside the ANC, and in how the ANC relates to society.

Let me be direct: unless our structures become learning spaces, unless our leaders become facilitators of community wisdom, unless our branches become centres of ethical organising – we will not earn back the trust we have lost.

And trust, once broken, is not regained through media statements. It is regained through consistent, visible, humble action.

A Movement Becoming

I have said before that renewal is not a campaign. It is a consciousness. It is a deep choice to evolve. And it is the only path available to a liberation movement that seeks relevance beyond its glory years.

The ANC that the people deserve is not perfect. But it is present. It is listening. It is doing the hard work of becoming.

This is the path we must walk. Quietly. Relentlessly. Honestly. Together. ■

Faiez Jacobs is an ANC member, Community Activist and Organiser. **Still building. Still learning. Still believing.**

Reaffirming the ANC's Non-Racial Vision

■ By **CHRIS ACKEER**

THE African National Congress (ANC) was founded on the enduring ideals of unity, non-racialism, and social justice. As a broad church of South Africa's liberation movement, it has always embraced all oppressed communities – African, Coloured, Indian, and white progressives – who stood together against the brutal machinery of apartheid. Today, these founding principles are being tested in the most insidious of ways: not by the apartheid state, but by a rising tide of casual racism and demeaning rhetoric dressed up as public discourse.

The recent episode of the Open Chats podcast, in which racist and insulting comments were directed at the Coloured community, represents a betrayal of everything the ANC stands for. The remarks, dripping with prejudice and ignorance, not only demean a proud and diverse community – they corrode the very foundation of our shared democratic project.

Silence, in this instance, is not neutrality. It is complicity.

The ANC's ethos has never been built on the supremacy of one group over another, but rather on a deep understanding that our strength lies in unity through diversity. The history of the struggle is not the story of one people – it is the shared story of many. The Coloured community played a pivotal role in that struggle, from

the courage of Cde Dulcie September in exile to the resilience of workers, activists, students, and families who gave all they had in the name of freedom.

Today, they – like many in our fractured society – face economic marginalisation, social exclusion, and now, open ridicule. It is the duty of the ANC, as a movement rooted in the people's struggle, to rise in defence of every citizen's dignity. Racism – whether institutional, interpersonal, or media-driven – must be confronted with the same clarity and moral courage that guided our leaders in the dark days of apartheid.

To defend the Coloured community is not to indulge in identity politics – it is to defend the very principle of non-racialism. To speak out against hate speech is not to stifle debate – it is to guard

the integrity of our public square. And to affirm the ANC as a home for all South Africans is not rhetoric – it is a recommitment to the soul of the movement.

As we reflect on the ANC's mission of renewal, let us remember: unity is not the absence of difference, but the presence of justice.

The time has come for our leadership to send a clear message that hate has no place in our movement, in our politics, or in our society.

We must remind the nation that the ANC is still the custodian of a dream – a South Africa where no person is judged or mocked because of who they are or where they come from.

Let us live that dream. Let us defend it. ■



The ANC's Existential Crisis: A Call for Introspection and Renewal

■ By **MATOME MOREMI TAUEATSOALA**

AS I ponder the state of the African National Congress (ANC), a question keeps echoing in my mind: why do ANC members seem to harbor more hatred for the party than members of opposition parties? This paradoxical phenomenon has left me perplexed, and I'm not alone. Many comrades, friends, and observers of South African politics have expressed similar concerns.

The ANC, once a beacon of hope and unity, now finds itself at a crossroads. The party's internal dynamics have become increasingly toxic, with infighting and factionalism threatening to tear it apart. The warning signs are clear: Cde Soviet Legqanyane's apt analogy of the ANC's situation to the prophecy against Damascus in the Book of Isaiah is a stark reminder of the party's precarious position. If we don't take drastic measures to address our internal issues, we risk becoming a relic of the past, a mere shadow of our former selves.

Cde Rudolph Phala's cautionary words in 2016 still resonate: if we continue down this path, the ANC might become extinct, and a new party might emerge in its place. This prospect should send shivers down our spines. The ANC's



legacy, built on the sacrifices of our forebears, is worth preserving. However, preservation requires transformation, and transformation demands introspection and renewal.

The call for a consultative conference, long ignored, has become more urgent than ever. We can't afford to relegate meaningful discussions to commissions, only to have them gather dust. Our conferences have become leadership conferences, where the voices of the rank and file are often drowned out. It's time for us

to listen to each other, to engage in genuine dialogue, and to find a way forward that prioritizes the party's interests over individual ambitions.

The implications of the ANC's decline are far-reaching. If we continue to eat each other alive, as President Mbeki once said, many will *"look and walk, wear, and sing like ANC members when they are not."* The party's reputation will suffer, and our ability to govern effectively will be compromised. The GNU partners, who are already gaining prominence, might

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soon dictate the terms of our governance, and the ANC's influence will wane.

But it's not too late. We can still change our ways and reclaim our position as the dominant force in South African politics. It starts with respecting our voters and being accountable to them. We need to demonstrate that our commitment to the ANC is genuine, not just a convenient façade for elections.

The question remains: why are we, as ANC members, so critical of our own party? Is it because we care deeply about its future, or is it because we're disillusioned with the direction we're heading? Whatever the reason, one thing is certain: we need to have an honest conversation about our party's state and our role in shaping its destiny.

The ANC's future hangs in the balance. We can choose to ignore the warning signs, or we can

take bold action to revitalize the party. The choice is ours. Let's seize this moment to reflect, to renew, and to rebuild. The fate of our party, and indeed our country, depends on it. ■

Matome Moremi Tauetsoala is the former Deputy Provincial Secretary of the ANCYL in Limpopo and Regional Spokesperson of the ANC in Waterberg Region. He writes in his personal capacity.

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Why Is Trump So Obsessed with BRICS?

■ By **SIKHUMBUZO THOMO**

US President Donald Trump's tariffs and subsequently push for sanctions on the ANC and its leaders by some Republicans is nothing but witch-hunt based on falsehoods because the BRICS is not anti-US. All literature will show you that tariffs are not the magic wound that will get the US out of the economic quagmire that it is in.

The only logic one can deduce from President Trump's tariffs is that they could be a trip wire for military conflict with smaller countries i.e. easier targets should they retaliate.

Through careful analysis however it is clear that the global tariffs are nothing but strategic sequencing and division of labour in which the U.S. seeks to pivot its resources towards dismembering the BRICS countries in the main coupled with regime change while laundering its military escalation with Russia in Ukraine via Europe and China in Iran via Israel. Strategic sequencing.

All countries now are forced to navigate the trip wire and implement retaliatory action as Mexico, Canada and China have successfully done. As a consequence, all countries are now going to allow

the US goods meanwhile all local producers will adjust their packaging and encourage local buying while all US imports sit on the shelves as Canada has just done. Canadians no longer buy US made goods or worse a lumpen illegal branding of goods that will even worse for the global economy.

Back when he was running for a second term, old Donald promised voters he would make it "costly" for BRICS countries to move away from the US dollar. Trump and his economic advisors discussed not just tariffs, but other "*punishment methods*"

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for countries seeking to conduct bilateral trade in currencies other than the dollar.

He also previously spoke about potential 100% tariffs in the event of a refusal to use the dollar in bilateral trade. These threats only fuelled global interest in creating alternative payment systems and other tools for mutual settlements.

Now, as a man of his word – accidentally forgotten or not – Trump is consistently following through on his promise to raise import tariffs by 10% on goods coming into the US from BRICS member countries. At a Cabinet meeting on July 8, he explained this by saying: *“BRICS was created to weaken our dollar.”*

What’s strange, however, is this:

In the first half of the year alone, the American currency collapsed by almost 11%, the worst result since 1973. Back then, at least there was a reason: President Richard Nixon ended the Bretton Woods gold standard – decoupling paper money from gold. What happened this time? From the hated Biden, Trump inherited, in general, a reasonably well-functioning economy.

Wall Street analysts directly blame the White House for the dollar’s decline.

“Currency traders really have something to think about: a catastrophic budget deficit that no one is trying to reduce, whether Republicans or Democrats. Tensions with allies – in both military and trade spheres. There are plenty of potential negative catalysts. And once a trend starts, it’s hard to stop,” said Art Hogan, chief market strategist at B. Riley

Wealth Management, recently on CNBC.

Many analysts believe Trump’s financial advisors intentionally chose a policy of pressure on the dollar precisely to devalue the country’s massive external debt. If true, then Trump’s administration and the BRICS alliance are moving in the same direction, with shared goals. The only difference is that BRICS merely declares its detachment from the dollar while members themselves admit they cannot yet create a competing currency. Meanwhile, Trump has actually managed to crash the green paper to record lows in just five months in office.

The paradox is that the US cannot simultaneously reduce its trade deficit and strengthen the global dominance of the dollar, because these are diametrically opposed efforts. The terms dictation to Europe by the US in

the recent trade framework is an example to the world that we are back to neo-colonialism. The US did not even spare its long-term ally. While some countries got 10% the EU got 15% on selected goods while the steel and aluminium related industries remain at 50% tariff against 0% tariff for all US goods into the EU. This will further de-industrialise EU.

The Prime Minister of France Le Pen, and President Macron have called this is an awful and humiliating deal and fiasco. So, the only thing BRICS countries can do in response to Trump regarding the accusations of weakening the dollar is: standing their ground and find other markets rather than be with a partner that continues to kick them in the teeth. ■

Sikhumbuzo Thomo is a member of the ANC. He writes in his personal capacity.



Camilo Cienfuegos – Charismatic Commander of Courage in Cuba’s Fight for Freedom



■ By **AMBASSADOR PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

COn the tabernacle of the universe, where the sun and the moon are the mother of all, is the fascinating geological and geographical beauty of the post colonial Antilles, on the peak of the mountain ranges of the Andes, from Colombia into Chile, Blue mountains of Jamaica, Baoruco of Haiti, Cochabamba of Bolivia and Sierra Maestra of Cuba, in the swarming rainforest of the Amazon and Choco, the desert formations of Atacama in Chile and Patagonian in Argentina.

Enthralling picturesque of Cachacrou, where powerful waves of the Atlantic Ocean and turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea converge, the historical architectural sites of the ancient civilisations of the Incas and the Maya, chronicle historiography of resistance, resilience and heroism, colosseum of revolutionary struggles for freedom of humanity.

At the bosom of the Caribbean sea, wondrous world of some of the most beautiful creatures of our universe, bequeath illuminating revolutionary spirit, of a legendary figure, charismatic, handsome



Camilo Cienfuegos with Fidel Castro

rebel soldier of the July 26 Movement, Commander Camilo Cienfuegos, whom today, on the occasion of the anniversary of the birth of the movement of the people, I declare in his memory, the sea trenches, submarine Canyons, Arches and Coral reefs, where his mortal remains disappeared, the beautiful garden of the blossoming flower of the world revolutionary movement.

Born during the year 1932 from a humble background of a working class family, he abandoned his studies at an early age, due to lack of resources. Being a son of a tailor, having grown in a home with a pair of sewing machines, found work at a fashion store in Havana. Where he worked hard, ensuring that he compliments his father, taking care of the needs of his family.

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His moral consciousness was baptised in the revolutionary struggles at the age of twenty-three, when he participated in a demonstration organised by Fidel Castro, the leader of the July 26 Movement, commemorating the living memories of Antonio Maceo, the hero of the Cuban wars of independence. It was during this historic day, that the repressive police of the dictator Batista, hit him with a bullet on his leg, incurring serious wounds.

The fateful moment was in his own words, the turning point of his involvement in the struggles for the freedom of his people. He says:

"They carried me to the student clinic, where I experienced one of the greatest emotions of my life, when more than hundred people gathered there at the entrance, broke into cheers and applause, when they carried me up, and I felt such an emotion.

"I felt I was about to cry, and I yelled out: 'Viva Cuba' I was sure then, that whatever it cost, Cuba had to be free, in my way of thinking, there was only one dignified road towards ending the present situation, to follow the cause of Fidel."

The mounting repression from the regime, forced him into exile in the United States of America, where he became active within the underground cells of the Cuban political exile groups, exposing human rights abuses and atrocities, committed by the vicious Batista regime, against the peace-loving people of Cuba. He wrote many articles and journals, about the deteriorating political situation in Cuba, the work which exposed him to the US security services, forcing him into exile in Mexico.

On arrival he joined a contingent of young Cuban revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro, preparing themselves to wage an armed struggle, to overthrow the oppressive government of the dictator Fulgencio Batista. He became part of the nucleus of 82 men and women, who undertook the Grandma Expedition, landing at the Sierra Maestra mountains, launching a guerrilla warfare, to liberate their country.

In one of the letters written to Fidel during the war against the Batista regime at Sierra Maestra, he writes: *"We went to the pantheon where the Apostle fell and placed a flag and bouquet of roses, the flag of the 26 July movement. We did a minute of silence, in memory of the fallen heroes and heroines and two shocks of a rifles. It is unnecessary to tell you that the aviation later machine-gunned the surroundings."*

His extraordinary feats of discipline, distinguished him as the most trusted soldier of the revolution, rising to the ranks of one of the commanders of the rebel army, leading heroic men and women into hundreds and hundreds of battles against the most superior and sophisticated army of the repressive regime. He led the courageous column of Anto-

nio Maceo into the decisive battle of Yaguajay, forcing dictator Batista to flee the country.

After the triumph of the revolution on the 1st of January 1959, he was appointed the Chief of the Army of the revolutionary government of Cuba, playing a central role in the reorganisation of the army of the people, cultivating an ethos of a new

society based on the fundamental principles of human solidarity and internationalism. He became instrumental in consolidating the gains of the revolution, against all odds from counter-revolutionary insurgents.

On the 28th of October 1959, whilst on an official assignment from Camaquey to Havana, his plane disappeared in a mist of a devastating hurricane storms, signalling the destiny of the heroic life of the leader of the people. The remains of the plane and bodies of the crew could not be found till today.

The disappearance of the Chief of the Army was a great loss to the revolutionary government as Camilo was the embodiment of the struggles for the freedom of the people of Cuba, the people of Latin America and the world. In



Wall mural in Cuba featuring Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos and Julio Antonio Mella.

REFLECTION

memory of the enigmatic leader of the revolutionary government of Cuba, thousands of people every year, on the occasion of the anniversary of the fateful day of his disappearance, throw beautiful bunches of roses into the sea.

During his last speech at the Presidential palace of Havana, two days before his fateful disappearance, he said the following: *“Because to stop this very Cuban revolution an entire people have to die, and if that were to happen the verses of Bonifacio Byrne would be a reality. If it breaks into small pieces, it becomes my flag one day, our dead, raising their arms, they will still know how to defend it. Brothers, the revolution is done, your blood did not fall for nothing.”*

Conveying the sad news of his disappearance to the Cuban nation and the world, the Commander-in-Chief of the revolution, Fidel Castro, said the following emotional words of kindheartedness: *“Camilo disappeared in the middle of a storm. In our country there are many Camilos. And Camilo will continue to live in other men like him. He will continue to live in men who are inspired by him.”*

“The only thing we can ask our people is that, whenever the country finds itself in a difficult situation, in a moment of danger, remember Camilo and every time our compatriots see that the road is long and difficult, they remember Camilo, what he did, how he never lost faith in most difficult moments and how he knew how to do great feats.”

“Men like Camilo Cienfuegos emerged from the people and lived for the people. Our only compensation for the loss of a



companion so close to us, is to know that the people of Cuba produce men like him. Camilo lives and will live in the people.”

In an emotional tribute to the living memories of his close friend, Comrade-in-arms and compatriot, Commander Ernesto Che Guevara, expressed the following words of condolences: *“Camilo was the subject of a thousand anecdotes; he created them naturally wherever he went.”*

“To his ease of manner, always appreciated by the people, he added a personality that naturally and almost unconsciously put the stamp of Camilo on everything connected with him. Few men have succeeded in leaving on every action such a distinctive personal mark.”

“As Fidel has said, he did not have culture from books; he had the natural intelligence of the people, who had chosen him out of thousands for a privileged position on account of the audacity of his blows, his tenacity, his intelligence, and unequalled devotion. Camilo practiced loyalty like a religion.”

Commander Che Guavara referred to Camilo, a companion

of hundred battles, as one of Fidel’s trusted man in difficult times of war and a selfless fighter who always made sacrifice an instrument to temper his character and forge that of a troop. He declared that Camilo was *“Camilo, the Lord of the Vanguard, the commander of the people, a complete guerrilla man, who prevailed for that war with colour that he knew how to do.”*

One of the remarkable woman guerrilla fighters of the Grandma Expedition, Vilma Espin says the following about the life and times of Camilo: *“Camilo is a legendary figure, it is the idea that I have of Camilo, even of his same name nothing common, full of strength and poetry at the same time. If we invented a name for a legendary character, we call him Camilo Cienfuegos.”*

“The same death of Camilo, lost in the sea, the way to commemorate it, throwing a flower to the water and all those his exploits, are actions of a legend.”

Camilo Cienfuegos was unwavering in his commitment to the struggle for the freedom of the people, as he eloquently, during his last speech at the Presidential Palace in Havana said: *“It*

REFLECTION

does not matter what cunning and cowardly betrayals they may commit to these people and this revolution, it does not matter that mercenary planes come manned by war criminals and protected by powerful interests of the North American government, because here there are people that do not allow themselves to be confused by traitors."

Over the past decades, since the triumph of the revolution, the Cuban nation suffered the most inhumane and longest recorded economic blockade in the history of the struggles of human society, the unjust and unilateral blockade imposed by the Yankee empire of the United States of America. The economic blockade has inflicted unimaginable destruction of socio-economic life of the Cuban society, which is tantamount to crimes against humanity.

History has declared the Cuban revolution the only one to have defeated the most powerful US military empire in the American hemisphere. The defeat of

the US military at the battle of Playa Giron and the declaration of the socialist character of the revolution, the declaration of operation Carlota on the soil of the African continent, prompted the ideological warfare in the backyard of the empire.

The Cubans have the right to choose the path for their own destiny. They have the right to decide on their own democracy, based on the will of the majority of the people, defending their territorial integrity and independence of their motherland. In the world of humanity, the Cuban revolution has become a standard bearer of the value systems of solidarity and internationalism.

The generation of Camilo Cienfuegos contributed immensely for the realisation of the paramount ideals of the struggle for the freedom of humanity, the struggle for a better future, of human dignity, the future of hope, peace and tranquility.

On the occasion of the anniversary celebration of the birth of the 26th July Movement, we call upon the people of the world to demand the immediate end of the illegal economic blockade against the peace-loving people of Cuba.

We make a call to the President of the United States of America, His Excellency Donald Trump, to lead the world into a new rostrum of the age of peace and stability.

We call for the greater world of human solidarity and internationalism, the world of equality and mutual respect amongst nation states, the world of diplomacy and prosperity, in doing so, we shall achieve more than the ancient world of human archipelago, leading society from the age of barbarism into the age of modernity, this is the noble prize

future generations shall bestow unto us, our gracious hearts to all humanity.

We the people of the African continent shall forever be indebted to the courage and heroism, to the humane character of the Cuban revolution. We shall forever cherish the immeasurable contribution to the cause of the independence of the African continent against imperialism and colonial domination.

Camilo Cienfuegos is the image of the ideal future, the hallmarks of his tenacity, heroism, selflessness and devotion to the cause of our struggle for freedom. His undying spirit, deep in the beautiful garden at the bosom of the Caribbean sea, is the hope of the future of the universe. His fervent revolutionary soul, charisma, his enigmatic smile, is what the future represents. His undying spirit is the embodiment of the ideal future world, the triumph of humanity against adversity. ■

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



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

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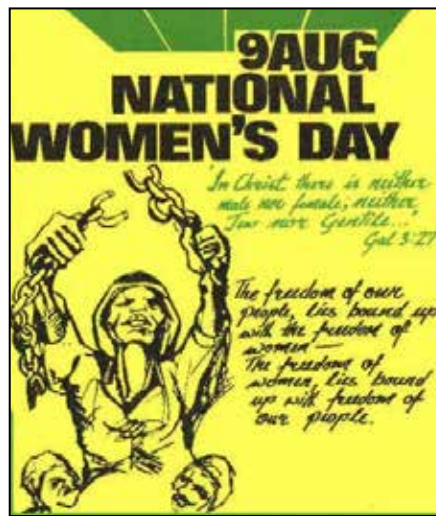
9–15 August 2025

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

9 August 1956 Historic women's march to Union Buildings



In one of the largest demonstrations staged in South African history, 20 000 women of all races marched to Pretoria's Union Buildings on 9 August 1956, to present a petition against the carrying of passes by women to the prime minister, J.G. Strijdom. This famous march is commemorated as National Women's Day, a public holiday on 9 August every year. The march against pass laws was organised by the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW). The Federation famously challenged the idea that 'a woman's place is in the kitchen', declaring it instead to be 'everywhere'. Strijdom was not at the Union Buildings to accept the petition. The women of South Africa sent a public message that they would not be intimidated and silenced by unjust laws. After the petition was handed over to the secretary of the prime minister, the women sang the song: *Wathint' abafazi, Strijdom!* Since then, the phrase '*wathint' abafazi, wathint' im-*



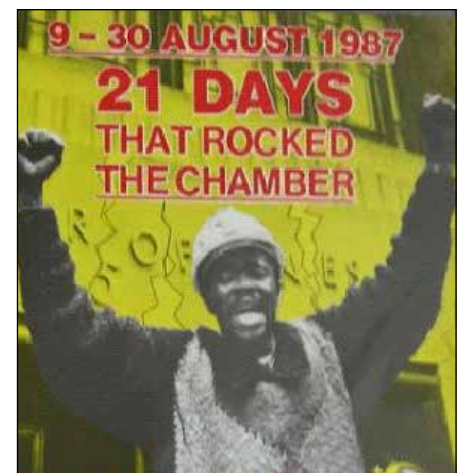
bokodo' (You Strike a Woman, You Strike a Rock) has come to represent the courage and strength of South African women, and the fight against patriarchy and for a non-sexist society.

9 August 1975 Moses Kotane receives Isithwalandwe/ Seaparankoe



Moses Kotane, General Secretary of the SACP and ANC leader received this highest award from the ANC in 1975, three years before his passing in 1978.

9 August 1987 Longest Mining strike starts



South Africa's longest and biggest strike was organised by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), led by Cyril Ramaphosa. At the time, it was the second largest trade union in South Africa. NUM represented mainly Black mineworkers in the gold and coal mines belonging to the Chamber of Mines. Approximately 360 000 Black miners went on strike over wage and working conditions. It lasted for three weeks, costing the Chamber of Mines close on R250million. In an attempt to break the strike, the Chamber of Mines retrenched approximately 50 000 workers. The mineworkers' strike was violent, according to NUM; 11 people died, 500 were injured and over 400 workers were arrested. The mineworkers' strike finally came to an after an agreement was negotiated with the Chamber of Mines, outlining new working conditions and wage increases for mineworkers

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

10 August 1965 Karen Muir, youngest person in world to break a sporting record



Karen Muir was born and lived in Kimberley. She went to Diamantveld High School where she broke the women's world record for backstroke at an event for girls, swimming a 110-yard backstroke in 1 minute, 8.7 seconds. Over the following five years, Muir would go on to set 15 world records. She also won 22 South African Championships. She matriculated in 1970. After retiring from sport, she studied medicine at the University of Orange Free State, where she qualified as a doctor. She practiced as a doctor and family physician, and died of breast cancer at the age of 60 years in Mossel Bay on 1 April 2013. Karin Muir was elected to the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1980.

10 August 1969 Zambia nationalised its copper mines

Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda announced nationalisation of copper mining companies, key to Zambia's economy contributing over 50 percent of government revenue. This policy gave the Zambian government the powers to use revenues collected from these mines to substantially reduce prices of basic food products. When copper prices collapsed in the mid-seven-

ties, the Zambian economy began to decline. The government borrowed money from the International Monetary fund (IMF) to maintain lower prices of basic foodstuffs. In 1985, the IMF put pressure on the Zambian government to restructure the economy and abandon socialist economic policies. As a result, the government adopted the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). These programmes were blamed for causing Zambia's economic decline.

10 August 1971 Pamphlet bombs in Four Cities

Eleven bombs exploded, scattering ANC propaganda leaflets in the four major cities. The blasts occurred twelve months after similar actions in the same cities.

11 August 1963 Escape from Prison

Four political detainees: Harold Wolpe, a listed Communist arrested on the Bechuanaland border; Arthur Goldreich, caught in the Rivonia raid; Moosie Moolla, accused in the Treason Trial; and Charlie Jassat, escaped from the Johannesburg Central Police station after bribing a young warder on 11 August 1963. Mannie

Brown was involved in planning and implementing the successful escape of the four detainees, but a massive manhunt and police operation led closer to Mannie and he was forced into hiding while his family went into exile. Probably the most dramatic escape in South African history, the detainees' exit from the country, particularly Goldreich's, infuriated the prosecutors and police who considered Goldreich to be 'the arch-conspirator' with regard to the Rivonia Trial. Wolpe, Goldreich, Moolla and Jassat all went into exile.

11 August 1972 No more land to Bantustans

The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development declared that no more land would be allocated to the 'homelands' other than that stipulated in the 1936 Land Act.

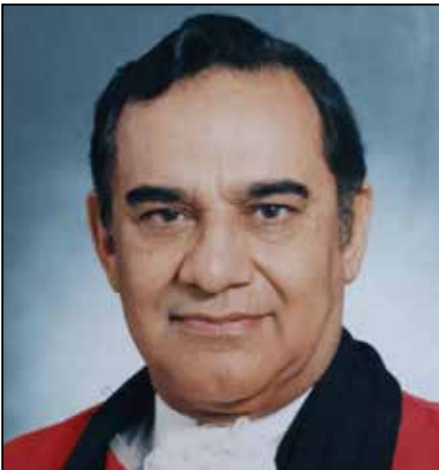
11-12 August 1976 Student revolt spreads to Cape Town

The uprising that was started by students in Soweto on 16 June 1976 spread throughout the country. On this day, students organised protests in solidarity with Langa, Nyanga and Guguletu and



then, for the first time, spread to Coloured townships in the city. Thirty three people were shot, and protesting student leaders from the University of Western Cape and others detained. Students at the Esselen Park High School in Worcester demonstrated in front of the school and were tear-gassed and baton charged. UCT students marched towards the city centre, giving the Black Power Salute; 73 UCT students were arrested. In Bellville, 600 coloured students marched from the Bellville Training College and clashed with police whilst in UWC a poster parade was broken by police. Poster bearers were arrested because of messages such as: *"Sorry Soweto, Kruger is a pig; the revolution is coming."*

11 August 1991 Ismail Mohamed First Black Judge appointed to the Supreme Court

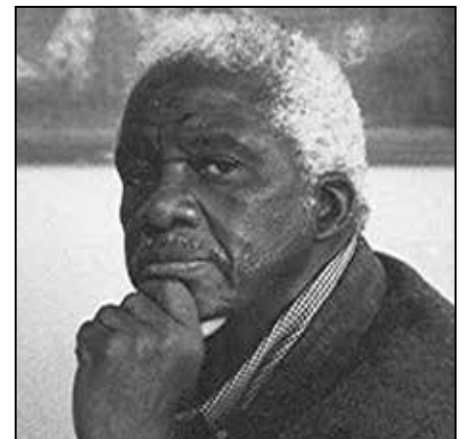


Ismail Mahomed was born in Pretoria on 5 July 1931 and died on 17 June 2000. Judge Mahomed matriculated at Pretoria Indian Boys' High School in 1950, completed a BA degree at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1953, a BA honours with distinction in political science in 1954 and his LLB in 1957. Judge Mahomed was admitted to the Johannesburg Bar, because the Bar in

Pretoria, where he lived, was reserved for whites. During the early sixties, he was admitted as an advocate in Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. In 1984, he was admitted to the English Bar. He built an extensive litigation practice and in 1974 he became the first black person in the country's history to take silk. Judge Mahomed's practice was concentrated on civil rights. He appeared in numerous trials on behalf of some of the leading figures in the anti-apartheid movement and played a leading role in challenges to the government's administrative and executive decrees during his 35-year career as an advocate. In 1979, he was appointed a judge of the Appeal Court in Swaziland, in 1982 a judge of appeal in Lesotho, and later Chief Justice of Namibia and the president of the Lesotho Court of Appeal. In this capacity, he gave some of these courts' leading constitutional and administrative law judgments. Judge Mohamed co-chaired the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), the negotiations forum that led to our democracy. In 1991, after the unbanning of the ANC, he became the first black person in South African history to be made a permanent judge of the Supreme Court of South Africa. Judge Mahomed was appointed to the Constitutional Court in 1994, and in 1998 he was made Chief Justice, a position he held until his death in 2000. Judge Mahomed published numerous articles in law journals and lectured on human rights jurisprudence at universities abroad. He was made an honorary professor of law at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1990. He received honorary doctorates in law from the University of Delhi and the University of Pennsylvania. He

was awarded the Indicator Human Rights award in 1990 and also received the special award of the Black Lawyers' Association for his outstanding contribution to the development of human rights in South Africa. (Source: <https://www.concourt.org.za/index.php/judges/former-judges/11-former-judges/57-justice-ismail-mahomed>)

11 August 2006 Poet Mazizi Kunene who penned Emperor Shaka the Great, passed on



The SABC reported that the celebrated African poet Professor Mazizi Kunene, well known for his epic poem Emperor Shaka the Great, which is inspired by the rise of the Zulu empire, had died in Durban at the age of 76 after a long illness. In 2005, Kunene was awarded the inaugural SA National Poet Laureate Prize, the M-Net Literary Awards Lifetime Achievement Award and recognised as a National Living Treasure by the Indigenous Knowledge Systems of SA. Kunene was born in Durban on 12 May 1930, started writing at an early age and by 12 had a number of his poems published in newspapers and magazines. Professor Kunene wrote his Master's thesis at the University of Natal on *"An Analytical Survey of Zulu Poetry, Both Traditional and Modern"* in 1959, and went on to do a PhD at Lon-

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don University. He became active in the ANC in the UK and did not complete his doctorate then. He went on to teach in the US, and returned to South Africa in 1993 to teach at the University of KZN. He published *Zulu Poems* (1970), as well as *Anthem of the Decades* (1981), a work dealing with Zulu religion and cosmology. His later books include *Isibusiso sikamhawu* (1994) and *Umzwilili wama-Afrika* (1996).

12 August 1883 Last Quagga in the world died

The last quagga in the world died in a zoo in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The quagga had once roamed the pastures of the Karoo and the southern Free State. It differed in appearance from other zebra in that it was striped on the front half of its body only. The upper part of its body was a creamy, light brown, while its belly and legs were whitish. The last wild quagga was probably shot in the late 1870s. The name is derived from a Khoi-Khoi word for zebra and is being said to resemble the quagga's call.

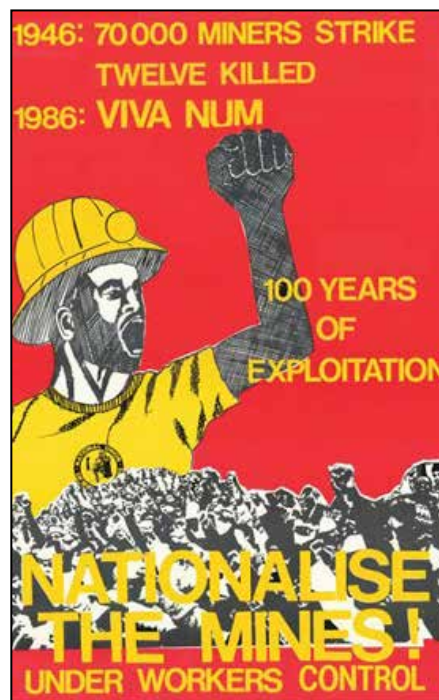
12 August 1952 Walter Sisulu arrested



Walter Sisulu and others were arrested on a charge under the Suppression of Communism

Act. Sisulu played a significant role in the planning of the 1952 Defiance Campaign in which over 8 500 volunteers were mobilised to contravene apartheid laws. On 12 August 1952, Sisulu was arrested, and consequently banned under the Suppression of Communism Act. Later that year Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and James Moroka were tried for their involvement in the Defiance Campaign.

12 August 1946 African Mineworkers strike starts



A week-long strike by African mineworkers, led by JB Marks, leader of the African Mineworkers' Union, started on this day. The strike was initiated by the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), which was active in distributing pamphlets and other material related to the strike. About 70000 miners went on strike. Government suppressed the strike by force. According to official figures, twelve were killed and 1 248 injured. Fifty-one persons, mainly Communists, were later charged in connection with the strike

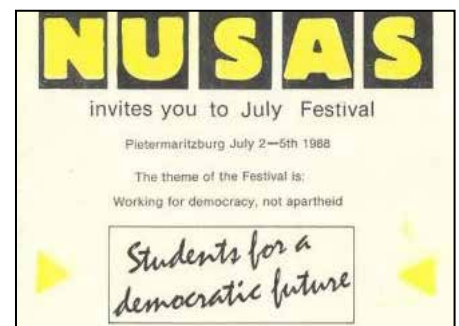
12 August 1966 Bill to ban Communists from practicing law tabled

Under the Suppression of Communism Amendment Bill tabled in Parliament, any attorney or advocate who has committed an offence under the Act at any time is liable to be struck off the roll. Other clauses give the Minister of Justice powers to cut listed people off from contact with any organisation he chooses. The Bill is rejected outright by the Progressive Party member Helen Suzman.

12 August 1969 UN demands withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia

The United Nations Security Council's resolution calls on South Africa to withdraw its administration from Namibia immediately, and, in any case, before 4 October 1969. South Africa is condemned for refusing to comply with previous United Nations resolutions.

12 August 1974 NUSAS students declared Traitors



The Commission of Inquiry into Certain Organizations submits its final report on NUSAS to Parliament. It finds that its leaders are traitors, guilty of providing terrorist groups and the like the ANC with sanctuary. The Commission recommended that the application

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of students to NUSAS should end and that NUSAS should not be allowed to accept funds from overseas.

13 August 1960 Oubangi-Shari achieves independence as the Central African Republic



Ubangi-Shari, then a French colony achieved independence as the Central African Republic (CAR). The colony was part of the French Equatorial Africa (along with Chad and middle Congo). It was named after the Ubangi and Shari rivers. The Central African Republic (C.A.R.) was settled from at least the 7th century by overlapping empires, including the Kanem-Bornou, Ouaddai, Baguirmi, and Dafour groups based in Lake Chad and the Upper Nile. Population migration in the 18th and 19th centuries brought new migrants into the area, including the Zande, Banda, and M'Baka-Mandjia. In 1875, the Egyptian sultan Rabah governed Upper-Oubangui, which included present-day CAR, and in 1903 it became part of the French territory. David Dacko became the CAR's first post-independent president.

13 August 1965 Dr Silas Modiri Molema passed on

Dr Seetsele Silas Modiri Molema, medical doctor, politician and historian, died in Mafeking at the age of 74. He was the eldest son of Silas Thelesho Molema, maternal uncle of Chief Montshioa of the Barolong boo Ratshidi. He was elected Treasurer-General of the African National Congress and was served with banning orders by the government in 1953. He also served on the African Advisory Council, Joint Advisory Council, and the Constitutional Committee that set the Bechuanaland Protectorate on its road to independence as the Republic of Botswana

13 August 1967 MK and ZAPU engaged Rhodesian Forces in Wankie Campaign



Umkhonto and ZAPU guerillas engaged Rhodesian forces in Wankie (now Hwange) Game Reserve, near the border of Zambia and Botswana.

14 August 1944 Historian Charles van Onselen born

Charles van Onselen was born on 14 August 1944, in the South African town of Boksburg. Van Onselen has become one of the most widely respected South African historians, whose work is widely published, both nationally and internationally. He chose to centre his already well

documented research on the social, economic and political foundations of southern African societies. Charles van Onselen has truly impacted the manner in which South African history is perceived, by choosing relatively unknown topics, and therefore revolutionising South African history. His published books include *Chibaro: African mine labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1933*. [1976]; *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914: Volume I: New Babylon, Volume II: New Nineveh*. [1982]; *The Small Matter of a Horse: The Life of 'Nongoloza' Mathebula, 1867-1948* [1984]; *The Seed is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine, A South African Sharecropper, 1894-1985* [1996].

14-25 August 1978 First World Conference against Racism, Geneva



A World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, Geneva was held under the auspices of the United Nations. The UN resolution adopting this conference read "As a major feature during the Decade, a world conference on combating racial discrimination should be convened by the General Assembly

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as soon as possible, but preferably not later than 1978. The Conference should have as its main theme the adoption of effective ways and means and concrete measures for securing the full and universal implementation of United Nations decisions and resolutions on racism, racial discrimination, apartheid, decolonization and self-determination, as well as the accession to and ratification and enforcement of the international instruments relating to human rights and the elimination of racism and racial discrimination.”

14 August 1968

Students protest banning of lecturer Archie Mafeje

Widespread student protests are held against government banning of the appointment of an African lecturer, Archie Mafeje, to a post in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cape Town. Prime Minister Vorster threatens to take action against student protests if the University authorities do not do so in reasonable time. Over 1000 students and staff later joined this protest and demanded cessation of government intervention regarding university appointments. Students at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Rhodes and Natal also joined the protests. Wits students took the matter further by marching to the Union Buildings to hand in their letter of protest. University of Pretoria students attacked Wits marchers, preventing them from reaching the Union Buildings.

14 August 1974

Defense budget increased to fund war in Frontline states

A sharp increase in defence expenditure is announced, following the White Paper tabled on 10 April 1973, by the Minister of De-

fence. This demand was deemed necessary for apartheid South Africa's war on its neighbours, and in this instance in the Caprivi Strip with Angola and Zambia.

15 August 1925

Mam Gertrude Shope born

Gertrude Shope was born in Johannesburg, but grew up in Zimbabwe. She was trained as a teacher and went on to teach in Natal and Soweto. At age 29, she joined the African National Congress (ANC) and soon afterwards left teaching as part of a campaign to boycott Bantu Education. She was active in FEDSAW, chaired its Jabavu branch and later became Transvaal FEDSAW secretary. Mam Gertrude Shope was one of the iconic women behind the 1956 women's march to the Union Building. In 1966, she joined her husband Mark Shope in exile where she joined Umkhonto we Sizwe. From 1970 to 1971, Shope was secretary to Florence Mopho-sho, head of the ANC's Women's Section, and together they started publishing *Voice of the Women*. Shope later became the ANC's chief representative in Lusaka and in 1981 was promoted to head of the Women's Section, which she led at the End of the Decade Conference in Nairobi in 1985. She served as ANC Chief representative in Lusaka, after serving in ANC offices in Botswana, Tan-

zania, Czechoslovakia and Nigeria. In 1991 Shope was elected president of the ANC's Women's League, a position she held until 1993. She worked together with Albertina Sisulu in convening the ANC's Internal Leadership Corps Task Force from 1990-1991. In 1994 Shope became a member of parliament in the Government of National Unity. MaShope is a patron of the Women's Development Bank Trust. In 2014, along with Ruth Mompati, Getrude Shope received the highest ANC honour, *Isithwalandwe/Seaparankwe*. MaShope passed away on 22 May 2025.

15 August 1964

Local Manufacturing of Aircraft announced for SA Air Force

Minister of Defense Foucht, announces that private enterprise will be responsible for the manufacture of aircraft for the South African Air Force. Jet trainers, to replace the SAAF's Harvards will be the first aircraft to be made locally. South Africa already in 1920s did local manufacturing of aircraft and other aviation equipment. Today, there are still over 100 local companies that manufacture aircrafts (especially small). State owned entity Denel also manufactures aircraft, most notably the Rooivalk, a South African developed attack helicopter.



Mam Gertrude Shope

1925–2025

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

9–15 August 2025

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



9 August International Day of the World's Indigenous People



9 August commemorates the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. It is celebrated around the world and marks the date of the inaugural session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at the United Nations in 1982. Indigenous peoples live in all regions of the world and own, occupy or use some 22% of global land area. Definitions of indigenous people include 'original and earliest known inhabitants of an area'; 'cultural distinct groups affected by colonialism' or 'inheritors and

practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live.' Numbering at least 370-500 million, indigenous peoples represent the greater part of the world's cultural diversity, and have created and speak the major share of the world's almost 7000 languages. Many indigenous peoples continue to be confronted with marginalization, extreme poverty and other human rights violations. The theme for 2025 is **Indigenous Peoples and AI: Defending Rights, Shaping Futures!** While AI can support cultural revitalization, youth empowerment, and even adaptation to climate change, it often reinforces bias, exclusion, and misrepresentation towards Indigenous Peoples. Most AI systems are built without Indigenous input, risking the misuse of their data, knowledge, and identities. This is a new issue added to the barriers to accessing new technologies, especially in rural areas, excluding Indigenous from full participation in AI-related processes. To unlock AI's full potential, Indigenous Peoples must be respected as rights-holders, co-creators, and decision-makers. Meaningful inclusion, data sovereignty, and culturally grounded innovation are key to ensuring AI empowers their communities.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

10 August

Africa Day of Decentralisation and Local Development (ADD)



Local government is an important localized and decentralised form of government, from both a developmental and participation perspective. The day spotlights the role of local government in urban and rural areas across the continent. The African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development was adopted in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in 2014. The continental umbrella body for local government, formed in Tshwane in 2005, is the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLGA). The theme for 2025 is ***Building resilient communities through inclusive decentralisation and equitable development***. The 2025 edition of the ADD aims to provide a platform in African Union Member States for all stakeholders to engage in dialogue at national level, share innovations, and reflect on the transformative role of inclusive decentralization in fostering resilient, equitable, and just communities. The Day also serves to mobilize action toward addressing structural inequalities and accelerating progress toward the goals of Agenda 2063.

12 August

International Youth Day

International Youth Day (IYD) is commemorated



annually on 12 August to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities facing young people around the world. It serves as a platform to promote youth engagement and celebrate their contributions to society, development, and peace. The theme for 2025 International Youth Day is ***Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond*** which places a strong emphasis on the transformative role of young people in the localization of the SDGs, translating the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into local realities. This theme recognizes that young people are not merely beneficiaries of development, but are active agents of change, innovation, and leadership. It acknowledges the need for youth inclusion in local governance processes, as their creativity, energy, and community knowledge are essential for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges of our time.

12 August

World Elephant Day

The day is dedicated to the preservation of the world's elephants. There are two living species, the Asian and African elephants. The African elephant is the world largest land animal, weighing up to 10 000 kg. There are today only 40 000-50 000 elephants left in the wild, with between 15 000 and 20 000 in captivity. South Africa has around 24 000 elephants, 17 000 in the Kruger National Park and about 600 in the Addo Elephant Park.

15 August

Homeless Animal Day

Humans share the planet with many other living beings. Every day, animals are abandoned or placed into kennels, dependent on charities and goodwill. Some organisations are strained beyond coping and are desperate to raise awareness of the plight of homeless and abandoned animals. Homeless Animals Day, celebrated every third Sunday of August aims to educate people about pet abandonment, feral animals and benefits of caring for domestic animals. Every year, South Africa euthanizes about 1 million cats and dogs, adopted from animal shelters help, as well as getting your pets sprayed and neutered. South Africa has a number of animal rescue organisations, most of them registered as not for profits. The largest of these is the National Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (NSPCA), which also runs shelters for homeless animals.