



# ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the  
**President**



## Our collective membership of the United Nations is our shared humanity in action

STATEMENT BY **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE **GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 80<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

**E**IGHTY years ago, the United Nations was established to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and build a peaceful, prosperous and just world arising from the devastation brought about by global conflict.

Through the UN Charter, the nations of the world pledged to uphold peace, development and human rights underpinned by international law. Now more than ever, we are called upon to uphold the values and advance the purpose of the United Nations.

We are called upon to advance cooperation and solidarity between nations.

We are called upon to promote multilateralism and safeguard the institutions that enable it.

South Africa's engagement in the international sphere echoes our domestic imperatives of eradicating poverty, reducing unemployment and addressing the root causes of inequality. Our foreign policy is guided not only by the needs of our people, but also those of the continent of Africa and the Global South.

Inspired by our own history, South Africa strives to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes through negotiation and dialogue, not war.

We therefore welcome the strong partnership between the African Union and the United Nations in promoting peace, security and stability on the African continent.

This year, South Africa is honoured to preside over the G20. This is the first time that the G20 Leaders' Summit will be held on the African Continent,

the Cradle of Humankind.

South Africa's G20 Presidency is guided by the theme of Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability.

As Member States of the United Nations, we adopted the Sustainable Development Goals.

Many of these goals remain elusive.

There are many reasons that hold many countries from fulfilling and implementing these development goals. Some of the reasons are lack of sufficient financial resources.

Many countries with developing economies, especially in Africa, do not have adequate capital to finance their development goals. They are indebted and are paying more on debt servicing than they do on health and education.

Yet through global solidarity, by having fairer lending rules especially for several countries of the Global South, we can achieve our shared commitment.

Through the G20 process we are working towards consensus on how this problem can be tackled, including the reform of international financial institutions, particularly multilateral development banks, to better tackle global challenges.

The multilateral trading system needs to be reformed as we re-confirm that the World Trade Organisation remains the only



multilateral body capable of managing differences and coordinating positions in global trade.

Trade is one of the most important instruments to mobilise domestic resources for development.

It is concerning that geopolitical shocks and unprecedented trade policy volatility are destabilising the global economy and jeopardising a critical source of development financing.

We must redouble our efforts to strengthen the link between trade and development. Unilateral trade practices and economic coercion have a detrimental impact on many nations. This includes the economic embargo against Cuba, which has caused untold damage to the country's economy

over the years. This unfair embargo must be lifted.

In the midst of global trade uncertainty, the African continent is providing a pragmatic example of constructive collaboration by using the African Continental Free Trade Area as an engine for sustainable growth and development.

This will, with commitment, become the central pillar of economic cooperation and integration for our continent.

As part of the effort to build more inclusive economies, South Africa's G20 Presidency has launched an Extraordinary Committee of Independent Experts on Global Wealth Inequality.

This committee, chaired by Professor Joseph Stiglitz a

Nobel laureate, will deliver the first-ever report on global inequality to G20 leaders.

Climate change is an existential threat.

We are failing future generations by our inability to reduce global warming.

Climate change is reversing economic growth and development gains in many countries, especially in the Global South.

Although Africa carries the least responsibility for climate change, many countries on the continent experience much of its harshest effects.

Extreme weather events like floods and droughts are driving food insecurity, displacing populations, causing damage to infrastructure and leading to the unnecessary loss of livelihoods.

Member States must honour their undertakings and commitments in line with the guiding principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

The Secretary-General recently reported that global military expenditure has reached historic highs just as the world is falling behind on its core development promises.

We are building weapons, when we should be building social infrastructure.

We are fighting wars that cause death and destruction, when

we should be fighting poverty and developing the livelihoods of vulnerable people.

We must act decisively to silence all guns, everywhere, to realise the goal of sustainable development and global peace.

As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the UN, the relevance of this institution and multilateral processes for the maintenance of international peace and security is being wilfully undermined.

There is an increasing reliance on unilateral military action in contravention of international law.

The United Nations Security Council has proven to be ineffective in its current form and composition in carrying out its Charter mandate to maintain international peace and security.

South Africa remains deeply concerned by the erosion of the credibility of the Security Council and its failure to ensure accountability and uphold international law.

As the security and humanitarian situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Gaza and elsewhere deteriorate, it is a matter of grave concern that there are countries that continue to violate international law and defy UN resolutions and rulings from bodies like the International Court of Justice.

The establishment of the

Hague Group and the Madrid Group aim to reaffirm the primacy of international law, promoting accountability and ensuring support for a just peace.

We cannot and should not accept that members of this Organisation continue to violate without consequence the Charter that we have all agreed to uphold.

Therefore, as nations that have pledged to uphold the UN Charter, we have the ultimate responsibility to ensure and protect the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

Consistent with the case that South Africa brought before the International Court of Justice, there is growing global consensus that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza.

Just last week, the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry found that Israel is responsible for the commission of genocide in Gaza.

As Palestinians continue to face genocide and famine, we have a duty to act.

We welcome the historic High-Level Meeting held yesterday on the Two-State Solution yesterday in this chamber. This reflects the determination of the global majority that Palestinians deserve a peaceful state alongside a peaceful Israel.

The long overdue announcement by an increasing number

of countries to recognise the State of Palestine is testament to this determination.

We have a responsibility as the Member States of the United Nations to reaffirm the right of self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

The very first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, in January 1946, called for the elimination of atomic weapons.

The resolution was passed shortly after the catastrophic use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Decades later, we have not made significant progress in the fulfilment of the commitment to nuclear disarmament.

In 2026, South Africa will be presiding over the first review conference of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

This Treaty reaffirms that there is no greater assurance of non-proliferation than the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

This year, we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as a roadmap for the achievement of gender equality.

South Africa reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the empowerment of women and their full, equal and meaningful participation in all spheres of life.



This milestone reminds us of our shared responsibility to advance human rights, dignity and justice for all.

The right to development must be central to the policies and operational activities of the UN and its specialised agencies, programmes and funds.

It must be at the core of the policies and strategies of the international financial and multilateral trading systems.

As we celebrate 80 years of the United Nations, we must seize the opportunity to build a better UN for the next 80 years.

What is needed now is a stronger and more capable United Nations, based on a renewed commitment to its founding principles.

We must invigorate the negotiations on Security Council reform at the Inter-Governmental Negotiations in the General Assembly, including by initiating text-based negotiations.

The Security Council must be more accountable, representative, democratic and effective

in executing its mandate.

We look forward to working with the Secretary-General on the UN80 Initiative to ensure that our Organisation works more effectively and efficiently.

Mandates given by Member States must be implemented and the necessary structural changes and programme realignment must be implemented across the UN system.

In the face of the decrease in funding to the United Nations to fulfil its mandate, the UN80 Initiative is important to maintain the integrity of the multilateral system and to uphold international law.

Lastly, I am reminded that our collective membership of the United Nations is our shared humanity in action.

The UN at 80 compels us to reflect on our collective achievements, and to chart a way forward in building an Organisation that is able to address our common challenges.

We must rise to the occasion and do our utmost together to ensure the political, economic and social freedom of all humanity.

We must reaffirm that freedom is indivisible and that the denial of the rights of one person diminishes the freedom of us all.

We must reaffirm the equal dignity and worth of every person and must therefore leave no-one behind. ■

# HERITAGE DAY 2025

## We all have the responsibility to preserve and showcase our heritage locally and globally

ADDRESS BY **DEPUTY PRESIDENT PAUL MASHATILE** ON THE OCCASION OF THE **HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATION** AT BRIDGETON SPORT GROUNDS IN THE OUDTSHOORN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

It is a privilege to stand before you today, on behalf of His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa, who entrusted me with the honour of leading this celebration of Heritage Day here at Oudtshoorn. A town known for its sandstone architecture, national heritage sites, and a rich cultural landscape influenced by Khoisan people, Scottish stonemasons, and Jewish settlers.

Given the rich history of this town, it is befitting that we are hosting the Heritage Day Celebration here.

What has especially caught my interest for this year's celebration is the theme, "*Reimagine our heritage institutions for a new era*," since it encourages us to honour our history while looking to the future.

This theme further emphasises the importance of leveraging heritage as a foundation for building a dynamic, socially responsive, technologically innovative and economically inclusive future. It is a call for fresh perspectives on how we can preserve and show-



case our history in the ever-evolving landscape of our society.

This theme is even more important considering that South Africa has been hosting various G20 initiatives since the beginning of the year and will officially host the G20 Summit in November 2025.

The theme of South Africa's Presidency of the G20 is Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability and, among other things, anchors as

a promoter of inclusive economic growth while fostering innovation, creativity, equity and social cohesion and ensuring that a diversity of cultural expressions flourishes in a globalised world.

I should state that it does not matter what your tribe or cultural background is; we all have the responsibility to preserve and showcase our heritage locally and to a global audience. This is important because our heritage

institutions nurture cultural identity, encourage unity, and offer economic opportunities in sectors such as tourism and the arts.

They serve as a bridge between the past and the present, allowing us to connect with our roots and understand where we come from. It is in the understanding of our roots that we can lay a solid foundation for our future as a society.

Fellow Compatriots, you will agree with me that as we enter a new era, it is crucial to reevaluate and reinvent heritage institutions to ensure their relevance and accessibility. We must emphasise the centrality of heritage in our national project to build a socially cohesive society based on democratic values, such as human dignity, equality, freedom, human rights, and civil liberties, as enshrined in our Constitution.

We are obligated to do so because our heritage embodies the very essence of our nationhood, and the resilience of a people united in their diversity. It is this unity in diversity that our cultural heritage finds expression through galleries, theatres, archives, concerts, works of art, sporting codes, storytelling, indigenous games, and museums, which form part of our shared culture.

Tata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (Aah Dalibhunga), twenty-eight years ago, said; *“When our museums and monuments preserve the whole of our diverse heritage, when they are inviting to the public and interact with the changes all around them, then they will strengthen our attachment to*



*human rights, mutual respect, and democracy and help prevent these ever again being violated.”*

With these words, Tata Madiba accurately describes the important role that museums and other historical institutions play in bringing about social change, encouraging active citizenship, and protecting the democratic principles that are in our Constitution. His observations further emphasise that museums and cultural institutions must address societal challenges and cater to the daily needs of people across racial and cultural divides.

Museums, monuments and other heritage sites must become spaces of cultural diplomacy, inclusivity, intergenerational conversation, laboratories of creativity and incubators of opportunities for our people, particularly the youth.

We must position our heritage institutions to contribute to the government’s efforts to deal with pressing challenges of unemployment, social fragmentation, crime and corruption. This can be achieved by empowering communities to challenge dominant narratives, providing secure

spaces for dialogue and critical thinking, and preserving and reinterpreting marginalised histories.

The heritage institutions may create a sense of collective memory, inspire resilience, and find new ways to solve current social challenges by adopting participatory approaches and focusing on people’s resilience and lived experiences.

More importantly, we must work together as families, communities, non-governmental organisations, businesses and government to fight the scourge of drugs and substance abuse, especially among the youth.

The rate of drug abuse among our children is a concern to the government, especially as it leads to stigmatisation of young people into categories such as *“AmaPhara”*. I call everyone to stand up and fight this demon that has engulfed our nation. It is our joint responsibility to combat alcohol and substance abuse and work together to eradicate similar practices within our communities.

We must also work together to fight crime, racism, tribalism, Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, including other anomalies that serve as a hindrance to our country’s progress.

Furthermore, we must embrace a radical perspective shift within our museums, one that reimagines these institutions so they may effectively respond to the sensibilities, aspirations, and challenges of the 21st century and beyond.

This is a call to decolonise our

museums, to Africanise them through a people-centred process of knowledge production and co-curation for a new era, a post-colonial era. It is a moment for a strategic shift, as heritage institutions worldwide are transforming into engines of development, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This shift is also reflected in the National Development Plan's Vision 2030, the Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, the National Policy on Living Heritage, and the Constitution. These frameworks acknowledge that heritage institutions must be people-centred, economically responsive, and technologically advanced while healing divisions of the past.

This task demands unity of purpose and collective action from all of us as a nation to construct a country that upholds human dignity and civil liberties, free from

racism, sexism and various forms of discrimination.

We must take deliberate steps to fast-track transformational imperatives and address the urgent need to restore the dignity of the African people whose cultural heritage practices were disrupted and destroyed by colonialism and, later, apartheid.

Some of you present here can confirm that apartheid undermined African heritage by destroying community structures through forced removals, fragmenting families and ancestral lands, and establishing an inferior education system focused on Bantu education. It suppressed African cultures, enforced segregation, and promoted the derogatory use of the term "Bantu" to dehumanise Black Africans and erode their identity.

As the Government, we are actively working to restore the dignity of African heritage through

initiatives like the National Policy for the Repatriation and Restitution of Human Remains and Heritage Objects, and the current reburial of Khoi and San ancestral remains, aiming to correct injustices from the colonial and apartheid eras.

We are called upon to restore the erased histories of our heroes and heroines who died defending this beautiful land. It was on the dunes of the Cape that our African ancestors, the Khoi and San, defended this land against the Portuguese viceroy Francisco de Almeida and his crew in 1510 at Table Bay. It was again in the same Cape that the Khoi and San stood defiantly against Jan van Riebeeck in what became known as the Khoi-Dutch confrontation of 1659.

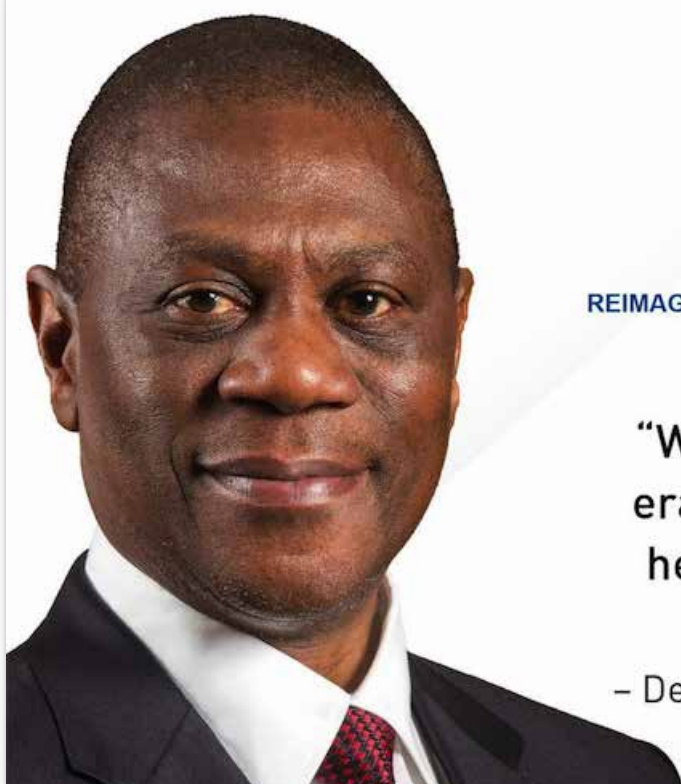
We are reminded of the Eastern Cape Frontier Wars, which raged over a period of one hundred years. History reminds us of the Battle of Ncome River in KwaZu-



REIMAGINE OUR HERITAGE INSTITUTIONS FOR A NEW ERA

**“We are called upon to restore the erased histories of our heroes and heroines who died defending this beautiful land.”**

– Deputy President Paul Mashatile



lu-Natal, the Bambatha Rebellion of 1906, and many other courageous acts of standing against Western colonising forces that took place across the length and breadth of our country in defence of our land and heritage.

Going to the North, we should always remember and teach the young ones about the Sekhukhune wars. These were a series of conflicts between the Bapedi people, led by King Sekhukhune, and the Boer-controlled Transvaal Republic, culminating in a final war against the British between 1878 and 1879. Sekhukhune was a determined leader who sought to maintain the independence of the Bapedi state against encroaching colonial powers.

These were not mere battles; they were forms of resistance that would later shape and determine the fate of the African child.

Today, we have an opportunity to pay tribute to the central role played by our Traditional and Khoisan leaders, our Kings and Queens, in the defence of our beautiful land and the safeguarding of our heritage. Throughout history, they have stood as custodians of culture, identity, and memory, ensuring that the wisdom of our ancestors is preserved and passed on to future generations.

Their leadership has not only safeguarded our territories but also fostered the values of unity, dignity, and resilience among our people.

Today, as we chart the path towards a more cohesive and inclusive society, we draw inspiration from their enduring legacy and acknowledge their invaluable

**Ouma  
Katrina  
Esau**



contribution to the preservation of our heritage as a whole.

Some of our Traditional and Khoisan leaders, who fought fearlessly in these wars, were beheaded, their skeletal remains collected as trophies and shipped out of the country to museums across Euro-Western countries.

To this day, some of these sacred human remains of our worthy ancestors remain locked away as prisoners of “science” in museum cupboards across the world, still awaiting their rightful repatriation. In this regard, I am reminded of the remains of Sarah Baartman that were returned from France in 2002. Her remains were repatriated to symbolise an end to colonial exploitation and the restoration of dignity to black African women.

Through our repatriation and restitution programme, we have begun identifying institutions across the world where some of these sacred human remains are located, awaiting their return.

Today, we also pay tribute to our Living Human Treasures who are vital to the transmission of heritage, serving as custodians of knowledge, skills, and cultural practices. They guide communities, enrich cultural experiences, and educate society on the enduring value of arts and culture.

In particular, we honour Dr. Ouma Katrina Esau, the last remaining fluent speaker of the critically endangered N’uu language and one of South Africa’s revered living human treasures.

Dr Esau stands as a towering figure, embodying resilience, wisdom, and the unbroken thread of indigenous knowledge. Through the wealth of her experience and teachings, we as a nation continue to draw inspiration and strength. Her life’s work reminds us of the urgent responsibility to safeguard our intangible cultural heritage for future generations. As the last fluent speaker of the N’uu language in our country, and indeed the world, she carries within her the living memory of

one of humanity's oldest languages, a click language once spoken by the San of the Kalahari.

With every lesson she imparts to present and future generations, she does far more than transmit words; she safeguards a profound archive of human experience and linguistic heritage.

Her voice reminds us that when a language dies, a universe of meaning, memory, and identity is lost forever. It is for this reason that the restoration and preservation of our indigenous languages must remain central to our pursuit of restoring the dignity of those whose voices were silenced and whose languages were suppressed.

Earlier today, we also had the opportunity to participate in the One Million Trees Campaign of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, by planting trees at Dysselsdorp Secondary School. This campaign is part of the Department's National Greening Project, aimed at planting trees across the country as part of our collective responsibility to safeguard the environment.

The planting of trees project serves not only as an environmental intervention but also as

a cultural imperative, aligning living heritage practices with the principles of sustainability. It affirms our duty to ensure that the resources of our environment are preserved and protected for future generations.

As Government, we have also taken a step further by launching the Clean Cities, Towns and Villages Campaign. The Campaign aims to create cleaner, sustainable environments in our communities, fostering job creation in municipalities. It supports developmental goals by improving public health, safety, infrastructure, and promoting green energy investments to combat environmental degradation.

The Clean Cities, Towns and Villages Campaign further protects heritage by creating environments that support the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and landscapes, and establishing a sense of collective place, fostering economic growth and social cohesion within towns and cities.

The month of September also marks the second reunion of Robben Island ex-political prisoners, during which a Wall of Remembrance, featuring the names of all Robben Island ex-political

prisoners and six commemorative statues, will be officially unveiled.

Indeed, the story of our collective heritage is the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. It is the story of the continuum of the past, present and future. It is a story of communities that, despite centuries of dispossession, division, and hardship, continue to rise, to create, and to preserve the wisdom of their ancestors for current and future generations.

Most importantly, it is a story of the resilience of people who refused to be silenced, who held on to their languages, traditions, and sacred knowledge as acts of defiance and human dignity.

This triumph is seen through the efforts of ordinary people from across the spectrum who safeguard our Intangible Cultural Heritage against the tide of erasure. It is seen in our cultural practices, which affirm identity and belonging in the face of global homogenisation. It is seen in our collective commitment to reimagine heritage as a force for unity, healing and cultural diplomacy.

As part of our efforts to come together as a nation, with the shared goal of mending the scars



of the past and addressing the deeply ingrained social and economic difficulties that the country faces, we have initiated a National Dialogue that is open to all people. The National Dialogue is a citizen-led process and is an opportunity for all South Africans, to confront uncomfortable truths about our democracy and reimagine a shared future for South Africa, where no one is left behind.

The Dialogue is a crucial platform for all voices, regardless of age, location, race, class, or culture, to shape the future of our democracy through meaningful, inclusive dialogue. Since the early 1990s, South Africa has relied on such dialogue for conflict resolution and shaping our future, with the Convention for a Democratic South Africa and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as examples.

We urge everyone to engage in this process, because as South Africans with diverse lived experiences, we each have a vital role in building the nation we hope for. As we celebrate our heritage, may this moment serve as a time of activation; let it be an opportunity to reimagine our heritage institutions not as remnants of a past era, but as beacons of possibility in a changing and globalising world.

Together, let us turn memory into momentum and heritage into hope for a new era of bold imaginings.

Our collective responsibility is to draw pride and joy from our diverse cultures and heritage. Let us recognise and embrace each other while celebrating our shared destiny and the rich tapestry of our country's history, cul-

ture, and heritage.

The duty lies with parents, community leaders, activists, teachers and all change agents to proactively educate and inform the youth about our past, and its significance in shaping our future.

Promoting family values strengthens individuals and communities by providing ethical guidance, fostering social skills like empathy and communication, and creating a sense of belonging. When communities promote family values, they foster mutual respect, collaboration, and the building blocks for healthy human development, resulting in more cohesive and supportive settings for everyone.

We must also recognise and appreciate the contributions of partners in the social cohesion and nation building journey such as the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) who promote positive values for moral communities through its Charter of Positive Values. I had the privilege to have a meeting with representatives of the MRM who also reminded me of the importance of the ex-

istence of such organisations in moulding the moral fibre of our society today.

The MRM Charter for example provides a framework designed to tackle social issues and facilitate moral renewal by advocating for principles such as human dignity, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, honesty, and family values, aiming to establish a fair and inclusive society, which remain crucial to the holistic development of our nation.

This is but one example of the many organisations that are determined to make a difference and bring about change that we as Government and other sectors need to support.

I call upon all South Africans to reimagine our history and heritage institutions for a new era, so that they may continue to add value to human development and serve generations to come.

I wish all South Africans across the length and breadth of our nation, across the continent, and throughout the Diaspora, a wonderful Heritage Day. ■



*"When our first democratically elected government decided to make Heritage Day one of our national days, we did so because we knew that our rich & varied cultural heritage has a profound power to help build our new nation"*

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela



# The Roll Call: Between Historical Betrayals and Present Misrepresentations

■ By **ANDILE LUNGISA**

**T**HE current obsession with the ANC roll call has distracted many from engaging with the historical and constitutional architecture of South African local government. To understand where we are, one must return to the White Paper on Local Government of 1998 and the constitutional settlement that followed.

Local government, as enshrined in the Constitution is primarily regulated by Chapter 7 (Sections 151-164). The Constitution outlines the nature of municipalities, their powers, and the objectives they must strive to achieve, and their relationship with other spheres of government. In its design, the sphere is envisaged to be the closest to the people, the first responder to daily struggles,

to dignity, to provision of service delivery.

This structuring of local government was set to dismantle the structurally and spatial uneven terrain of apartheid. Through amalgamations that lumped rural communities, former homelands, and sprawling metros into single municipalities, local government was born into a paradox: tasked with the heaviest demands, yet given the lightest purse. The funding model has always tilted in favour of national and provincial governments, leaving municipalities to stretch meagre resources across vast inequalities.

It is therefore councilors not cabinet ministers nor premiers, who stand daily in the firing line. They are the first respondents to cries

for water, electricity, sanitation, jobs, housing. Instead of being acknowledged for their central role, they are often subjected to derision, mocked by the products of self-glorified “*night school graduates*” who parade themselves as intellectuals. This insult is even more glaring when weighed against the reality that many of today’s young councilors are highly educated, forged in the fires of the student movement, tempered in higher education struggles, and deeply conscious of their political duty. They remain disciplined, often choosing not to respond to these provocations, but their silence should never be mistaken for incapacity.

The real shortfall lies in the state’s failure to invest in institutional capacity building for local gov-



### Our 2021 Local Government Elections campaign slogan

ernment. Unlike national departments and provincial administrations, there exists no dedicated institution to cultivate the technical and political acumen required at this frontline sphere. That void is filled instead with performative opportunists, people more committed to parading than leading, more focused on spectacle than service.

It is insulting and deeply ahistorical to reduce the ANC's culture of song to some caricature of anti-intellectualism. Song is not distraction; it is communication, memory, and struggle. Africans sang in war, in church, at funerals, in celebration. Rhythm was a language, a form of resistance, a spiritual grounding. To trivialize this heritage is to trivialize Africanness itself. The comrade who sings does not retreat from intellect, but draws on centuries of embodied memory.

We are also tired of the dishonest narratives that parade Stellenbosch and Cape Town as paragons of governance. These are historically privileged, self-sufficient spaces, much like Sandton and Waterkloof. Their wealth is rooted in centuries of skewed

development. Meanwhile, in informal settlements like NU30 Motherwell in Nelson Mandela Bay, residents have access to sanitation (toilets), water, waste collection, roads and electricity. Contrast this with the slums of the Western Cape, where the so-called "good governance" cannot mask the persistent indignity of shack life. Who then is truly serving the people? The best classes to attend is go to Barcelona, Vukuzenzele, Kanna, Europe, Kosovo, Samora

Machel, Marikana, Thabo Mbeki, Klipfontein Glebe settlement, Marconi Beam, QQ Section, RR Section, TR Section, BM Section, BT Section, Enkanini, Covid19, Sanitizer, Is'fonyo (Mask in Xhosa), Phumlani Mqhashi, Imizamo Yethu, Brown Farms, Nomzamo, and Vrygrond just to mentioned but a few in Cape Town. What informs this posture from our leaders, we hazard to ask? The zealously to seek approval from the dominant White establishment is a result of a lack of



cultural confidence in our cause of the National Democratic revolution.

Yes, we must demand more of our comrades. Yes, we must alleviate the failures of municipalities where they exist. But let us not be naïve, nor allow ourselves to be hoodwinked by comparisons that erase history and context. When President Thabo Mbeki addressed the historic January 8 gathering in Cicira, eMthatha, he reminded us that the ANC's central task is not to posture about others, but to self-critique, to renew, and to lead.

That is the roll call that matters. Not the noise of night school graduates seeking self-glorification, but the roll call of history from the 1998 White Paper on Local Government. This policy document remains a pivotal South African policy that established the foundation for a new, developmental local government. It envisages an accountable, responsive, effective, and efficient system in meeting community needs. As a result, key legislation includes the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (2000), which outlines revenue-raising powers, Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, the Act provides a framework for establishing different types of municipalities (e.g., metropolitan, district, local) based on the specific needs of an area. In the other hand, the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA, 2003), enforces sound financial management, budgeting. In addition, the Act is central in ensuring accountability and enforcing regulation released by National Treasury and Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA).

Everyone who understands local government will know the

1998 White Paper on Local Government which is under review now assumed that municipalities would be able to fund 90% of their recurrent expenditure out of their own revenues. Councillors through South African Local Government Association (SALGA) have been saying this assumption is no longer valid: municipal own revenue only covered 60% of recurrent expenditure. As a result, the 9.9% of the national fiscus allocated to local government is inadequate for local government to fulfil its mandate. On the revenue side, municipalities are also undertaking mandates that are unfunded or underfunded.

All summits of councillors under SALGA dominated by ANC councillors who understand the challenges and solutions of local governments have been making a clarion call for the vertical allocation of funds to local government

would need to increase from the current projected 10.2% to 17.8% of the fiscus enable local government to fulfil its mandate under the moderate revenue potential scenario. This would represent an increase of 74% above current fiscal transfers to local government. The National Treasury should consider the distribution of a portion of the fuel levy currently allocated to the national sphere to non-metro municipalities providing the roads function. National Treasury should facilitate and intergovernmental dialogue on addressing the additional R50 billion per year of unfunded mandates of local government.

It is there, in the trenches, that the ANC must reclaim its intellectual and moral leadership. ■

**Andile Lungisa** is a member of the National Executive Committee.



**ANC PRESIDENT  
CDE CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

**ROLL CALL  
OF ANC  
COUNCILLORS**

**Reaffirming the pledge taken in Ekurhuleni in 2021.**

**Our councillors will:**

- **Serve the people with dignity**
- **Lead with honesty and respect**
- **Uphold accountability and consequence management**
- **Accelerate delivery for all communities**

**The ANC lives. The ANC leads. Renewal continues.**

**REBUILDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

113<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY | 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY | FREEDOM CHARTER 1996-2022

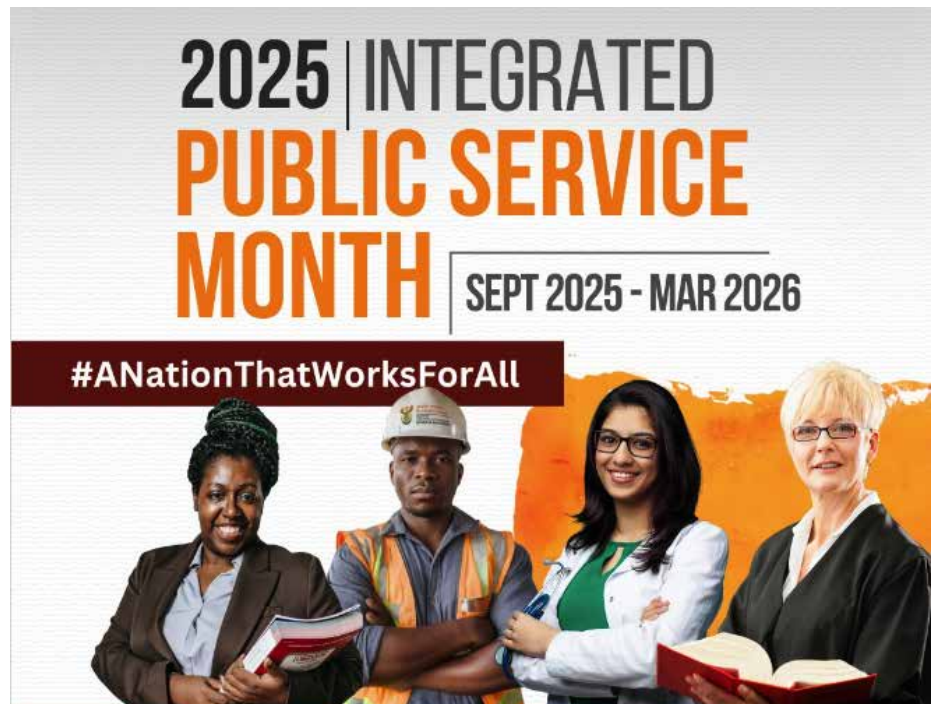
Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli House, HQ

# A Capable State Requires Effective State Institutions With Skilled Public Servants Who Are Committed to the Public Good and are able to Deliver Quality Services To Our People

■ By **LAZARUS KAGISO MOKGOSI**

**T**HE Month of September is recognised annually as the Public Service Month. During this month we celebrate men and women of high ethical standards who continue to serve our province with pride and distinction. As we mark the end of this important month I am reminded me of a book written by **Ayi Kwei Armah**, titled *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. Set in post-colonial Ghana, this novel portrays the decay and moral compromise of a society consumed by greed and corruption. The protagonist, an unnamed man who works in the railway, is an idealist who resists participating in the country's rampant cases of malfeasance becoming an outcast for his integrity.

In his weekly newsletter, His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa intimated that, this month offers the country an opportunity to reflect on the vital role played by public servants in the delivery of services to our people and in particular the most vulnerable by being incorruptible. He acknowledged the significant challenges facing the public sector and in particular poor service delivery, and corruption, where in many parts of the state, the values of



**Batho Pele – Putting People First** – have been eroded. President Ramaphosa further maintained a fully functional public service remains the most potent instrument that is critical for socio-economic development.

As I pondered on the words of the President I wondered if he had this book in mind when he penned his weekly newsletter.

In the last few days our province launched the Integrated Public Service Month held under theme:

*“Professionalising the Public Service to build trust and restore confidence in Government.”* This launch came exactly two weeks after we had a frank and candid discussion with Cabinet on the state of governance in the province. While there is enormous work confronting us to reposition the province, particularly in addressing the scourge of unemployment and poverty affecting our communities, provincial audit outcomes serve as glimmer hope on our continued endeavours in keeping up to this year's theme.

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Our concern however is the state of local governance, which remains crucial in improving the lives of our people through uninterrupted provision of services such as water, electricity, sanitation and roads among others. As we mark twenty-nine years since its establishment, we must not relent in our advocacy for a local government that serve its people selflessly with dignity and respect. We are however encouraged by the intervention measures employed by both the national and provincial government in addressing administrative challenges stifling the developmental trajectory of municipalities.

Our government has always been intentional in developing and institutionalising reforms, directives, themes and programmes that are aimed at ensuring the delivery of quality services to the citizens. This assertion is given credence by Priority 3 of the Medium Term Development Plan which is centred on building A Capable, Ethical and Development State, with emphasis on a strong public service, which is capacitated with responsive and meritocratic professionals that can help the province achieve its developmental objectives.

As part of seeing to the full implementation of this priority we can confirm that all Accounting Officers have been vetted as part of our ongoing efforts to deter various cases of malfeasance in our Departments. We have instructed all Accounting Officers that no new appointments at senior management level will proceed without formal clearance from the Security Services or an appropriate security structure. This will extend to all supply chain functionaries across the provincial



# BATHO PELE

## PRINCIPLES

*"We belong, we care, we serve."*

- 1 CONSULTATION**  
 You should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services you receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.
- 2 SERVICE STANDARDS**  
 You should be told what level and quality of public services you will receive so that you are aware of what to expect.
- 3 ACCESS**  
 You and all citizens should have equal access to the services to which you are entitled.
- 4 COURTESY**  
 You should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
- 5 INFORMATION**  
 You should be given full, accurate information about the public services you are entitled to receive.
- 6 OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY**  
 You should be told how national and provincial departments run, how much they cost and who is in charge.
- 7 REDRESS**  
 If the promised standard of service is not delivered, you should be offered an apology a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy. When complaints are made, you should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

administration. We expect this process to be concluded by end of this year and this is not negotiable.

These efforts are primarily aimed at strengthening the efficacy of the state.

A capable state requires effective coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to the public good and capable of delivering consistently high – quality services in the achievement of the nation's development objectives.

Therefore, it is our responsibility to ensure that people that we employ to serve our communities are skilled, properly qualified and ethical, and will further serve with dedication.

It is for this reason that I agree with the President in his introductory remarks of the Framework on Professionalisation of the Public Service where he stated the following, that *“the Public Service is diverse, with a huge range of skills, qualifications, and capabilities. Many Public Servants have specialised skills that are necessary for effective provision of services. It is therefore not necessarily the case that we need a smaller public service: what we need is a fit-for-purpose public service with suitable skills, a professional ethic, and commitment to serving the people”*.

In building trust and restoring confidence in government the professionalization framework further requires that, as government operationalises Batho Pele Revitalisation Strategy, more focus should be on investing in strategic partnerships with institutions of Higher Education and Private Sector. This will go a

long way in assisting the public sector to optimise the effectiveness of the State and enhance service delivery. The 2025 -2026 Integrated Public Service Month (IPSM) Framework has identified weak service delivery, corruption, poor accountability, and declining public trust as hindrances in our developmental trajectory. In addressing these challenges, a litany of intervention measures has been developed and will run until the end of the financial year. This is primarily aimed at ensuring that the needs of our people are being attended to and there is value for money in this regard.

This will further be given impetus by following an integrated approach and utilisation of the multidisciplinary teams in order to strengthen intergovernmental cooperation through models such as the District Development Model (DDM).

Therefore, Forums for Batho Pele

and Accelerated Service Delivery Plan-Thuntsha Lerole in departments and municipalities must be strengthened and given the necessary support to ensure proper and seamless coordination of service delivery mechanisms and interventions in the province. Through the implementation of Phase 5 of Thuntsha Lerole we have demonstrated that nothing is insurmountable and together we can find lasting solutions to challenges such as overcrowding in schools, a lack of water, road infrastructure and social ills such as teenage pregnancy and drug use.

We need to pull together in building a public service that serves its people with integrity and has the aspirations of our people as one of its apex priorities in realising a better life for all. ■

**Lazarus Kagiso Mokgosi** is the Premier of the North West Province.



**ANC POLICY, MONITORING, EVALUATION & RESEARCH (PMER)**

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**[basic.services@anc1912.org.za](mailto:basic.services@anc1912.org.za)**

**Issues will be escalated to the relevant department, municipality, or province.**

113<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY 70<sup>TH</sup> FREEDOM CHARTER 1994-2024

Issued by the ANC Chief Albert Lutshuli, HQ

# We might be law-abiding, but are we being ethical?

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

**T**HE search for saints among sinners in the broad church needs to acknowledge some harsh realities. First, the law sets the minimum standard of ethical conduct at the lowest point. We all defer to the rule of law, not just to salvage ourselves from murky situations but in stark recognition of the need for consistency and justice in the application of the set of rules.

Second, this search for saints is sometimes compromised by the hunters themselves not necessarily being beyond reproach. In the eyes of the public they may resemble those being hunted, that they hunt for devils with horns that protrude further than theirs. Consequently, the public square becomes a stage for a public spectacle of battles fought by rivals clothed in fake moral and ethical regalia.

Our eagerness to use individuals as markers of ethical failings has not fermented into a strong theoretical foundation that seeks to achieve a moral compass. From this foundation, a vision for an ideal ethical organisation and society could have been imagined. Through this obtrusive diversion from the norm and by attempting to theorise moral cleansing through people, we risk being perceived as another faction or engaged in a witchhunt for the



biggest sinners. It becomes a battle of proportions of wrongdoing.

At the level of the abstract, what will the just, ethical and morally upright broad church look like? In practice, what must it manifest? What are our 10 commandments? Further muddying the waters is the conflation of law, ethics and morality. The law, though imbued with the values of the cultural majority (those with power to shape ideas and decisions), remains a safer refuge.

Consistent application fosters a sense of uniformity and justice. It has established principles of “due process” and “judicial review” as safeguards. The other

two processes lack such protective shields. Ethics, conceptually standing above the law, function as an ethereal ideal for reasonable people who desire to see their fellow beings do the right thing, even when no-one is watching. It presupposes a moral compass guiding us towards just, equitable and transparent choices, regardless of circumstances. They serve as both the spear and shield against our own desires and dilemmas.

However, to avoid perceived or real arbitrariness, ethics must be envisioned and established before being applied. The Batho Pele statement in Singapore is: “Will you treat your mother the same way?” This is the ethical

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foundation on which the public service is professionalised in that Asian country. The perennial questions of all ages are: can ethics be taught or they are intrinsic to consciousness, like a baby learning to suckle? Is knowledge of conflicts of interest and how to avoid it innate? Is corruption hereditary?

One-eyed suburban consciousness disagrees – it views politicians as ethically ready-made technical beings who are uninfluenced by the broader society they live in. Yet we know that in the corporate world ethics are codified, taught and enforced. The moral (third) dimension, often confused with law and ethics, carries the most peril. Moral judgements are prone to deep bias and selectivity. They can violate the principle of fairness by attributing value based solely on disposition and feelings. Moral judgment often lacks strong normative foundations, making it even more precarious than ethics.

Those who attempt to draw from



religion risk a descent into prejudice and double standards, as religious institutions themselves can become havens for philanderers, scammers and nudists. So, what is to be done? Cleansing ceremonies (renewal as we call it in the broad church) hold little power without first addressing the spiritual dimensions. When families gather months after a loved one's passing, recognising their spiritual connection, they perform rituals to heal

their souls. This includes offering a final opportunity for atonement (a concept currently absent from the august movement's open discourse on second chances), rapprochement and sanctioning. Only then, with the belief that the departed rests with the ancestors, can they move towards addressing the material dimensions of healing, such as matters concerning the estate and prospective heirs.

Perhaps, as a long shot, there is a need to return to open discussions – both in discussion papers, boardrooms, branches and on the streets – to grapple with ethics as an abstract and the ideal panacea for the moral decay. But without a common understanding, the discussions will vacillate, change form and content, depending on who is involved. We should define and describe what we mean and desire when we talk about renewal and an ethical-based organisation.

What is the minimum standard? What tools can we use to gauge ethical conduct? How can we demonstrate that ethics are more effective as self-regulators than tools of judgment?



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We must seek conceptual and practical clarity regarding the differences and relationships between ethics and the law. Ethics, being the higher bar, unlike the law (the minimum standard), are best applied by individuals using their agency, as opposed to relying on enforcing agencies who use the legal bar to make determinations of right and wrong. It may be legal to buy a car for the mayor, but it may be judged as unethical to prioritise it when the municipality's garbage trucks are broken and sewers blocked.

Ethics tend to be normative, as a natural law guiding rational people. They transcend time and space, acting as an internal compass that guides moral choices.

Ethical leadership requires just, unimpeachable and upright individuals as vanguards. Ethics are a dream, an aspiration, not a kangaroo court where the perceived or actual powerful wield them as a tool of control. If ethics are to permeate the air we breathe within the broad church, we must define and describe how an ultra-liberal society that champions social justice while celebrating avaricious materialism can create members and leaders who defy the pervasive force of *"I want that too"*. Otherwise, the public perception risks becoming one where the search for the devil has long ceased, replaced by a hunt to eliminate the one with the longest horns.

By not achieving conceptual clarity on what we expect from each other, we risk being seen as unjust and inconsistent. Rampant factionalism makes matters worse, as it weakens our defences against those who might have acted unethically (another pitfall of subjectivity in the absence of well-established codes).

As one wise woman from the troubled Inanda ghetto aptly phrased it: *"The ethics debate in the movement is like the infidelity sermon led by a charismatic church pastor who has three young children outside of wedlock. They hunt carrying salt and knife."*

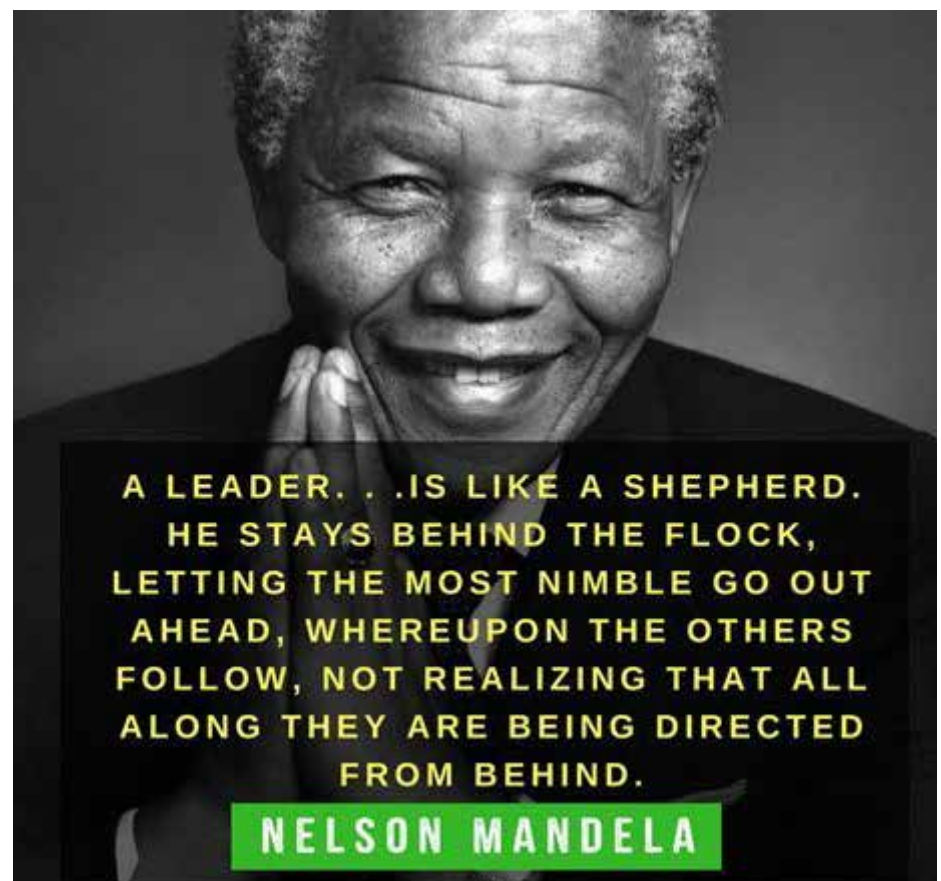
The search for saints amongst sinners in Gomorrah is a Herculean act of bravery, but the only catch might be the weakest (those who get careless are caught). Punishing the weakest might offer fleeting satisfaction, but ultimately leaves everyone wondering why things have not changed. Right now, when looking at us all, the masses see porous borders on all counts: the law, ethics and morals.

May a hundred ideas contend and a million voices speak. After all Nelson Mandela told us, we are all sinners trying to do better.

The conundrum is, *kuyashoda* and *kumnandi!* As supporters of the broad church, we are a society and society is us. Not forgetting that the ethics discourse in the polity has become a TikTok (a meaningless fad) video for many members and supporters. Public displays of absurdity are no longer the preserve of the lumpen, as the most senior commit dastardly acts of absurdity.

The contemporary moment and clarion calls for renewal require breakthroughs in the study of society, its pulse and mutating DNA – and these are the variables we should compute in our theorisation of the ideal ethical organisation. In the ruling party of Singapore, having an extramarital affair constitutes misconduct. In China having poor people in your constituency is unethical.

Are these the ideal standards we wish to adopt? ■



# The unbranding/rebranding of the ANC

*Most people cannot handle the truth, or would rather not*

■ By **PELO-GO-TLALA WA GA LESO**

**WARNING: THIS ARTICLE CONTAINS STRONG LANGUAGE.**



“THE people have spoken, the bastards!” This was the bitter, petty sulk by US politician Dick Tuck as he conceded electoral defeat in California. While hardly the worst thing any politician has ever said, it reflects the Western brand of American politics: at best, entertaining with its brutal honesty; at worst, just brutal. Not so here in South Africa, our revolutionary home. In the immortal words of one Luthuli House firebrand, “Here you behave, or else you jump!”

Our ANC councillors are under pressure. Not only must they reverse a rapid decline in electoral support, but now they also face a decline in confidence from leaders within their own party.

What used to be a fiercely guarded ANC brand, where “robust debates” stayed internal, has become a public spectacle. This was evident at the recent gathering of ANC councillors, where leaders admonished their councillors.

First, the sharp-shooting National Chairperson Gwede Mantashe scolded disruptive members who kept singing while proceedings were underway: “They can sing well, but competence dololo!” If you know the irritable “tiger” and understand marketing speak, you’ll agree this was “on brand”.

However, the biggest shockwaves across national social media came from the senior-most

brand custodian, ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa.

In an ill-advised attempt to motivate his party’s councillors to up-skill and compare notes, he referenced municipalities allegedly better run by the opposition DA.

“What is it that they are doing that is better than what we are doing?” he asked, perhaps rhetorically. Then he answered himself: “There’s nothing wrong with saying we want to go and see what Cape Town... Stellenbosch are doing.”

Could the president still be in National Dialogue mode, viewing all S’effricans as South African? Unfortunately, this was at an ANC

event, with over 4000 councillors gathered to reflect on party renewal, service delivery and electoral gains.

The last thing they expected to hear was how useless they are. So, what's all the fuss about – was it wrong for Ramaphosa to tell his brutal truth? Yes, especially him, and especially so brutally. Most normal people cannot handle the truth, or would rather not, especially if brutal. Straight-talking is self-indulgent, and can cause cognitive dissonance. Communication best practice prefers “*correctional services*” to the more trauma-inducing “*jail*” or “*prison*”. The former lands softly, is more therapeutic, and preserves dignity. Same meaning, different attitude.

What is wrong with acknowledging the opposition? In brand communication, much like politics, everything.

“*I can name it (DA) here because there's nothing wrong with competition,*” pleaded a defensive, truthful Ramaphosa.

As a golden rule, you do not mention the competition (never mind compliment it), except in jest. The free mileage only dilutes your share of the audience or, worse, unbrands your brand, whereas with wit, one may divert attention away from a winner and towards oneself.

The Gen Xs and Ys might remember a challenger car brand that cleverly claimed to “*beat the bends*” without naming its German rival. All glory to itself.

Will President Ramaphosa's utterings hurt the ANC brand, especially ahead of next year's local elections? And can the damage be reversed? It depends. A brand

is a measure of perception (in the mind) and has nothing to do with absolute truth, never mind whether DA-led municipalities are indeed better run. However, if the same unflattering message from the ANC president resurfaces repeatedly, people will start to believe it.

The DA is already seizing the day, with its federal leader posting a caricature of Ramaphosa jogging in DA colours. Brand perceptions are built and reinforced over time and at high frequency, just like adverts.

PR might tackle reputation management with a retractive statement like “*It was taken out of context,*” but adverts are flighted repeatedly until the brand is fully immersed in your subconscious. Before you know it, you're singing along involuntarily to Cocomelon jingles or molo-molo.

Could President Ramaphosa have handled this better, perhaps by referencing exemplary ANC-led municipalities? Maybe. But he would have had to dig deep.

In reality, it will take more than such trolling by the DA to meaningfully gain from the ANC's stumble. Service delivery that addresses real issues, done consistently, is the only redemption.

And the President knows this: “*The transformation of our society relies on what you do where our people live... If not, we are dead,*” he cautioned.

At next year's local elections, the people will speak again. Let's hope all the “bastards” will listen. ■

**Pelo-go-tlala wa ga Leso** is a brand communications specialist.





# Master-Slave Dialectics on the Airwaves of 947: Anele vs. Helen

■ By **ERIC GABORONE**

If Hegel were alive in Johannesburg in 2025, he would have cancelled all philosophy lectures and tuned his philosophical ears to 947 Radio, for in that interview between Helen Zille and Anele Mdoda, the master–slave dialectic wasn’t just theorized — it strutted into the studio, took a seat, and ordered a cappuccino.

Here was Helen Zille: former mayor of Cape Town, national chair of the DA, perennial defender of colonial nostalgia, a woman whose every utterance about “refugees” in Cape Town still drips with the vinegar of racial hierarchy. And opposite her sat Anele Mdoda: radio queen, black, female, unapologetically from the very “*refugee stock*” Zille once derided. The stage was set: the mistress

of white liberal respectability versus the voice of the historically oppressed, broadcast live to the City of Gold.

## **The Masters’ Expectation: A Sweetheart Tea Party**

The establishment had already written the script. Anele, as a black woman in the media, was supposed to smile, giggle, and throw Helen questions as soft as Clifton’s sea breeze. She was supposed to be the cheerful servant, fluffing the pillows of white political comfort. After all, mainstream media in South Africa often polishes DA’s halo while sharpening knives for the ANC.

But alas, Anele hadn’t read the script. Instead, she tore it to shreds and set it ablaze with di-

alectical fire.

## **The Slave Speaks Back**

With composure sharper than a Soweto grandmother’s tongue, Anele confronted Zille about her infamous statement that black South Africans in Cape Town were “*refugees*” from the Eastern Cape. She then twisted the knife with a Johannesburg edge: “*If you win the mayorship here, will you also call black migrants from rural Limpopo or Eastern Cape refugees in the City of Gold?*”

The master was cornered. For the first time, Zille – normally fluent in the slippery dialect of liberal evasion – looked like a colonial settler hearing the drumbeat of rebellion outside her farmhouse. The dialectic had turned: the



slave, through critical questioning, asserted her humanity and in so doing forced the master to recognize a subject she could not control.

### **Suburbs vs. Townships: The Geography of Apartheid Revisited**

Anele pressed further. Why, under Zille's mayoral reign in Cape Town, did Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain languish while Clifton and Camps Bay sparkled like colonial baubles? Why did the DA seem to serve the cocktail-sipping elite while leaving the black townships to rot in sewage and gang violence?

This wasn't mere questioning. It was a dialectical hammer smashing the illusion of DA's "clean governance." Because behind the poster of accountability lies the structural truth of white capital pampering itself while black people in townships drown in neglect.

### **Corruption and the "Clean Audit" Fetish**

Anele raised the specter of DA corruption – something DA

spin-doctors prefer to bury under the mantra of "clean audits." But a clean audit means nothing when governance is dirty with class bias. After all, the Titanic probably had a flawless safety certificate before it sank.

### **The Dialectical Shock**

To the establishment, Anele's performance was blasphemous. A black woman – whose historic script is "domestic worker," "yes madam," "background noise" – had the audacity to interrogate the white liberal madam live on air.

The slave had spoken truth not in whispers but through the loudspeaker of Johannesburg's airwaves.

This is the dialectical inversion Hegel foresaw: the slave, by laboring and thinking critically, becomes the true subject of history. The master, comfortable in privilege, becomes dependent on the slave for recognition. In that studio, it was Helen Zille, not Anele, who appeared subordinate – scrambling to defend her record, gasping for moral coherence.

### **Historical Materialism of the Airwaves**

From a historical materialist lens, the exchange was not just personal; it was structural. It represented the clash between old colonial privilege (white liberal elites defending capital and racial hierarchy) and the new consciousness of black assertion. Anele's questions were not only her own; they echoed the collective frustrations of millions in Khayelitsha, Mitchells Plain, Alexandra, and Soweto.

It was, in short, a mini-insurrection on air, a battle of ideas fought in dialectical volleys. And while Helen may still clutch her pearls and donors, Anele walked away as the embodiment of the slave's triumph: a subject who refuses to be silenced, who dares to question the mistress, and who forces recognition through the power of critique.

### **Conclusion: The Dialectics March On**

The 947 interview was not just journalism. It was Hegel in action, Fanon on FM, Biko on the breakfast show.

It was the inversion of centuries of silence. For once, the black woman did not serve tea to the madam; she poured it boiling hot into the cracks of liberal hypocrisy.

And in that moment, on Johannesburg's airwaves, the master-slave dialectic tilted. Helen Zille, the supposed master, was reduced to defense, while An-ele, the supposed subordinate, emerged as the architect of truth.

History, as Marx would remind us, is not written by the masters forever. Sometimes, it is spoken live on radio by the "slave" who refused to stay silent.

### TO THE RESIDENTS OF GREATER JOHANNESBURG

Let us not be fooled by the sweet talk and liberal perfume sprayed on old colonial instincts. The leopard never loses its spots.

Helen Zille has shown us, time and again, who she truly is – from calling black South Africans "refugees" in their own land, to prioritizing rich white enclaves over struggling townships, to whitewashing genocide when donor cheques are at stake. Johannesburg, the City of Gold built by black labor and soaked in the sweat of the oppressed, deserves better than recycled apartheid apologists dressed in liberal rhetoric.

Johannesburgers must totally and unequivocally reject Helen Zille's mayorship – for to hand her the keys to this city would be to let the master re-chain the slave in the very house that freedom built. ■

**Aluta Continua!!!!**



## BUSINESS DAY EDITORIAL

18 SEPTEMBER 2025

# What clean audits don't tell us

*The auditor-general's statistics on municipalities are always shocking, but the picture is probably worse, considering the external auditors just deal with the accuracy of financial reporting.*

It's a familiar yet still shocking statistic: only 41 of the 257 municipalities (16%) in South Africa received a clean audit opinion in the auditor-general's latest report.

However, the picture is probably much worse. A clean audit does not necessarily reflect effective performance. It simply means that the external auditors have found the financial statements to be a true and fair representation, "free from material misstatement", of the organisation's financial position, in accordance with the required accounting standards.

That's all — necessary, but by no means very helpful.

The external auditors, in adjudging a clean audit, are simply dealing with the accuracy of financial reporting. They always make it clear that they are inspecting the books on a selective test basis — how could it be otherwise?

A clean audit does not guarantee that a municipality is not wasting resources, engaging in corrupt practices or failing to deliver services. A clean audit does not tell us that the organisation is efficient, ethical or doing the right things.

It is the internal auditors who have, or should have, the broader watchdog role. As the Institute of Internal Auditors South Africa puts it, they "often have input into strategic planning, market analysis, compliance and change management". Internal audit "is essentially not a financial discipline". It is expected to "evaluate and report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of management policies".

Therefore, to be told of a clean audit without also getting a report from internal audit (where it functions at all in government departments) is like hearing one hand clapping. ■

# Based on Recent Judgments, is Constitutional Democracy Still Preferred Over Parliamentary Democracy?

■ By **SEPHOKA DAVID SEKGOBELA**

**T**HE South African Constitution is the supreme law of the land. It is trite that our Constitution established the independence of the judiciary, and established a democratic system of governance.

Our Constitution is indeed a local product written by “leading indigenous African legal minds”. The ANC played a pivotal role in the development of the Constitution that also “encapsulates values of the 1955 Freedom Charter”.

One of the proponents of the Constitution, Prof William Gumede, credits it by saying, “The South African Constitution is one of the greatest indigenous African legal documents ever written – admired by many cultures, societies, and countries, including Western ones outside the continent”. In the 2021 article, “Constitution Turns 25: Never Allow That Anything Diminishes This Noble Product”, former President, Thabo Mbeki, argued that, “The Constitution, which marks its 25th anniversary on Saturday, needs to be protected”. He wrote, inter alia, that “Regrettably, as we discuss the specific matters of Constitutional Democracy and local government, recently, some claiming to belong to the very same ANC which was the principal author of this 1996 Consti-



*tion, have sought to challenge precisely these pillars of the Constitution, among others”.*

Like Thabo Mbeki, former Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Ronald Lamola, equally wrote another article for the same event, “**25 Years of Constitutional Democracy: We Must Interrogate Those Who Attack the Judiciary**”. He stated, “We must hold those among us accountable who have surrendered the will of the people and our constitutional democracy at the altar of personal gain and corruption”.

However, there is a perception

that, as South Africans, we are victims of our own laws, and the worst culprit of those laws is the Constitution itself.

It is unfortunate that proponents of the Constitution are intolerant of criticism of the Constitution, as if it is sacrosanct, and are using unsavoury terms to describe those having different views about it – “populists”, “naysayers”, “opportunists”, “corrupt”, “incompetent”, etc. For instance, Professor William Gumede took a swipe at critics of the Constitution – “The persistent attacks on the Constitution by populists, the incompetent and the corrupt have undermined the public legitimacy

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*of the supreme law, unleashing a breakdown of rule and law generally, allowing competing despotic governance regimes such as customary law, local strongman “law”, and gangster “law” to gain traction as alternatives to the official democratic Constitution”.*

Is the Constitution not supposed to be criticized? We are human, and are bound to see things differently. We need to encourage debate, not to stifle it. Therefore, instead of muzzling others into silence, those who know better must not relent enlightening those who are not equally informed about the issues at stake. They should let their light shine.

It is undisputed fact that the ANC played a pivotal role in developing the Constitution, but what if there are now compelling circumstances to change it? In Constitutional Democracy, not even parliament is sovereign, and actions of the President, legislature and executive could be, and are in fact often struck down by another arm of government, i.e. the judiciary, as being “invalid”, “unconstitutional”, “irrational”, “unlawful”, etc.

Another perception is that under Constitutional Democracy, the Constitution seems to protect minority rights more than it does for the majority, because parliament duly passes laws, and the other arm of government, the judiciary, reverses them by declaring them, and thus undermining the doctrine of “Separation of powers”. It is believed that minorities, including right-wing apartheid beneficiaries, criminals and illegal immigrants, seem to be enjoying more rights and protection of the Constitution than majority of ordinary South Africans, because they win almost all cases brought before the courts against government

policies and/or legislation. The government’s decision to attain socio-economic transformation is always successfully challenged in courts by minorities and apartheid beneficiaries. In other words, anti-transformation forces are reversing those little democratic gains attained after the demise of apartheid – affirmative action, B-BBEE, employment equity, etc. and the judiciary, especially the Constitutional Court, i.e. the apex court, is lending a helping hand in that regard by declaring some of the duly passed pieces of legislation and executive policy directives “unconstitutional”, “unlawful”, and “invalid”.

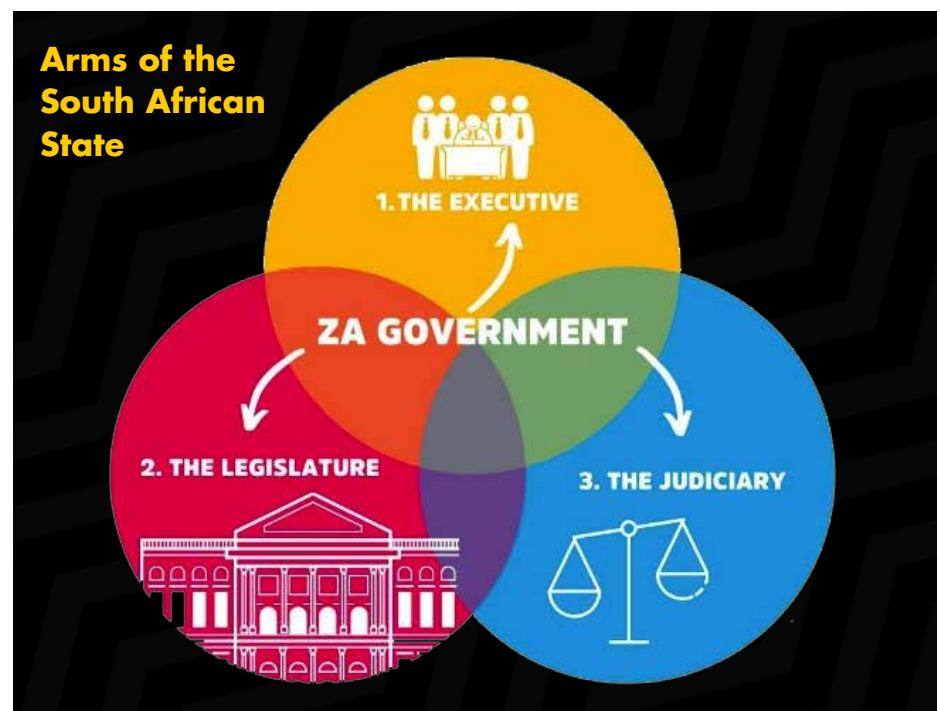
The Constitution might have been promulgated with the best intentions, but it is turning to be the worst piece of legislation against the masses and/or good governance. Under Constitutional Democracy, there is seemingly hostile judiciary wielding extensive powers over other arms of government. In some instances, the judiciary is even (mis)using the Constitution to promote illegality. For instance, former Minister

of Home Affairs, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, was accused of many things by NGOs representing interests of foreigners, including illegal immigrants, and his decisions, as the executive, to arrest and deport illegal foreigners were challenged in court, and declared “unlawful” and “unconstitutional”.

Where on earth can one enjoy rights in a foreign country without any form of documentation? It can only be in South Africa, because “South Africa belongs to everyone who lives in it”, as espoused in the Constitution. That High Court’s decision of declaring Home Affairs directive not to extend Zimbabwean Exemption Permits “unconstitutional”, and not to arrest and deport undocumented Zimbabwean immigrants back to their country, but instead allowing them to remain in South Africa illegally, for whatever reason, was absurd.

Some of the decisions of the courts, including the Constitutional Court, are themselves perceived to be “irrational”, and amount to “judicial overreach”.

### Arms of the South African State



Example of judicial overreach is found in implementation of Prevention of Illegal Eviction From and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, 1998 (Act No. 19 of 1998), (the PIE Act), which provides for the prohibition of unlawful eviction and procedures for eviction of unlawful occupiers. In terms of the PIE Act, an eviction can only be ordered by a court if it is just and equitable to make that order.

Despite there being no obligation on a landowner to provide alternative accommodation to an unlawful occupier, the courts declare evictions “unlawful” for lack of alternative accommodation. It is absurd that the property owner has to provide alternative accommodation to people occupying properties illegally, because it is “unlawful and unconstitutional” to remove illegal occupiers without providing alternative accommodation for them. Why should the property owner provide alternative accommodation to someone illegally occupying his/her property?

Contrary to African culture, the Constitutional Court recently declared that men could assume their wives’ surnames – something totally un-African phenomenon. This might sound trivial to be concerned about, due to individual freedom of choice. However, it has far-reaching implications as it might lead to foreign men entering into “*transactional marriage arrangements*” with financially desperate South African women, and subsequently assuming their purported wives’ surnames, leading to lot of Nigerians, Pakistanis, Chinese, Ethiopians, etc., especially those with evil intentions, carrying South African surnames.

On the other hand, whatever was taught in the past in Family Law, also referred to as, Law of Hus-

band and Wife, and Customary Law, or, Indigenous Law, has to be unlearned and/or taken out of our legal system. Textbooks will have to be rewritten to keep pace with the latest developments in jurisprudence.

Former MEC of Health in Limpopo, now Limpopo Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, was castigated for speaking out the truth regarding illegal immigrants flocking South Africa just for medical treatments, at high taxpayers’ cost. As a result thereof, our health facilities are overcrowded and health workers overwhelmed, and nothing should be said about the situation, because that would be xenophobic.

The Constitutional Court has also declared that children born of foreign parents in South Africa, legal or otherwise, could assume South African citizenship.

We normally do not take keen interest in the number of babies born at our public health facilities on daily basis, except, of course, for the so-called Christmas’ or New Year’s babies. Statistics indicate that in the recent past, majority of babies born in South African health facilities are born to foreign mothers – legal or otherwise.

Observations have also been made that, due to better health care facilities in South Africa, as compared to immediate neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Mozambique, and Swaziland, in particular, expectant women from neighbouring countries cross borders into South Africa, just to give birth in South African health facilities. Therefore, all those children born of foreign parents would now assume South African citizenship, by vir-

tue of being born on South African soil. At the rate that those foreign mothers are illegally flocking into South Africa just to give birth, it would not take long before the population of children born to foreign parents far outnumber legitimate South African children.

Every system, including Constitutional Democracy, is subject to abuse. Hence, we need to discuss whether Constitutional Democracy is still preferred than Parliamentary Democracy under these prevailing circumstances.

Thabo Mbeki is saying, “*In reality, what is suggested here is the abandonment of the principle that the Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic, thus the restoration of the unfettered authority of Parliament and therefore the complete freedom of any elected majority party to set such governance rules as it wishes*”, which is not necessarily the case.

Prof Gumede is correct in saying that, “*What is clear is that there is a profound lack of knowledge among South Africans about the Constitution*”.

In conclusion, the way things are panning out, it is just a matter of time before the so-called “*best Constitution in the world*” declares the whole Bible, not just a specific chapter or verse, “*unconstitutional*” and “*unlawful*”. Perhaps it is only then that people would wake up from their drunken stupor to realise that we are indeed in deep trouble with this runaway free-for-all Constitution. ■

**Sephoka David Sekgobela** is a member of the ANC (King Nyabela Mahlangu Branch, Ward 5, Montana, Greater Tshwane Region).

# Why brand these leftovers African Cuisine?

■ By **SELLO SHAI-MORULE**

**H**ERITAGE Day was first celebrated on September 24, 1995, as a national public holiday in South Africa to recognize and commemorate the country's diverse cultural heritage and foster unity after the end of apartheid. Two days ago, we marked the 31st instalment of Heritage Day. As usual we have seen the display of African attire, food, song and dance, that's all. Few minutes later we will then be back to our colonial blinkers. We shall again put them on to cover our eyes of shame like we did decades ago, so that we do not see our real heritage, vast ancestral land laying along the road – the land, our food basket. Our eyes are completely moved off the ball as others continue to till our fertile land unconditionally. Since we took over as the African National Congress, we have been treating our heritage (our land) as a by-the-way issue. We have not been serious about our land. Those who stole our land, they have even gone to an extent of enclosing our animals, so we pay to see our natural God-given possessions.

Yearly on 24 September, this important day endeavors to revive, resuscitate, recognizes and celebrate the cultural wealth of our nation. We usually celebrate this day by remembering the heritage of the many cultures that make up the population of our beautiful country. Year in year out, we witness different events organized in South Africa to commemorate



this day and that includes, and not limited to, so-called African Cuisine. Previously we have branded useless and unhealthy meat portions from cattle, sheep, goat, pork, chicken feet and heads, cow heals, cow heads, mathumbu and mala mogodu – entrails, as African Cuisine whilst those who came from the west to this rich continent with nothing, continues to pamper themselves with portly beef steak, oxtail, lamb chops, ribs and ovambo chicken of our African soil.

Anyhow the problem started when we were dispossessed of our ancestral land by political aliens, the settlers – when we were taken by force to their land of birth as slaves to build their towns and cities. Some of our brothers and sisters who went through terrible weather in transit to the Queen's land were dumped into the troubled waters of the Indian Ocean and the dark stomach of the deepest Pacific Ocean. Even

today on some South African farms, innocent farm workers and dwellers who earn next to nothing are still thrown into lion's dens, some are shot and killed, and those perpetrators will always claim that these native people were mistaken for monkeys and dogs. During the sorry era of apartheid many were killed and buried into shallow graves and the ground was levelled so that no one can recognize or detect what is beneath the soil. We are a shocked and terrified nation, our culture and heritage were crushed by the loud sound of the extraneous gun. We still to this day, are struggling to silence the guns because colonizers who are still in our mist, putting on artificial horns and crying crocodile tears claiming to fight for minorities. The hangover of colonization is so powerful, cruel and tremendously treacherous to an extent that the majority of us can't see beyond the sham nowadays. The strength and oomph of fighting

## VIEWPOINT

each other as black people is our daily bread. Hatred of each other is beyond our command. We don't have a heritage that we can proud ourselves with.

The only heritage we have is poverty and starvation hence we claim food scraps as our cuisine. We are beggars in our own land and beggars can't be choosers. We consume what is readily accessible, available and brand the inferior food as African cuisine. We are on our own. It is up to us, to wake up and smell the coffee. Our eyes must be on the ball. We are just sixty million but we have more than 100 political parties, ahead of countries that are double our population. We are a disgrace to the human race. A renowned South African poet Mr Mzwakhe Mbuli in one of his revolutionary poetic stanza once said *"the land was bought but never sold"*. How do you celebrate your heritage without land? How do you practice indigenous healing and access our traditional medicine without land? The question is, who has branded these leftovers African Cuisine? Our African heritage cuisine is can't be referred to these leftovers. We need to reclaim our rich and genuine African heritage cuisine now or never. So-called colonial, apartheid and settlers' master's leftovers cannot be our cuisine. We cannot reduce our rich African heritage cuisine to mathumbu, mala mogodu (entrails), chicken feet and heads, cow heals and heads whilst descendants of settlers who arrived in 1652 in our shores without women, livestock and crops, relishes on hale and hearty beef steak, chicken, pork, lamb and game meat without ruckus. Decolonization of minds also refers to the radical amends of the sorry above status core. September is not just declared a heritage



**Sello Shai-Morule**

month in South Africa because of song and dance.

This sorry yesterday reminds us of a Jamaican political activist, publisher, journalist, entrepreneur and orator Marcus Mosiah Garvey when he said *"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots"*. His brand of black nationalism had three components, unity, pride in the African Cultural heritage and complete autonomy. Significantly deprived of skepticism, we still have a long way to go when it comes to name changes. If we want to celebrate the real African Heritage, we need to change names of all places in South Africa so that the next generation must not even know that Mokopane was Potgietersrus; Mokgopong – Naboomspruit; Mbombela – Nelspruit; Tshwane – Pretoria capital City of Apartheid, Mangaung – Bloemfontein; uMgungundlovu – Pietermaritzburg, Gqeberha – Port Elizabeth; Mashishing – Lydenburg; Mankweng – Turfloop; Modimolle

– Nelstroom; Polokwane – Pietersburg and Mahikeng formerly known as Mafikeng etc. The name Kimberley must go, however the name Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital subsequent to the renaming of Kimberley Hospital and the possible renaming of the Kimberley Airport to Ulysses Godi Modise is forever saluted. Cape Town Airport must be named Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Airport and that revolutionary victory must be realized in our lifetime. We need to reclaim our land, names and our own African Cuisine. The question is, why branding these food leftovers, African Cuisine?

*Ke nna Mogopa, seapanoga, Kwena ya letswai, entsho ya madibadiba e etshelang tlase ga metsi.*

Happy Heritage Month 2025. ■

**Sello Shai-Morule** is the former ANCYL Regional Chairperson (of the former Western Region of Mpumalanga Province).

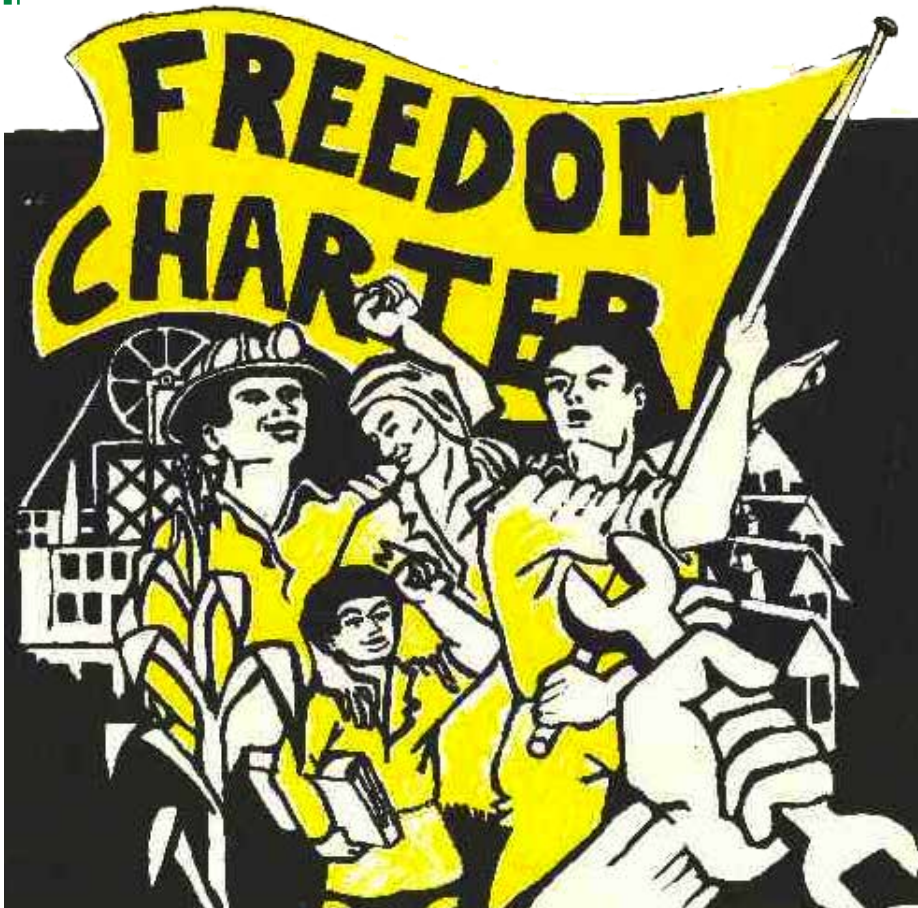


## ANC Veterans and the Freedom Charter | Part 4

# The Road to the 1955 Congress of the People

The National Dialogue aims to create a platform for voices to shape the future of our democracy through meaningful and inclusive conversations.

In 1985, **Raymond Suttner** and **Jeremy Cronin** wrote a book based on interviews with veterans commemorating 30 years of the Freedom Charter. They interviewed veterans at the time about the demands they were collecting in the run-up to the Congress of the People and what happened at this event.



**A**s we go into the National Dialogue and the second convention, some lessons can be learned. In this article, we have edited excerpts from interviews about the experience of collecting demands and what happened at the Congress of the People.

In Langa Township, Cape Town, South African Congress of Trade Union (SACTU) organiser, **Comrade Christmas Tinto** was the Volunteer in Chief. His *“task was to go house to house, to collect demands from the widest range of people.”*

**Tinto:** Even the witchdoctors. I remember I went to a house in which witchdoctors were planning their celebration. We talked to them. They said their demand

is that the government must give them the halls where to dance as witchdoctors. They must have a right to halls, they must have their hospitals where they keep their patients and cure them. That, we wrote it down because it was said whatever section of the people... we must take down their demands.

**Q:** *And traders?*

**Tinto:** There was a shopkeeper at Bunga Square. He demanded that we must have shops in Cape Town where people are, where we choose to have our shops. But most people made demands to have political rights. Though some couldn't mention what kind of political rights. They say political rights to elect our people to go to Parliament.

**Q:** *What happened when you went to a house?*

**Tinto:** Mother and father, you sit here. You talk to them.

**Q:** *What did you say?*

**Tinto:** There is a Congress of the People which is coming, which needs everybody to voice out his or her opinion as to what how does she see this country to look like. If I come to this house, I call those next door to come here. To do the talking to a small group.

*We asked Com T if people sometimes came out with demands that he thought were reactionary. He told a story about being on the Island when black consciousness people came in big numbers and continued:*

**Tinto:** Even there in 1955 there were people who were saying: "Ja, I will agree if we are going to chase the white people away from this country," Talking that



type of language. We didn't call them reactionary as such. Ja, no.

**Q:** *So did you write down such demands, like driving out the whites?*

**Tinto:** I write it down. But I would ask them how they thought such a thing could help...trying to get them to understand better.

*Suttner interviewed veterans Elliot Tshabangu from Soweto, Martin Ramokgadi from Alexandra Township, and AS Chetty from the Natal Midlands, who attended the Congress of the People.*

**Tshabangu:** We were seated there, all of us. Two bricks, two bricks and a long plank. All of us were seated.

**Ramokgadi:** Well, man, it was a mass meeting. Thousands gathered there from all over the country, even from the rural areas. I really started to know how people were moved by the conditions under which we live.

**Chetty:** Just after two, they started the session. They had a band from Johannesburg, ANC guys, they played with a guitar, and they started singing. Eyy, I tell you the way they were singing, the whole crowd started joining in.

Then the conference went on proper. While the procedure was going on they interspersed with a little bit of singing. You know, Lilian Ngoyi and Winnie Mandela and Albertian, and they had somebody from the Cape, a Sappo and a COD group rendering their items.

Every time a session of the Charter took place, then straight away silence and seriousness. Item by item the Charter was read. The National Consultative Conference had already prepared a draft. Then it was thrown open for discussion.

It was done so methodically. If anyone had an amendment, then they came right up to the podium to the mike. Then, after, it was put to the house. Show your hands and all of that.

**Tshabangu:** It continued the whole day. Speakers after speakers. It was my first time to see so many people in one place and saying one thing. All the speakers were saying different words, but meaning the same aim and object.

And the silence was there. Ten thousand people, but there was no coughing business. What was coming from the speaker's mouth everybody was thirsty to swallow that. ■

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

27 September – 3 October 2025

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

### 27 September 1939 Sociologist and liberation theologian Jean-Marc Ela born

Cameroonian sociologist and theologian articulated the Christian foundation for African liberation theology was born in Ebolowa.

### 27 September 1961 Imam Haron killed in detention



Imam Haron was born on the 8th February 1924 in Claremont, Cape Town. He was influenced by the various progressive political trends in South Africa and internationally. He was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Teachers' League of SA, the NEUM and progressive trade unionists such as Ray Alexander. He established the Claremont Muslim Youth Association. When he was appointed Imam of Stegman mosque he initiated the tradition of getting progressive speakers to address his congregation. This tradition persists still today. He was the editor of *Mus-*

*lim News* (from 1960 to 1966). He maintained contact with Alex La Guma, Robert Sobukwe and others. He spoke out when others were silent. He urged his constituency to support the 1960 anti-pass marches; he spoke out in favour of workers on strike and of struggles against the apartheid regime. He was arrested by Spyker van Wyk, tortured for 123 days and died on 27th September 1969. No one was brought to book for his brutal murder. In 2014, Imam Haron was awarded the National Order of Luthuli for his "exceptional contribution to raising awareness of political injustices". The family has decided to apply to reopen the inquest into his murder.

### 27 September 1961 Khaled Al Khamissi born

The Egyptian writer and columnist was born on this day in Cairo. His hitherto three critically acclaimed novels have been translated in over 25 languages. Al Khamissi founded Doum, an institution for critical thinking, as well as story-telling and literary festivals.

### 27 September 1965 Dr Margaret Campbell, Africana collector passed on

Margaret Roach "Killie" Campbell was born in Mount Edgecombe, KZN on 9 September 1881. She was educated at St. Anne's Di-

ocesan College in Natal and St. Leonard's School in Scotland, where she developed a profound interest in history. Campbell was well known for her private collection of Africana, which is made up of items specific to Natal and the Zulu people. She collected manuscripts, books, photographs and maps over her lifetime, and encouraged both settlers and Zulu families to write their family stories, in order to preserve local history. Her collection of historical artefacts has allowed for much research, and she was awarded honorary degrees from the University of Natal and the University of the Witwatersrand for her contribution to historical preservation. She died in Durban on 27 September 1965, and her collection was donated posthumously to the university.

### 27 September 1987 Africa's rapid transit system opens

The first section of the Cairo rapid transit system opens, connecting the suburb of Helwan with the Ramses Square. Cairo Metro is Africa's first fully-fledged rapid urban transit system.

### 28 September 1902 15,000 gold licenses received a week

The start of diamond (1867) and gold (1886) mining transformed South African from an agrarian society at the edge of world trade

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

into a globally integrated industrial economy, which spurred wealth and immigration and intensified the subjugation of the indigenous inhabitants as well as the conflicts between the Dutch and the British. The mineral revolution led to the quick spread of European colonization into the interior. The period saw the making of magnates and migrants, of millionaires and bankrupts, shopkeepers and entrepreneurs. It also saw the emergence of a new working class, one that was deeply divided along both colour and social lines. Racist laws enabled the white-owned mining companies to control workers, keep wages very low and gain immense profits from the diamonds and gold that black miners extracted from the earth. 10 years after 1886, the Johannesburg town was already the largest in South Africa, outstripping the growth of Cape Town. On 28 September 1902 it was announced that 15,000 applications for gold mining permits were being received weekly in Johannesburg.

### 28 September 1923 Ethiopia joins League of Nations

Abbyssinia (Ethiopia) joins the League of Nations (forerunner of the UN), the second African country after founder, South Africa.

### 28 September 1945 Pieter Dirk Uys born



Pieter Dirk Uys was born in Cape Town in 1945. He studied drama at UCT from 1965 to 1965 before going to study at the London Film School. During the 1970s and 1980s he was associated with the Space Theatre in Cape Town and the Johannesburg Market Theatre. He has become an award winning novelist and playwright and has written more than 20 plays and over 30 revues over 40 years in the theatre industry. Uys is also well-known as his alter ego **Evita Bezuidenhout**, whom he describes as “*the most famous white woman in South Africa.*”

### 28 September 1958 Haile Selassie tells League of Nations he will fight Italian invasion

Ethiopia had been one of the few states to survive “*the scramble for Africa*” by the major European powers in the late 19th century. Both Italy and Ethiopia were members of the League of Nations, founded in 1920. Italy was a founding member and Ethiopia joined 28 September 1923. However, during the run up to the Second World War, Benito Mussolini, Italy’s fascist dictator, dreamed carving out a “*New Roman Empire*” around the Mediterranean sea and northern Africa. After a border clash in 1934, and on 7 May 1936 Italy annexed Ethiopia. Ethiopia appealed to the League for arbitration and the doctrine of collective security, but the League’s response was sluggish at best. Emperor Selassie vowed that Ethiopia will resist Nazi invasion.

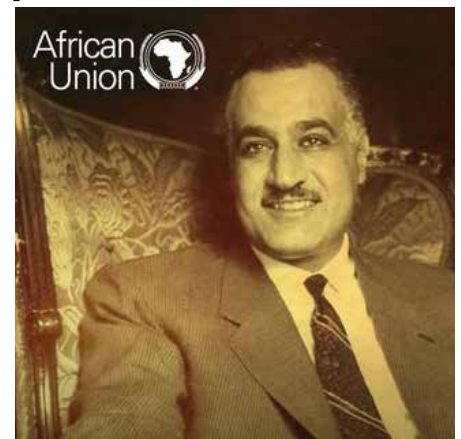
### 28 September 1962 Thuli Madonsela born

Advocate and prosecutor Thuli Madonsela is born in Johannesburg on this day. Part of the draft-



ers of the 1996 Constitution, she served as Public Protector from 2009 to 2016, a fierce opponent of corruption and state capture.

### 28 September 1970 Gamal Abdel Nasser passes on



In September 1970 Egyptian President, Gamal Abdel Nasser died of a heart attack. Nasser had been in power in Egypt since 24 November 1954, and is the founder of modern-day Egypt. He was one of the founding members of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). He was succeeded by Muhammad Anwar Sadat in 1970. Nasser had been described as the first leader of an Arab nation who challenged what was perceived as the western dominance of the Middle East. However, Nasser suffered a major blow when Egypt and other Arab nations were defeated by Israel in a war that lasted only six

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

days in 1967 and he offered his resignation. Nasser is still highly revered in Egypt, Africa and the Arab world.

### 28 September 1975 ANC President and Trade Unionist AWG Champion passes on



Trade unionist, political activist and businessman Allison Wesels George (A.W.G.) Champion died at his home in Chesterville, Durban. He was known as a campaigner for an end to apartheid and devoted his life to the betterment of the Zulu people. In 1942, he was elected to the Native Representative Council (NRC) – one of the most outspoken members against apartheid in the council. From 1946 to 1947 he was president-general of the African National Congress (ANC). Champion occupied several positions in various other political organisations.

### 28 September 2003 Pope John Paul II appoints Cardinals

Pope John Paul II appointed 31 new cardinals; three of them were from Africa. These were the Nigerian Cardinal Anthony Olubunmi Okogie, Ghanaian Peter Turkson, and the Sudanese Gabriel Zubeir Wako. The Pope's appointment of these three car-

dinals and others from the developing world was part of the Catholic Church's aim to revamp interest in the church and church membership.

### 29 September 1903 Artist John Koenakeefe Motlhakangna born



Motlhakangna (Mohl) was born in 1903, son of a carpenter/sculptor, in Dinokana near Zeerust, Northwest. Mohl compulsively drew as a child, on rocks and use clay to fashion animals. When his father threatened to take him out of school to tend goats, the Reverend Alfred John Haile, then principal of the London Mission Society's Tiger Kloof Educational Institution (known as *Moeding* in Setswana) intervened and implored his father to allow him to continue to study and draw. Mohl graduated from Moeding as a teacher, went on to study art in Namibia at the Windhoek School of Art and studied art for five years in Düsseldorf, Germany at the Kunstakademie, where he shortened his surname to Mohl. Mohl returned to South Africa and settled in Sophiatown in 1944 where he started teaching art from his home, making him the first black art teacher to establish an independent art school, The White Studio. He also established the Apollo Gallery in Johannesburg using a pseudonym, Frank van Melten, since under the apartheid

laws, as a black man, he was not allowed to open a gallery in white area. Mohl was a founding member of Artists under the Sun (1960), which held open-air art exhibitions in Johannesburg at the Zoo Lake and Joubert Park. He died in Soweto in 1985 and was posthumously awarded the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver for his contribution to the field of art. <https://www.straussart.co.za/artists/john-koenakeefe-mohl/>

### 29 September 1969 Earthquake in Tulbagh and Ceres

At about 10:04pm on 29 September 1969, the Boland farming towns of Tulbagh, Wolseley and Ceres experienced the most destructive earthquake in South African history. The epicenter of the earthquake was situated in Saron, a region near Tulbagh. The earthquake measured a sizeable 6.3 on the Richter's scale. The Tulbagh earthquake resulted in nine human casualties and several injuries. In addition many homes in the town were rendered uninhabitable.

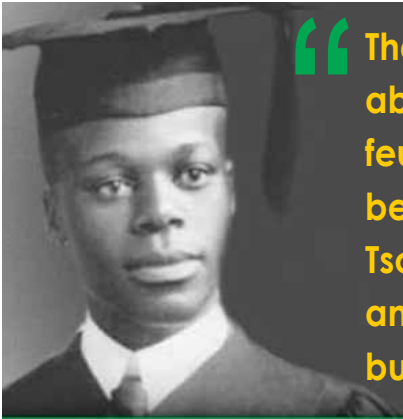
### 30 September 1966 Botswana gained independence from Britain

Previously known as Bechuanaland, Botswana gained independence from Britain on 30 September 1966 under the leadership of Seretse Khama. Khama was elected president by the National Assembly in 1966 and then re-elected for two additional terms, until he passed away in 1980.

### 1 October 1881 Pixley Isaka Seme born

On 1 October 1881, Pixley ka Isaka Seme was born at the Inanda mission station, KZN. Seme wrote the famous Pan African speech,

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



“The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xhosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tsongaas, between the Basutos and every other Native must be buried and forgotten...”

**Pixley ka Isaka Seme 1 October 1881 – 7 June 1951**

“*The Regeneration of Africa*” in 1906, founded the SA African Native Farmers Association in 1911, and was a founding member of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912. Seme was elected Treasurer-General in this ANC inaugural meeting. He was a barrister, newspaper owner, farmer and business person, and became President of the ANC from 1930 to 1936. Seme died in Johannesburg in 1951.

### 1 October 1960

**Nigeria gained independence from Britain**  
Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom on 1 October 1960. Its first government was a coalition of conservative parties, and it came into power on the back of increasingly struggles for political independence from colonial powers that swept across much of the African continent during the middle of the 20th Century.

### 2 October 1934

**Dutch Reform convened National congress discusses “Poor White Problem.”**

The ‘poor White problem’ was an issue in South Africa in the late 19th century and first part of the 20th century. This was discussed

at a synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1886, held in Stellenbosch (1893), Cradock (1916), Bloemfontein (1923), Pretoria (1930) and another in Bloemfontein (1933). The first national congress dedicated to solving the ‘poor White problem’ met on 2 October 1934 in Bloemfontein, organised by the Dutch Reformed Church, with research funded by the Carnegie Commission. It was the Carnegie report of 1932 that also recommended segregation as a strategy to address “*the poor white problem*,” laying the basis for grand apartheid and the ‘white’ affirmative action’.

### 2 October 2003

**Writer JM Coetzee wins Nobel Prize for Literature**

Born in South Africa in 1940, JM Coetzee is the only author ever to win the Booker prize twice. He was named the 2003 Nobel laureate for Literature. Accord-



ing to permanent secretary of the Swedish Nobel Academy, Horace Endgahl, it was an easy decision to honour Coetzee: “*We were very much convinced of the lasting value of his contribution to literature.*” He further observed that Coetzee’s novels are characterized by their well-crafted composition and analytical brilliance, containing stories which often criticize the cruel rationalism and cosmetic morality of western civilization. The only other South African to receive this award was Nadine Gordimer, in 1991.

### 3 October 1948

**Leaders call for African Unity**



Twelve African leaders, mainly from the African National Congress (ANC), issued a Call for African Unity. These leaders included I. B. Tabata, Professor Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu, Dr. Alfred Bitini, Dr AB Xuma, Z. R. Mahabane, R. V. SelopeThema, Dr. James Sebe Moroka, Z. K. Matthews, AWG Champion, Paul Mosaka, RH Godlo, RG Baloyi, RT Bokwe, and LK Ntlabati. They were protesting against apartheid and its dangers to African education, freedom of movement, land and residential rights, and employment opportunities. The call laid the basis for the convening of the All African Convention in December that year.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

27 September – 3 October 2025

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

### 27 September

#### World Tourism Day

Global tourism numbers, in particular international tourism arrivals, according to the UNWTO are still 16% below 2019 numbers, year on year. For Africa, this now stands on 8% below 2019 arrivals.

### 27 September

#### Ancestor Appreciation Day

Many of us are completely unaware of our ancestors and the lives they lived, yet they almost certainly went a long way towards shaping our habits, traditions and values today. Fortunately, the annually-celebrated Ancestor Appreciation Day gives people a reminder to learn more about those who came before us.

### 28 September

#### International Day for Universal Access to Information

Universal access to information means that everyone has the right to seek, receive and impart information. Access to information is more and more recognized as a prerequisite for sustainable development and for claiming human rights. Digital technologies and social media enable access to information, but raises important issues of privacy, cyber security and cyber bullying.

### 29 September

#### International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste

The world produces enough food to feed everyone, but over 800 million people still go hungry, including 23% of households in our country. However, one third of food produced in the world goes to waste along the value chain, enough to feed 3 billion people. The day draws awareness on the impact of



food waste, not just on people but on the environment and what we can do about it.

### 29 September

#### World Heart Day

On World Heart Day, the World Health Organisation is asking you to be a Heart Hero by making a promise ... a promise to make a simple change for your heart health.

- A promise to our families to cook and eat more healthily.
- A promise to our children to exercise more and help them to be more active, to say no to smoking and help our loved ones to stop.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

- A promise as a healthcare professional to help patients give up smoking and lower their cholesterol.
- A promise as a policymaker to support policies that promote healthy hearts.
- A promise as an employee to invest in heart-healthy workplaces.

### 1 October

#### International Day of Older Persons

The composition of the world population has changed dramatically in recent decades. Between 1950 and 2010 life expectancy worldwide rose from 46 to 68 years, and it is projected to increase to 81 by the end of the century. It should be noted that at present women outnumber men by an estimated 66 million among those aged 60 years or over. Among those aged 80 years or over, women are nearly twice as numerous as men, and among centenarians women are between four and five times as numerous as men. For the first time in human history, in 2050, there will be more persons over 60 than children in the world. Almost 700 million people are now over the age of 60. By 2050, 2 billion people, over 20 per cent of the world's population, will be 60 or older. The increase in the number of older people will be the greatest and the most rapid in the developing world, with Asia as the region with the largest number of older persons, and Africa facing the largest proportionate growth. With this in mind, enhanced attention to the particular needs and challenges faced by many older people is clearly required. Just as important, however, is the essential contribution the majority of older men and women can continue to make to the functioning of society if adequate guarantees are in place. Human rights lie at the core of all efforts in this regard.

### 1 October

#### World Vegetarian Day

The day has been recognized since the 1970s, to promote and focus attention on the health, environmental and humanitarian benefits of a plant-based diet.

### 1 October

#### International Coffee Day

The history of coffee is traced back centuries to the high plains of Ethiopia, and is an integral part of this country's national culture. Today, coffee is a global beverage, and coffee producers in Africa include

Ethiopia, Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Ethiopia and Uganda together account for 62% of African coffee output. International Coffee Day, celebrated since 2015 pays homage to the coffee farmers, roasters, baristas, and coffee shop owners across the world.

### 2 October

#### International Day of Non-violence



The day marks the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, Indian and South African leader and campaigner, who was known for using non-violent means to fight against injustices. Gandhi said: *"Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of (hu)mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man"*.

### 2 October

#### World Farm Animals Day

World Farm Animals Day seeks to ensure that all farms, irrespective of their purpose, provide a safe home for animals. It also raises awareness of the abuse of mass production of farm animals, as we include more and more meat in our diets.

