



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the
President

World leaders must act now to tackle inequality

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

WHEN South Africa took over the Presidency of the G20 nearly a year ago, we identified **'equality'** as one of the pillars of our term, alongside **'solidarity'** and **'sustainability'**.

We chose to focus on equality because it is essential to a more stable, prosperous and sustainable world. If the G20 is going to live up to its mission to tackle pressing global economic and financial issues, then it needs to significantly and urgently reduce inequality.

Global wealth inequality is stark. The world's richest 10 percent account for more than half of total global income. These people ac-

count for a staggering 74 percent of total global wealth. The human cost of these inequalities is severe; one in four people globally face moderate or severe food insecurity.

These huge disparities are unjust and consign billions of people to poverty. Inequality is bad for everyone. It makes the world less stable, fuels conflict and undermines democracy. It stifles inclusive economic growth and prosperity.

It is for this reason that I appointed an Extraordinary Committee of Independent Experts on Global Inequality as part of our G20 Presidency. The Committee, chaired by Nobel Laureate

and renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz, handed over its findings last week. The report examines the causes and consequences of inequality and makes important recommendations.

Given the importance of equality to sustaining global growth, to social and political stability and to the legitimacy of international economic governance, it is good that at South Africa's instance this will be the first time the G20 will focus on this matter and consider an in-depth report of this nature.

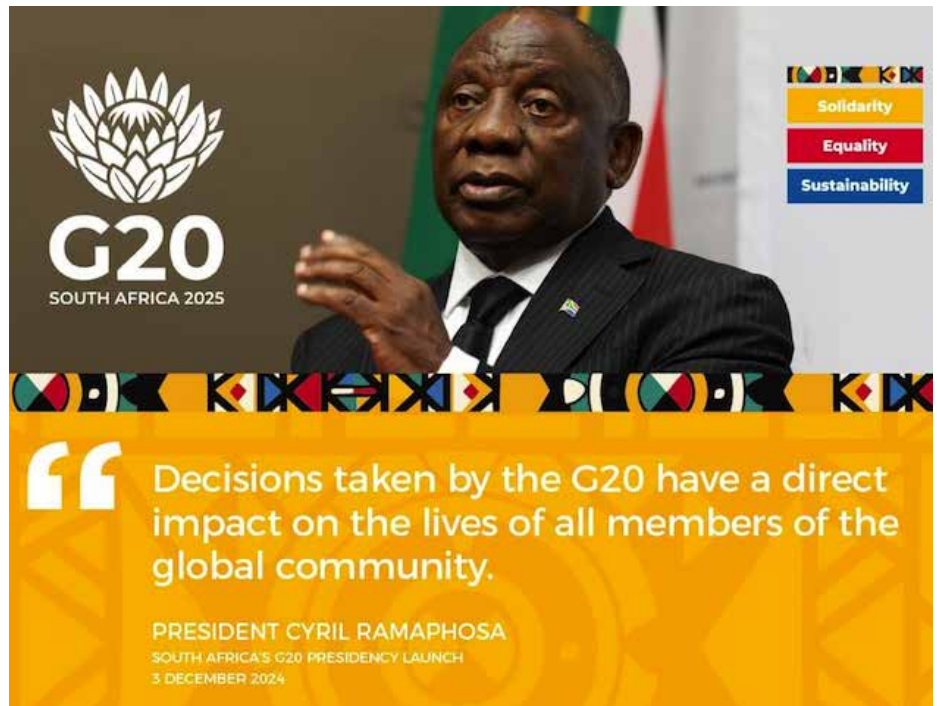
As Professor Stiglitz and his fellow experts note, the features of the international economy that perpetuate inequality *"can be significantly affected by the decisions*

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and actions of G20 governments". They say that inequality is a policy choice. It is therefore critical that G20 leaders recognise the extent and urgency of the problem of inequality – and that they act accordingly.

Among the committee's recommendations is the establishment of a permanent international body on inequality. This would be modelled along the lines of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which has been vital to global efforts to measure and respond to the climate emergency. In a similar way, the proposed International Panel on Inequality would bring focus to bear on inequality and measure, monitor and report on global and national trends in inequality among and within countries. It would be mandated to advise governments, multilateral bodies and institutions and the G20 on effective policy responses.

The report suggests policy levers that governments around the world can use to reduce inequality. It is noteworthy that South Africa already has a number of these policies in place. These include progressive taxation, minimum wage legislation, public expenditure on free or subsidised healthcare, zero-rating essential



foodstuffs and strong social protection systems.

The report courageously cites market concentration, monopolies and anticompetitive business practices as key drivers of inequality.

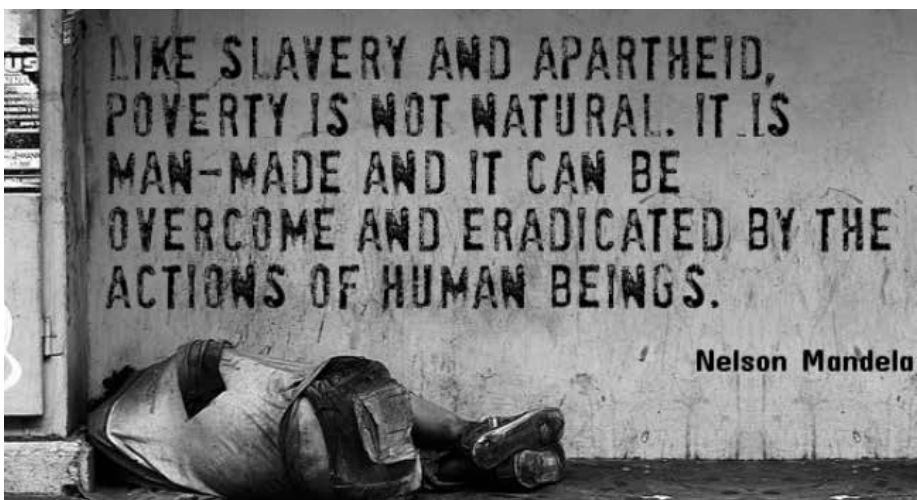
Another important part of our response to inequality is to promote debt sustainability, especially for developing economies. Interest on sovereign debt repayments, particularly in Africa, is stifling public spending and economic growth. It is widening the gap between countries and within countries.

That is why we are using our G20 Presidency to advocate for the reform of the global financial architecture.

The committee's report echoes our position, calling for multilateral development banks to have an **'inequality-reducing agenda'**. In a similar vein, it suggests that governments might agree to establish 'National Inequality Reduction Plans', which would set clear goals to reduce both income and wealth inequality.

Although not all the recommendations made in the report are new, what we are pleased about is that this is the first time the G20 will be considering the issue of global inequality. It will be critical in the lead up to the Leaders' Summit later this month that the report is widely-read and its recommendations given proper attention in the public discourse.

Inequality is one of the most pressing global issues of our time. This report provides a credible blueprint for the actions we need to take to overcome it. ■



STATEMENT ON THE Meeting of the National Working Committee, held on 10 November 2025

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC) convened its National Working Committee (NWC) meeting at a time when our movement and nation stand at a critical juncture in the journey of renewal, unity, and transformation. Guided by the historic resolutions of the 55th National Conference and the enduring vision of the Freedom Charter, the NWC deliberated on pressing organisational, national, and international matters with a singular focus, to strengthen the ANC as a disciplined force of the left, rooted among the people, and to ensure that the Government of National Unity delivers tangible change to the lives of South Africans.

The meeting affirmed that the ANC remains the strategic centre of power in advancing the National Democratic Revolution, deepening democracy, and building a just, inclusive, and developmental state.

National Executive Committee Meeting

We will convene a National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting from November 14 to 17, 2025, during Disability Rights Awareness Month. This meeting will assess the ongoing work to build unity, rebuild organisational struc-



tures, and strengthen the movement's capacity to lead society.

The NEC will also assess the domestic and global balance of forces, reflecting on South Africa's strategic posture as we move towards the 5th National General Council (NGC). These discussions will be rooted in the ANC's strategic objective of constructing a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous society, as enshrined in the Freedom Charter and reaffirmed in successive National Conference resolutions.

Engagement of Political Parties

The ANC commends the recent engagement of political parties

led by President Cyril Ramaphosa. This strategic retreat of the GNU Political Leaders Forum resulted in an agreement on a Medium-Term Development Plan. This marks an important step in resetting and consolidating the Government of National Unity (GNU), ensuring that it continues to embody the spirit and letter of the Statement of Intent signed by all participating parties.

The ANC reaffirms that the GNU must be a people-centred instrument for transformation, stability, and service delivery. Through consensus-based governance, we will strengthen cooperation and accelerate the implementation of key policy priorities, particularly those advancing economic inclusion, social justice, and national renewal.

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The NWC noted the recent attempt by the Democratic Alliance to undermine the gains of our struggle, an attempt aimed at rolling back over 300 years of subjugation of our people. This demand to scrap BB-BEE by the DA is another indication of their pain when they witness the development and transformation of black people, (African, coloured and Indians). We will not relent until the legacy of colonialism and apartheid is erased in the economy, employment and social dynamic. We will not capitulate, but the dignity of our people remains the centre of our daily prosecution of our struggle.

Broad Macroeconomic Environment

The NWC reflected on the broad macroeconomic environment within which the upcoming Medium Term Budget Policy Statement will be tabled by the Minister of Finance on Wednesday 12 November. The NWC noted that the importance of the MTBPS lies in reflecting on the state of the economy since the Budget Speech earlier in the year, enabling the government to determine whether its key assumptions about the direction of the economy and public finances remain valid.

Accordingly, at a macro level, the NWC observed that the economy has shown signs of resilience against global challenges and has even registered positive performance in our trade balance. In the view of the NWC, all these positive macroeconomic indicators have arrived at the right time to help the government fulfil its spending commitments with the aid of improved tax collection.

In this context, the NWC is con-



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ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The ANC notes with confidence that South Africa's economy continues to show resilience in the face of global challenges. Improved trade performance and strong tax collection are helping government meet its developmental commitments.

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dent that the government will sustain priority spending on public infrastructure and employment-creating growth initiatives, as well as eliminate wasteful expenditure.

The NWC believes that the MTBPS will sustain momentum on GNU priorities as outlined in the Statement of Intent and the ANC's 10 priority interventions for the economy announced after the ANC's NEC meeting in October this year, which aimed at, amongst others, to fast-track large-scale investment in the country's electricity transmission grid, strengthen the capacity of the state to manage major projects, promote township and rural economies and use development finance institutions to support the growth of SMME's.

Infrastructure spending on water,

roads, rail, ports and electricity is key to lifting the rate of growth and creating jobs. The NWC reaffirmed the good work done to date in stabilising the performance of our critical SOEs, which is a vital pillar of deepening economic growth and raising investment in job creation across the broader economy. Recent performance data for Eskom, PRASA and Transnet have all demonstrated improvement in efficiencies and financial management. However, more work still needs to be done to get these entities back to full strength.

National Dialogue

The ANC welcomes the National Dialogue as an important step towards deepening democratic participation and nation-building. South Africans have demonstrated a clear readiness for meaningful engagement on the challeng-

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es confronting our nation. The ANC believes that such dialogue must strengthen social compacts across all sectors and reaffirm the constitutional values of equality, justice, and non-racialism. Our structures and members will participate actively, guided by the ANC's historic mission of unity and transformation.

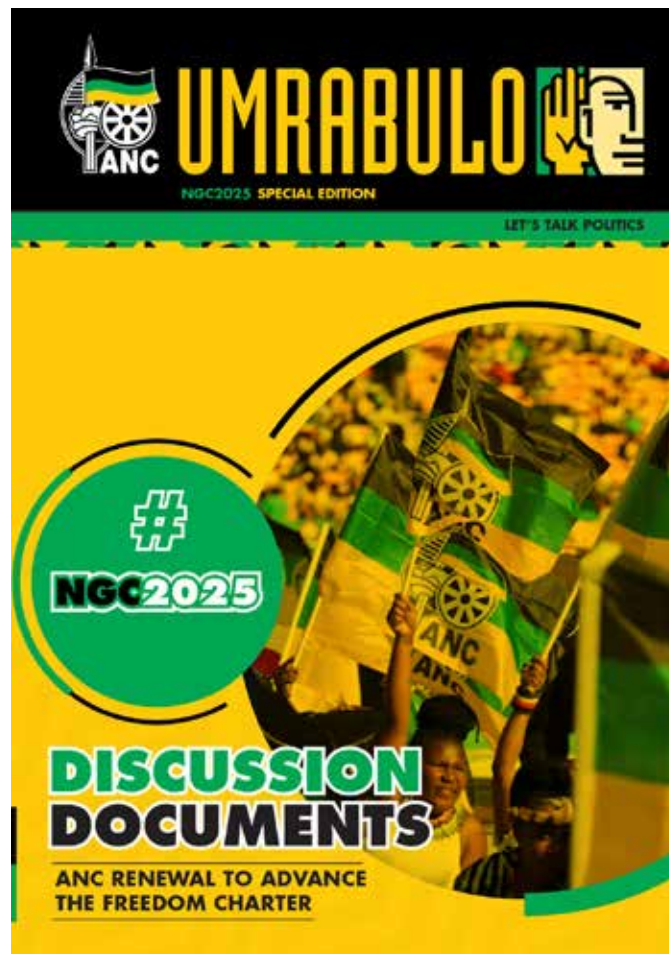
Municipal Reconfiguration

The NWC endorsed the reconfiguration of municipalities in the Free State province as part of implementing the Local Government Action Plan (LGAP). In the Free State Province we have intervened in Lejweleputswa, Letsemeng, Mafube, Masionyana, Moqhaka, Nala and Nke-toane. This is aligned with the ANC's commitment to strengthening local governance, improving service delivery, and ensuring accountability to communities.

The ANC continues to prioritise ethical leadership, capacity building, and stability in local government as essential to advancing the District Development Model (DDM) and fulfilling the constitutional mandate of developmental governance. In the coming weeks, we will see changes in some of the municipalities in the Free State and we will hasten the process of the appointment of the replacements. We will reconfigure the Troika in certain municipalities in the Free State. We have also intervened in the North West province, mainly in Ditso-botla and Taung Local Municipalities. The Mayor of Taung will be recalled, this is a matter that is currently being implemented.

The National General Council

The 5th National General Council



(NGC) will be held from the 8th to the 12th of December 2025 at NASREC, in Gauteng under the theme, ***“The Year of Renewal: Making the ANC a More Effective Instrument of the People to Achieve the Vision of the Freedom Charter.”***

The NGC remains the second-highest decision-making body of the ANC between National Conferences and will focus on unity, renewal, and the transformation agenda. The delegate cut-off date was 30th September 2025, with participation limited to branches in good standing and within their constitutional terms of office.

The NGC will comprise 1,600 delegates of which 1,115 will come from provincial delegates and branches, and a breakdown of this is now being communi-

cated to the structures and branches that qualify to come to the NGC. The Draft Programme of the NGC is finalised, and the NGC documents have been distributed to all organs of the organisation, including public representatives, to ensure a comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of progress. This was coupled with Provincial and Regional General Councils that have been convened to engage with the NGC base document, which is ensuring that the discussions at NGC are enriched.

Additionally, the NGC Base Document has been published for public engagement, encouraging open dialogue and the broadest participation from our movement and society. Logistical preparations are well underway. *(The document can be accessed on the ANC Website: www.anc1912.org.za).*

January 8 and the 114th Anniversary

The ANC will gather and celebrate the 114th Anniversary in Moruleng Stadium in the Bojanala Region of the North West Province. Our 114th Anniversary in the province of Sol Plaatje, Ngaka Modiri Molema, Moses Kotane and Mama Ruth Mompoti

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will be a springboard to our 2026 Local Government Elections as we march towards a decisive victory. Disciplined organising and mobilisation is underway across the North West Province, and our structures across the country will join us in the North West Province.

Reconfiguration of the Western Cape

The NWC announced earlier this month the reconfiguration of the Western Cape Provincial Executive Committee as mandated by the NEC. Subsequent to the announcement, Cde Rasool requested to be recused from the PTT due to a new important assignment in terms of global work and Comrade Jeremiah Thuynsma was appointed as the Provincial Convener of the Western Cape PTT, a task he duly accepted.

Comrade Jeremiah, who hails from Mitchells Plain, is a long-standing activist and member of the ANC, having grown and led in the Cape Youth Congress, South African Youth Congress and the Youth League. He is a former SACP Provincial Executive Committee member and a trade unionist who is well-grounded in the struggles of the people in the Western Cape. Comrade Jeremiah served in the Cape Metro and was honoured as Alderman.

The Alliance

The ANC held a productive bilateral meeting with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), reaffirming our shared commitment to the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) as a collective programme of the Alliance.

Discussions centred on safe-

guarding and revitalising the Alliance, advancing decent work, worker rights, and social transformation. We agreed on the need to defend the working class and ensure that economic policy remains pro-poor, redistributive, and transformative in line with the ANC Economic Transformation Policy Framework.

Engagements with the South African Communist Party (SACP) are ongoing. We note the success of the SACP's People's Red Caravan in October under the theme "***The People's Movement for Self-Reliance and Sustainability.***" The ANC will hold a bilateral meeting with the SACP before the NGC to strengthen ideological coherence and programmatic unity.

Special Leave – Comrade Senzo Mchunu

The NWC has resolved that Comrade Senzo Mchunu's request for special leave from the activities of the National Executive Committee and the National Working Committee be granted.

The ANC Guidelines and Procedures: Implementation of National Conference Resolutions on ANC Credibility and Integrity: Dealing with Corruption and on Fighting Crime and Corruption were adopted by the National Executive Committee on 13–14 February 2021 and amended the Special National Executive Committee meeting on 24–25 April 2022.

Paragraph 3.1.1 provides that: "*A member, office-bearer, or public representative, who has been indicted to appear in a court of law on a charge of corruption or other serious crime must immediately step aside pending the finalisa-*

tion of her or his case."

Cde Mchunu has not been indicted to appear in a court of law on a charge of corruption or other serious crime. Accordingly, the specific provisions of paragraph 3.1.1 do not apply to him.

However, this does not mean that he or any other member who is alleged to be involved in corrupt activities cannot voluntarily step aside or take special leave.

We welcome Comrade Senzo Mchunu's emphasis that he understands "*that people are feeling the trauma of crime and corruption in the country.*"

Geo-Politics

South Africa will host the G20 Summit under the theme "***Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability.***" This milestone reflects our growing role in shaping the global development agenda through the principles of Ubuntu, our belief in shared humanity and mutual respect among nations.

The Summit will prioritise the development agenda of the Global South, focusing on combating inequality, ensuring food security, advancing climate justice, and promoting sustainable growth in Africa.

The ANC notes with concern the decision by the President of the United States not to participate in the G20 Summit or other critical platforms such as COP30. He has based his reason for non-attendance at the G20 Summit on the misinformation campaigns alleging "genocide" in South Africa. These false claims, widely discredited by our government, civil society, and even sections of the Afrikaner community, form part of

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a deliberate disinformation drive aimed at sowing division and destabilisation.

The ANC reiterates its stance on non-alignment, multilateralism, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Freedom Charter's call for peace and friendship among nations.

50th Anniversary of Angola's Independence

The ANC congratulates the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the people of the Republic of Angola on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of their Independence, celebrated on 11 November 2025. Angola's liberation stands as a beacon of African self-determination, solidarity, and the triumph of perseverance over colonial domination.

The bonds between the ANC and the MPLA were forged in the crucible of struggle, with Angola providing a home to many South African freedom fighters during the darkest days of apartheid. As we celebrate this milestone, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthening Pan-African unity, South-South cooperation, and the pursuit of peace, stability, and development across the continent, in the true spirit of African Renaissance and Ubuntu diplomacy.

Birthday of Dr Esther Mahlangu

The African National Congress joins the nation and the world in celebrating the remarkable life of Dr Esther Mahlangu, a global icon of African art and cultural heritage, on the occasion of her birthday. Dr Mahlangu's work has not only elevated Ndebele visual traditions to international acclaim

but also affirmed the ANC's long-held belief in the power of culture as a weapon of liberation and social cohesion.

Her artistry symbolises the resilience, creativity, and dignity of African womanhood, embodying the spirit of the Freedom Charter's call that *"the doors of learning and culture shall be opened."* The ANC salutes Dr Mahlangu for her lifelong contribution to the preservation and global recognition of South Africa's indigenous knowledge systems, and for inspiring generations to embrace their identity with pride.

Condolences

The ANC expresses its deepest condolences on the passing of Comrade Moruti Maphatsoe, a veteran of uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and our Gauteng Chaplain. Comrade Maphatsoe dedicated his life to the liberation struggle and continued to minister to our movement with compassion, dignity, and unwavering faith. We call on all members to ensure that he is laid to rest with the honour befitting his service to the people and the movement.

We also extend our heartfelt condolences to our National Spokesperson, Comrade Mahlengi Bhengu, on the passing of her beloved mother, uGogo Thelma Buyisiwe Bhengu. During this difficult time, the ANC stands in solidarity with Comrade Mahlengi and her family, praying for strength and comfort.

The ANC continues to uphold the value of Ubuntu, reminding all members that in mourning, we reaffirm our shared humanity and collective responsibility to support one another.



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THE MEDIUM-TERM BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT MAINTAINS PRIORITY SPENDING

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE ANC welcomes the **Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement** as tabled by the Minister of Finance, Cde Enoch Godongwana on Wednesday 12 November 2025. The 2024 ANC Election Manifesto committed to put South Africans to work, to support the growth of industries, to tackle the high cost of living, and to invest in people. The Medium Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) provides a macroeconomic framework within which to advance these commitments to social and economic transformation.

The ANC welcomes the fact that through the MTBPS, government maintains priority spending on public infrastructure and inclusive growth, and to eliminate corruption and wasteful expenditure. Infrastructure spending on water, roads, rail, ports and electricity is key to lifting the rate of growth and job creation.

This policy emphasis aligns with government's broader growth strategies and with the ANC's 10 priority interventions for the economy announced after the ANC's NEC meeting in October this year, which aims amongst others to fast-track large-scale investment in the country's electricity transmission grid, strengthen the capacity of the state to manage

major projects, promote township and rural economies and use development finance institutions to support the growth of SMME's.

The fact that tax revenue receipts have been higher than expected in the past year also contributes to the fiscal capacity required to fund infrastructure spending as well as spending on public services and social grants. The ANC

salutes all South Africans who continue to pay their taxes and contribute to our country's public finances. We call on SARS to strengthen its programmes which aim to enforce wider tax compliance.

Through sustainable fiscal planning, the ANC is confident that government will be in a position to maintain the real value of social

MEDIUM-TERM BUDGET POLICY STATEMENT
YOUR PRIORITIES MATTER



FISCAL STABILITY

The ANC welcomes positive economic indicators that position government to sustain spending on key priorities – from infrastructure and jobs to social protection – while intensifying the fight against wasteful expenditure



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grant transfers and will be able to continue with public employment programmes, as well as with the provision of subsidised access to basic services to assist millions of households in need.

This Budget demonstrates that under the leadership of the ANC, fiscal discipline and social justice can coexist. The projected narrowing of the budget deficit from 4.5% of GDP in 2024/25 to 3.2% by 2027/28, and the stabilisation of government debt below 74% of GDP, show that prudent financial management remains a cornerstone of our developmental agenda. The R40 billion revenue overrun recorded in the first quarter of 2025/26 is testament to the improved efficiency of SARS and government's fight against illicit trade and tax evasion.

The ANC particularly welcomes the allocation of R943 billion over the next three years for infrastructure investment, focusing on energy, roads, water, and transport. These investments will not only stimulate industrialisation and job creation, but also improve service delivery to communities. The Infrastructure Investment Plan 2.0 and Infrastructure Fund fast-tracking mechanisms will ensure that these projects are implemented on time and within budget, while the 6 000 MW renewable energy expansion strengthens energy security and supports a just transition.

The continuation of the Presidential Employment Stimulus (R36 billion) and the target of creating 2 million job opportunities by 2026 represent tangible action in addressing unemployment. The expansion of the National Skills Fund for youth placements in digital and green sectors aligns with the ANC's vision for a modern,



**20 MEDIUM TERM BUDGET
25 POLICY STATEMENT
(MTBPS)**

SPENDING

Medium-term spending continues to **protect the social wage – education, health, community development, social protection and jobs programmes.**

knowledge-driven economy.

The ANC welcomes the inflation-linked increases to social grants and the additional R58 billion for social protection. These interventions cushion the most vulnerable and affirm government's commitment to restoring dignity to all South Africans. The forthcoming Comprehensive Social Security Reform Paper marks a crucial step toward universal social protection.

Significant allocations to education (R310 billion) and health (R12 billion for NHI transition) demonstrate that the ANC-led government continues to prioritise people's development. The R49 billion for NSFAS and the recruitment of 15 000 nurses and doctors by 2027 will ensure improved access to quality education and healthcare.

Support to municipalities through the R17.5 billion Municipal Infrastructure Grant and the debt relief framework will strengthen

local service delivery. The ANC also notes the allocation for 10 000 new SAPS recruits, modernisation of the defence force, and digitalisation of courts, all of which enhance state capacity and citizen safety.

The R18 billion allocation for land reform and rural infrastructure, alongside the rollout of agro-processing industrial parks, supports inclusive rural growth. The R2.5 billion Climate Adaptation Fund and the Green Industrial Strategy leveraging R100 billion in blended finance reaffirm South Africa's leadership in building a sustainable, climate-resilient economy.

The principle is to assist in containing the cost of living, which is particularly important for middle class, working class and poor households. In this context, low inflation protects the buying power of middle- and working-class families, whose wages are eroded by steep rises in prices.

The ANC holds that the credibility

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of this monetary policy strategy will be established when low inflation results in lower borrowing costs for households, firms and government to create a conducive environment for higher levels of investment by both the public and private sectors. This is vital for growth-inducing industrial policy. This means that the spread between the lending rate and the low inflation rate must visibly come down.

For South Africa to break out of the trap of low growth, rising indebtedness and failing infrastructure, a number of complementary policy interventions are required. Local government service delivery and finances must be improved. Capabilities for effective spending on public infrastructure projects need to be strengthened at all levels of government. Spending must be guided by the country's strategic priorities. There must be rational interventions to eliminate wastage of public resources where such is identified. Corruption must be exposed and those who have been stealing from the public must face the consequences.

We welcome the launch of the Procurement Payments Dashboard on the eTender portal, a decisive and practical step towards transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption. This initiative allows South Africans to view payments made to suppliers by national and provincial departments, giving citizens direct oversight into how public resources are spent. The ANC believes this innovation reflects government's unwavering resolve to strengthen ethical governance and restore the integrity of the public sector. It is a tangible expression of the ANC's commitment to clean governance and people-centred ser-

vice delivery.

The ANC also celebrates South Africa's removal from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list, a significant milestone that reaffirms the country's credibility in the global financial system. This achievement is the outcome of robust collaboration across government, law enforcement, and the financial sector to combat money-laundering and terrorism financing. It demonstrates that South Africa is serious about reform, compliance, and integrity in financial management. The ANC applauds all sectors that contributed to this success, which strengthens investor confidence and positions our nation as a trustworthy, transparent, and responsible member of the international community.

The ANC calls on government to strengthen policies to promote economic inclusion. Safety and security, improved service delivery, access to quality public health and education services, black economic empowerment, improved urban planning, effective land redistribution and land reform, policies to support small business, and industrial policies

to boost the global competitiveness of South Africa's mining, agriculture, manufacturing and services sectors, are all required to transform the exclusionary structure of the South African economy.

Through the MTBPS the Minister of Finance has provided a positive roadmap for the economy, but much still needs to be done. The ANC calls on government to show determination and discipline as it undertakes the interventions required to lift the economy to a higher trajectory of inclusive growth.

Ongoing consultation and consensus building with GNU parties, as well as with social partners in communities, trade unions and businesses will assist in overcoming resistance and blockages to the country's programme of economic growth and transformation. For the ANC, it is important that such ongoing consultations should result in the acceleration of inclusive growth and rising living standards for ordinary South Africans. Now is the time to move forward to achieve a better life for all, it is not the time for deadlock and delay. ■



20 **MEDIUM TERM BUDGET**
25 **POLICY STATEMENT**
(MTBPS)

FISCAL FRAMEWORK

The fiscal framework projects moderate real growth in expenditure over the next **three years**, while ensuring that government can meet its fiscal targets.



STATEMENT

COSATU welcomes positive drop in unemployment in Quarter 3

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) welcomes the positive drop in unemployment announced by Stats SA with the expanded definition of unemployment down by 0.6% to 42.4% and the narrow definition falling by 1.3% to 31.9% for Quarter 3 of 2025.

The increase in employment by 248 000 jobs bringing the total number of working South Africans to over 17.1 million is good news indeed. The fall in the number of unemployed persons by 360 000 bringing total unemployed persons to 8 million is equally positive.

It is critical that this critical momentum is maintained and in fact accelerated as we head into the festive season of Quarter 4 where there is normally a spike in employment as the retail and hospitality sectors cater for millions of workers and their families' end of year festivities. South Africa is long overdue for some good news.

Whilst welcoming nearly a quarter of a million new jobs over the past three months, we dare not be complacent. A 42.4% unemployment rate remains a dangerous ticking time bomb that cannot be sustained. Much more needs to be done by the African Nation-



al Congress led government, in particular to further capacitate the frontline public and municipal services that the working class and businesses depend upon, to inject additional stimulus needed to unlock economic growth including expediting the infrastructure investment programme, and to ramp up public employment programmes and relief for the poor and the unemployed.

Particular support must be provided by the state to struggling businesses and sectors due to the 30% tariff duty imposed on South African exports to the United States, increasingly unaffordable electricity or other economic challenges. Such support must come in the form of tax relief, industrial subsidies and fixing the mind-numbing delays at the Unemployment Insurance Fund's

Temporary Employment Relief Scheme.

The private sector must be mobilised to end the investment strike and invest in government bonds and critical economic infrastructure as well as the industrial, manufacturing and agricultural jobs rich economic sectors.

Unemployment is the single greatest threat to the nation. Tackling it must be our collective focus, and every possible resource and intervention mobilised to defeat it. South Africans do not expect overnight miracles, but we need to see consistent and steady progress, e.g. a fall of unemployment by 1% each quarter. This will provide the momentum the economy needs and give hope to the working class and society. ■

The Freedom Charter remains our lodestar towards the attainment of a National Democratic Society

■ By DENIS MATWA

FROM the 8th–12th December 2025, our glorious movement, the African National Congress (ANC), will hold the 5th National General Council (NGC) at Nasrec in Gauteng. As we are going to this NGC, our movement is facing many challenges. We are a movement in government under very different and difficult circumstances. We are a movement that is forced by circumstances, both locally and internationally, to adapt to the new terrain of struggle. However, there is still hope to extricate ourselves from this dire situation if we can go back to basics, guided by principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter, which we are currently celebrating on its 70th anniversary. As members and supporters of the ANC, we need to understand what the goals of the Freedom Charter are, and what does it mean for us in contemporary South Africa.

In this article, we are looking at the historical relevance of the Freedom Charter and how the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) has been guided by this historical document throughout these years. We are going to unpack what is the Freedom Charter, how it was formulated and why it remains relevant today. The article will articulate what it means to be committed to the

Freedom Charter, and how the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is guided by this august document. We are going to look at how the Charter is viewed and understood by the different segments of our society, both within the progressive forces and those who profess to be the analysts of our movement, the ANC. Our intention is to locate our Charter within the current challenging situation and, in the process, help

us to understand our challenges as we are going to the NGC in December 2025.

What is the Freedom Charter?

The Freedom Charter was not crafted by a coterie of a small group of the wise in some corner of a boardroom. This important document was a well-organised and lengthy consultation with the



people of South Africa through the length and breadth of our society. The people of South Africa, in all segments of society were given a chance to express their hopes for a future democratic and prosperous South Africa. Volunteers travelled throughout the country, both urban and rural areas, to collect the wishes of the people. According to Karis and Carter, *“the Freedom Charter was essentially a restatement of long-standing aims. It was consistent with the 1943 Bill of Rights, which was part of ‘African’s Claims,’ with one exception: if the ANC accepted the Charter, it would be for the first time in its history be endorsing a nationalization plank. The Charter stated that ‘the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and the monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole....’* (Some ANC leaders have maintained that the principle of nationalization had been implied by the call in the Bill of Rights for “a fair redistribution of the land.”) adoption by an ANC conference of the nationalization plank alone at that time would have been doubtful.

Potentially more disruptive, however, was the preamble’s statement *“that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white...”* Most definitely, the country was made aware of the coming Congress of the People. All sectors of the South African population were consulted in order to submit their demands.

We argue again that the Charter was a very consultative process. As stated above, the Freedom Charter was a process where the people of South Africa, from all sectors of society, were given a chance to express their wishes for a democratic and prosperous country.

Furthermore, the Freedom Charter was adopted by the ANC as its basic policy document. This is the case because the ANC is an organisation that truly belongs to the people, especially the revolutionary and the toiling masses. We are a people-centred organisation that caters for all freedom-loving people.

Throughout the years, from the adoption of the Charter and through the years of illegality, the ANC has always confirmed its adherence to the values and principles of the Freedom Charter. We remain proud of this rich history. On top of that, through the years, our movement has always stated, and continue to state that this document belongs to sectors of the South African populace. Fundamental in our beliefs, we are, as the ANC, biased towards the workers, and black workers in particular. *“While the Charter is not a programme of the working class alone, it nevertheless primarily reflects its interests. Some clauses of the Charter are socialist in orientation and are addressed much more profoundly to working-class interests than would be the case with any bourgeois document.”* As it will be demonstrated below, the Charter had been our guiding document even inside the country when our movement was banned in the early 1960s. as the apartheid state was facing an organic crisis from the early 1970s onwards, the Charter became a guide for the toiling masses of our people.

The turbulent 1970s and 1980s and the National Democratic Revolution

The early 1970s, to be precise – the Durban strikes of 1973, saw the resurgence of black trade unionism. The apartheid state

was under an endemic crisis that made it very difficult for it to extricate itself from. The working class openly associated itself with the exiled liberation movement in general, and the ANC in particular. It must be argued that the oil crisis (globally) during this period also exacerbated the difficulties faced by the working class during this period. It is not the purpose of this paper to dwell much of the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) during this period.

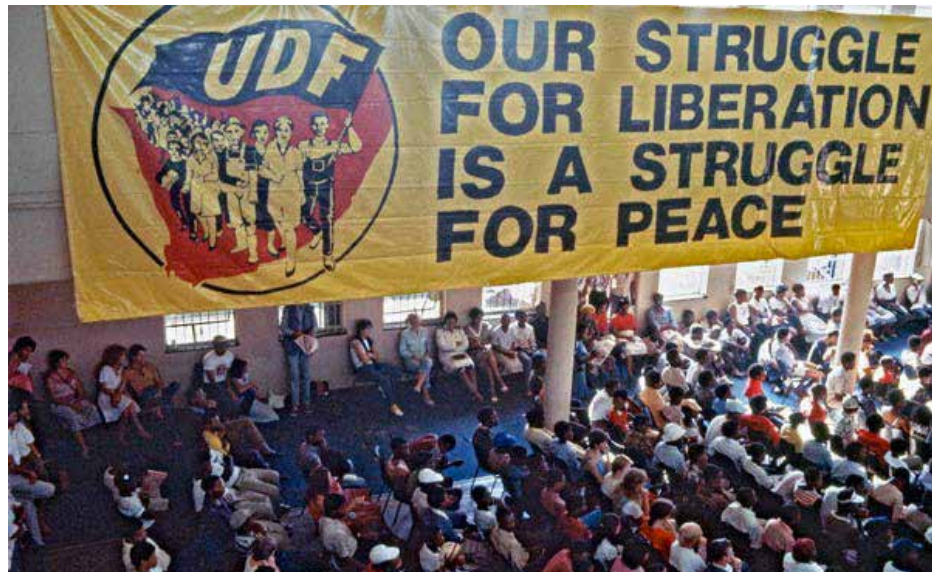
However, we must mention in passing that our liberation movement, led by the ANC, was not as yet firmly established inside the country during this period. In his seminal study of the United Democratic Front (UDF), Jeremy Seekings argues that, *“people surreptitiously read ANC literature, tuned into the ANC’s Radio Freedom, and sought out ANC veterans. But most of them were cut off from and unsure of the changing patterns of politics in the major centres”.* Seekings go further and argue that *“until 1979 these groups had little or no contact with each other, but had several features in common. They were either firmly within the Charterist fold or were gravitating towards it. At the same time, all the groups recognised that the armed struggle alone would not bring about political change; what was needed was political organisation, above ground, inside the country. Moreover, building strong organisation would entail working together with non-Charterists in broad-based movements. Thus Charterists involved themselves in ostensibly non-partisan civic organising in residential areas.”* We have cited at length from Seekings because he clearly captures the moment of the time. The presence of the

ANC during this period was very limited as it was still trying to penetrate the country and prepare an underground movement.

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the ANC was not firmly established in the country. However, newly released ANC leaders from Robben Island played a meaningful role in keeping the ideals of the Freedom Charter alive in the minds of this generation. The newly released leaders of the movement (the ANC) were a source of inspiration to the young and upcoming leaders of this period. Seekings elaborates further on this. He argues that *“ideology and strategy were also furiously debated in prison, where activists of different political persuasions were thrown together. Whereas outside prison most activists had sought to maintain broad-based unity against the state, in prison people polarised into harshly antagonistic groups, either supportive of or hostile to the ANC, and with corresponding views on forming a new national organisation independent of and perhaps a rival to the ANC.”* These vigorous and vociferous debates took many different forms, but adherents of the Freedom Charter triumphed.

The emergence of the civic movement, the UDF and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)

The concept of firmly establishing the National Democratic Revolution within the country can perhaps be traced through the emergence of the civic movement, the UDF and COSATU. As we pointed out above, the apartheid state was facing an organic crisis from the early 1970s onwards. The oppressed masses of our peo-



ple, faced with dire circumstances, decided to organise around bread and butter issues. The oppressed masses of our people started to voice out their grievances, especially against the draconian apartheid laws. People started a process of connecting with the exiled ANC and the newly released Robben Island prisoners. Prominent writer Heidi Holland states that *“the idea of forming a new popular front rather than a political organisation to unite protest inside South Africa was first discussed by the ANC in 1981. Two years later, when the government published its proposals for a constitution giving coloureds and Indians a limited role in the legislature but excluding blacks, a prominent priest, Dr Allan Boesak, head of the Geneva-based World Alliance of Reformed Churches, called a meeting at Mitchells Plain, a township near Cape Town. It drew an enthusiastic crowd of 12 000, many clutching copies of the Freedom Charter and displaying ANC colours.”* It was at this gathering that the United Democratic Front (UDF) was born. Prior to this gathering, there were fierce debates as to what this organisation would take which form. After exhaustive debates, the name the

United Democratic Front (UDF) was agreed upon. This front was a collective organisation of people who shared the common hatred of the apartheid system.

The UDF was a conglomeration of organisations who shared the common hatred of apartheid colonialism. We can argue that the influence of the ANC was very much visible in these discussions. On top of that, the delegates who gathered at Mitchells Plain in 1983 embraced the Freedom Charter as their guiding document. They associated with all the clauses of the Charter in all its elaboration. The leaders of the newly formed UDF were either ex-political prisoners or post-1976 student uprising leaders. The delegates to this gathering emulated the democratic traditions of the Freedom Charter. There was broad support for Popo Molefe being appointed as general secretary, although Molefe himself later said that he had been reluctant: *“I felt I did not have the necessary experience to handle that kind of job... it was just too big a job for me”*. The post of publicity secretary was less readily filled. Lekota’s name was put forward but opposed by Natal. Lekota had kept a low profile since returning from Robben

Island in 1982, and not everyone was aware of his conversion from BC to the ANC. There were, however, no other obvious candidates. The most controversial post was the presidency. We strongly believe that the democratic tradition of the Congress Movement was prevalent throughout this gathering and beyond. This was so because of the influence of the ANC.

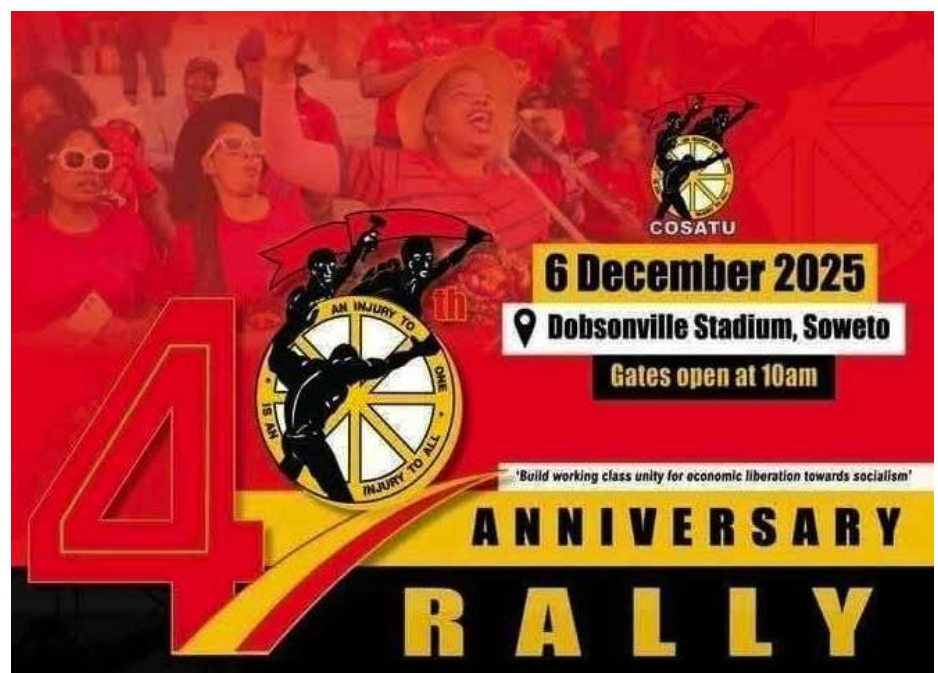
The formation of the UDF in 1983, we argue, culminated in the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Workers started to demand and to campaign for a union that would best address their demands. For the first time in many years, workers started to link their shop floor demands to the political struggle, as led by the ANC. William Beinart argues that, “*shared antipathy to white minority rule facilitated alliance building and the emergence of the United Democratic Front (UDF), but the movements had not yet been subjected to the ideological discipline of the ANC. After the formation of the UDF in 1983 and COSATU in 1985, activists increasingly worked within the framework of a national liberation struggle.*” (Beinart: 2001:12). We must point out that the emergence of COSATU in 1985 quickly linked up with the UDF. Just like the UDF before it, the new labour movement openly accepted the Freedom Charter. COSATU also identified itself with the national democratic revolution as expounded by the ANC. Almost all affiliates of COSATU accepted the ANC as the leader of the National Democratic Revolution. COSATU carried forward the struggle of the then banned South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), and this workers’ federation did a sterling work in advancing the cause of the workers. “*At its inception in*

*1985, COSATU exemplified ‘social movement unionism’, where democratically organised workers engage in both ‘production politics’ at the workplace and the ‘politics of state power’. Unlike a narrower form of ‘syndicalism’, this involved explicit alliances with movements and organisations outside the workplace, but under strict conditions of union independence based on shopfloor accountability. The 1987 adoption of the Freedom Charter as a ‘stepping stone to socialism’ by COSATU further entrenched this strategic compromise, which recognised the increasing popularity of the ANC-SACP alliance as well as a strong belief in the independence of the labour movement.” To this day, COSATU remains a principled representative of the South African workers. This has been the case throughout its history of existence. It is important to stress that “*in its meetings with the ANC, SACP and SACTU in exile, COSATU stressed that it was an independent formation and not a transmission belt for the ANC. Together with the UDF, it had some influence on the relatively hierarchical ANC and**

SACP, helping to deepen the lessons learnt during the Gorbachev era about the failures of one-party state ‘socialism’, and a greater appreciation of the values of mass participatory democracy.” We can argue that this is still the stance of COSATU to this day. COSATU, as a disciplined member of the Tripartite Alliance, has always been a voice of reason even under the most trying and testing circumstances.

Is the National Democratic Revolution still on the right course?

As the turbulent years of the late 1980s drew to a close, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) was born. It was undoubtedly clear that the horrible apartheid system was on its death throes. The combination of the four pillars of struggle: international isolation of apartheid, mass mobilisation, underground work and armed insurrection was taking its toll. Apartheid rulers realised that they could not rule in the same fashion. The racist minority regime of the Nationalist Party tried all tricks in the book to ‘reform’



apartheid colonialism. The labour movement, we must argue, was at the centre of making it very difficult for apartheid to 'reform' itself. If we step back a little, we must remember that COSATU affiliates were vociferous in denouncing apartheid capitalism at the shopfloor. In their study of the National Union of Mineworkers in this period, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout state that, *"ironically, COSATU's affiliate that came from a black consciousness tradition was the first union officially to adopt the Freedom Charter – in 1987 – and later that year it sponsored a similar motion at the federations' second national congress in opposition to some of the manufacturing unions. It is no wonder then two of the unbanned ANC's general secretaries (1991 to the present) have come from NUM. Indeed, what is remarkable about the NUM is the way in which it has been able to accommodate and incorporate various political traditions- black consciousness, the Charterist movement expressed in the politics of the ANC and the South African Communist Party, as well as the United Democratic Front in the mid-1980s, and even far left intellectuals."* It is still because of the amalgamation of these different ideological strands that we argue the National Democratic Revolution is on the right course. We must further point out that the ANC must and should remain the leader of the NDR!

As a National Liberation Movement, we should be proud of our rich history. In the same vein, we should ostracise and isolate elements within our ranks who want to use our movement, the ANC, for their criminal gains. We need to castigate councillors who are not performing their duties as per the wishes of our people. Such



elements are enemies of our national revolutionary aspirations. Comrades are elected to become councillors because they are required to implement the vision of the ANC as it is articulated in the Freedom Charter. People who are betraying the Freedom Charter are most definitely the enemies of our people. Writing as early as 2001, Cde Ngoako Ramathlodi gave us a grim warning, years before we experienced the challenges that we face today. He argues that, *"experience has shown that a weaker ANC means a weaker working class, in the same way as a weaker working class means a weaker ANC."* This is a grave concern for all freedom-loving people of our country. As we are fast approaching the 2026 Local Government elections, we need a very strong ANC that takes into account the aspirations of our people as expressed in the Freedom Charter. As we have pointed out throughout this article, the Freedom Charter remains the lodestar of our struggle towards a national democratic society.

To be quite frank, the ANC is faced with many challenges now more than before since we came to power. Most of these challenges are self-inflicted. The question of the failure of service delivery is a terrible eye-sore. We can no

longer keep on blaming the failures of apartheid colonialism. We should be reminded that *"the ANC successfully emerged from the people's war of the decades before the 1990s (both internal and from exile) to take control of government and state in South Africa – and to govern legitimately in the name of the people."* The statement 'the people shall govern' in the Freedom Charter is the origin of the notion of people's power in this context. 'The people' denotes the totality of those who are democracy oriented and, overwhelmingly, the formerly oppressed and by now at least politically-liberated, citizens of South Africa. 'People's power' indicates an organic link between the ANC and its followers – a relationship that could help the ANC outlast much evidence of imperfection, leadership insincerity and failures in government. We need to self-correct before the masses of our people lose confidence in our movement.

As we will be gathering at Nasrec for the ANC's National General Council (NGC) on the 8th to 12th December 2025, delegates should ask and answer very difficult questions about our movement. To paraphrase the Guinea-Bissau revolutionary, Cde Amilcar Cabral, we must not tell lies and claim easy victories. The ANC that is in power must not be a totally different ANC that waged a struggle against apartheid colonialism and capitalism. The ANC 5th National General Council Base Document succinctly states that, *"to remain true to these objectives, the ANC and the broad liberation movement must continually hegemonies, clarify and popularise the vision of the NDR. This also means updating our Strategy and Tactics in the light of the current conjuncture, deepening our cadre' theoretical un-*

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derstanding of the CST and its manifestations today, and ensuring that every policy and program of the movement is aligned to these strategic goals of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society. It also means candidly assessing where we have fallen short in realising the Freedom Charter's aspirations, and taking corrective action informed by our ideological principles". It is the onus of every cadre of our movement to guard and to advance the values and principles of the Freedom Charter.

In the final analysis, our cadres should always be inducted on the **"Through The Eye Of a Needle"** document so that they can understand what the ANC stands for, and how to conduct themselves as members of our glorious movement. The current tendency of reviving our branches when there is going to be conferences and elections (both local and national) should be condemned.

Every branch member of the ANC should be able to articulate the revolutionary program of the ANC. The lack of proper political

education in our branches makes it much easier for our rank and file members to be easily swayed by the ultra-left organisations. This is a direct result in the lack of proper political education at branch level. Fortunately for us, the Constitution of our country articulates what is contained in the Freedom Charter vividly. This is further elaborated by our 55th National Conference Resolutions. It is stated that, *"conference is of the unanimous view that the gains of our freedom and democracy must be defended, consolidated and advanced by ensuring that all citizens enjoy a better life as demanded by the Constitution of the Republic. Ours must become a people-centred and people-driven democracy in practice-what the veterans refer to as "a democracy with South African characteristics where the interests and well-being of the people must come first."* This must remain the focus of our people, both within and in alliance with all the progressive forces. We must also remember that the ANC is a broad church, accommodating various elements of our society who are guided by the values

and principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter.

Conclusion

We have argued throughout this article that the Freedom Charter remains our lodestar in pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution as we are advancing towards the attainment of a national democratic society. This has not been a very easy road. The struggle for the attainment of freedom has, over the years, included a variety of organisations (civic, labour and political organisations). The onus is on our members to jealously guard our gains against the reactionary forces and counter-revolutionaries who are hell-bent on derailing the gains of the revolution. Lastly, as members of the ANC, we need to do a serious introspection before it is too late. We are a movement in power, and this simply means that along the way we are going to be joined by forces who want to use access to state power for their gains. The ANC must at all times strive to implement the vision of the Freedom Charter in the best possible way. ■



Delegates at the 4th National General Council

The African National Congress: Governance, Organisational Integrity, and the Crisis of Renewal/Reconfiguration

■ By **TANIA BOUWERS**

THE African National Congress (ANC) stands at a defining juncture in its post-liberation trajectory. Once the moral and political vanguard of the anti-apartheid struggle, it now grapples with an erosion of legitimacy, deep internal divisions, and a crisis of ethical and organisational renewal. The ANC's dual crisis, referring to its diminishing capacity to govern the state effectively and its weakening as an organisation, has laid bare fundamental contradictions between its founding values and its contemporary practice.

This reflection interrogates the current state of the ANC, revisiting the warnings of past leaders while analysing the implications of the recent reconfiguration of provincial structures, a process that appears more concerned with political compromise than with eradicating organisational decay. It also explores how the ANC's drift from its Marxist and anti-capitalist grounding has contributed to its moral and institutional paralysis.

Organisational Decline and the Myth of Renewal

Oliver Tambo once warned that "a movement that does not renew itself is doomed to decay." Today, this warning has become



a lived reality. Renewal within the ANC has too often been rhetorical, deployed as a slogan rather than a substantive organisational reform process. The recent reconfiguration of provincial structures epitomises this malaise. Instead of confronting corruption, factionalism, and unethical conduct, these reorganisations have tended to prioritise internal compromise and the preservation of elite balance.

This approach reflects a dangerous misunderstanding of unity, a unity that is performative rather than principled. In seeking to maintain organisational cohesion

at all costs, the ANC risks perpetuating the very rot it claims to cleanse. True renewal requires moral clarity and political courage, not the accommodation of decay in the name of stability. By institutionalising compromise over consequence, the organisation inadvertently normalises dysfunction and undermines its own transformative mission.

Governance and the Corrosion of State Capacity

The state's declining administrative and moral capacity is a direct reflection of the ANC's organisational crisis. The weaknesses

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that manifest in the state maladministration, policy incoherence, and corruption are inevitably symptoms of deeper dysfunction within the movement itself. Thabo Mbeki's 2005 warning that *"the rot is within the ANC itself"* remains unheeded. The inability to separate the public interest from factional interest has blurred the line between governance and patronage, eroding the state's credibility.

The reconfiguration of provincial leadership, framed as a renewal exercise, often reinforces this corrosion. Rather than strengthening accountability and competence, it entrenches the logic of political expediency. Leaders are selected to placate factions rather than to serve the public good. Such compromises, while politically expedient in the short term, further erode institutional integrity and public trust.

The Marxist Lens: Capitalist Logic and Organisational Capture

From its earliest days, the ANC's ideological orientation was rooted in a synthesis of nationalism and Marxism, seeking to challenge the economic structures of racial capitalism that underpinned apartheid. Yet in the democratic era, the party's relationship with capital has evolved from critique to complicity. The internal political economy of the ANC has become shaped by capitalist incentives for access to state resources, patronage networks, and material accumulation, rather than by the collective pursuit of social emancipation.

Karl Marx cautioned that capitalism reproduces inequality not only through economic structures, but through the capture

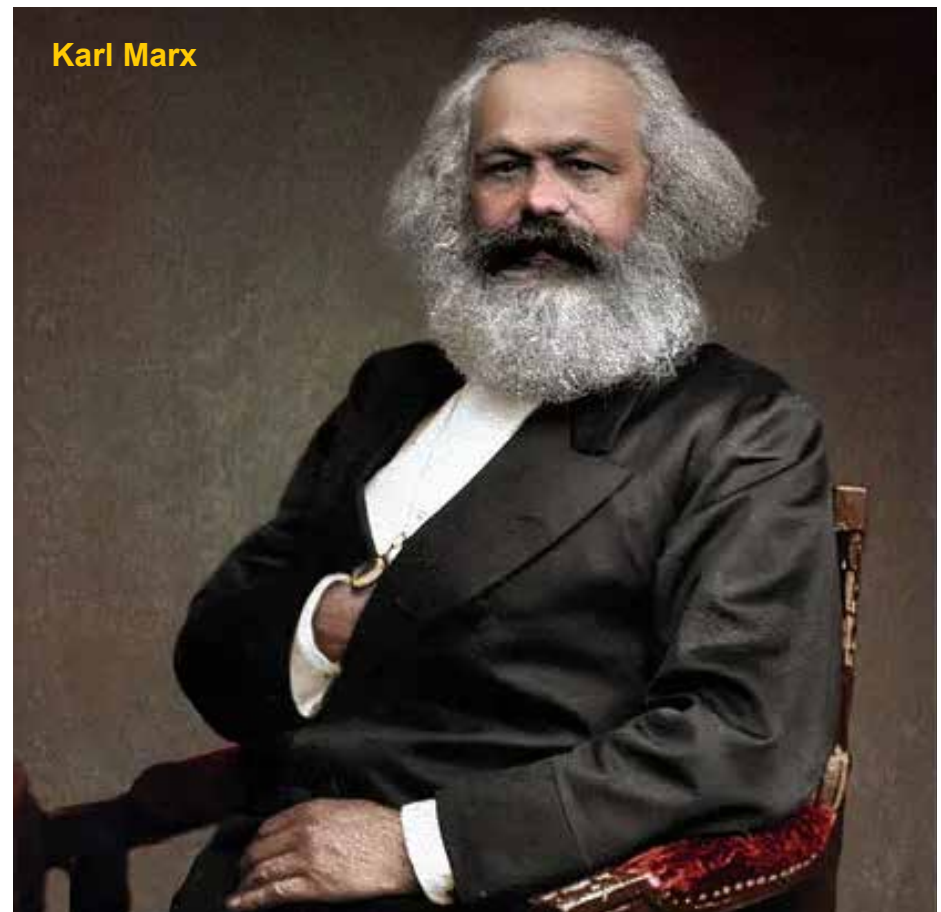
of social consciousness. This insight illuminates the ANC's current predicament: the capitalist logic of self-interest and accumulation has supplanted the ethos of collective struggle. The reconfiguration of provincial structures, under this lens, represents not ideological renewal but organisational capture. An attempt to preserve class interests within the party under the guise of unity.

This dynamic illustrates a profound contradiction. The ANC continues to espouse socialist rhetoric, yet operates within and reproduces the capitalist relations it once sought to transform. Its failure to confront this contradiction has rendered it ideologically disoriented and morally compromised. The movement has, in Marxist terms, internalised the logic of the bourgeoisie while still claiming to represent the proletariat.

Moral Drift and the Normalisation of Wrongdoing

At the heart of the ANC's present crisis lies a profound moral decay. The normalisation of corruption, the acceptance of impunity, and the elevation of loyalty over integrity have eroded the moral foundation of the movement. As Nelson Mandela once reminded us, *"Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people."* Today, the sacrifices demanded of leadership are moral rather than physical, yet too few are willing to make them.

Chief Albert Luthuli's caution that *"Those who think of themselves as liberators must never become the oppressors of tomorrow"* resonates deeply. In our time, the oppression takes the form of economic exclusion, governance failure, and ethical compromise. The failure to cleanse the movement





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True unity is born not of compromise but of conviction. To rebuild both organisational integrity and state capacity, the ANC must embrace the difficult work of confronting its internal contradictions.

of corruption is not merely a leadership issue; it is an ideological surrender to the capitalist and individualistic impulses that undermine collective struggle.

The False Unity and the Crisis of Political Will

The ANC's current posture reflects a deep-seated fear of disunity, indeed a fear that has come to justify the accommodation of unethical conduct in the name of cohesion. The reconfiguration of provincial structures illustrates this pathology: it seeks harmony, not accountability; balance, not transformation. The outcome is a fragile unity that conceals deep moral fractures.

True unity is born not of compromise but of conviction. To rebuild both organisational integrity and state capacity, the ANC must embrace the difficult work of confronting its internal contradictions. It must rediscover the political will to dismantle patronage networks, reject capitalist capture, and rebuild the ethical culture that once defined its struggle.

Towards Ethical and Ideological Renewal

Renewal, if it is to be meaningful, must transcend slogans and address the structural and ideological roots of decay. It must restore the primacy of political education, ideological clarity, and cadre discipline. The ANC must re-engage with its Marxist analytical heritage, not as dogma, but as a framework to understand how capitalist accumulation and class interests distort revolutionary ideals.

This process requires a generational shift in leadership ethics, a reorientation towards service, humility, and accountability. Renewal cannot be achieved through reconfiguration alone; it demands moral regeneration and a return to principle-based politics. Only by reclaiming its ideological and ethical core can the ANC restore both its organisational integrity and the state's capacity to act as an instrument of transformation.

Conclusion

The ANC's crisis is both institutional and moral, structural and

ideological. The recent reconfiguration of provincial structures, while presented as reform, reflects the deeper malaise of a movement more concerned with managing decay than confronting it. The influence of capitalist logic within its internal politics has displaced its revolutionary ethos, leaving the organisation ideologically hollow and morally fatigued.

To reclaim its legitimacy and rebuild the state, the ANC must rediscover the courage to act against its own excesses. It must confront the false unity that conceals corruption and rediscover the transformative conviction that once defined it.

As Tambo's words remind us, *"The struggle is not over; it merely assumes different forms."* The form it now takes is the struggle for the soul of the ANC itself and, by extension, the integrity of South Africa's democratic project. ■

Tania Bowers writes in her personal capacity.

The Colour of Truth: My Disquisition on the Patriotic Alliance, the ANC, and the Myth of Manufactured Movements

■ By **STAN ITSHEGETSENG**

HISTORY, I have learned, is not a collection of gossip but a ledger of truth. Yet, every few years, some self-appointed custodian of “reason” climbs a public stage to retell it through the lens of political convenience. In a recent performance, Helen Zille once again attempted to cast herself as the patron saint of South African democracy while reducing everyone else to pawns in her imagined chessboard. She now claims that the African National Congress, under Jacob Zuma, “invited” Gayton McKenzie to form the Patriotic Alliance (PA) to lure coloured votes. It sounds dramatic. It also collapses under the weight of fact.

The Patriotic Alliance was founded in November 2013 in Paarl, Western Cape, by Gayton McKenzie and Kenny Kunene. The Independent Electoral Commission’s records show its registration that same year. Its founding statement declared that the PA “was born in the heart of the coloured community and its pain.” There is no ANC resolution, no Luthuli House memo, no presidential record – nothing – to suggest the ANC engineered its creation. This is not a matter of opinion but of administrative record. Political myth-making cannot erase public documents.



Through 2014, 2016 and 2021, the PA contested elections independently. In several metros it even joined coalitions led by the Democratic Alliance. If Zille’s tale were true, it would mean the ANC “created” a party only for it to cooperate with her own organisation years later. Logic deserts that fantasy at the first hurdle. What is consistent is the DA’s habit of bending timelines whenever its narrative of moral superiority begins to fray.

The truth is more straightforward and less flattering to those addicted to drama. The PA was born of frustration in coloured townships – frustration with all major parties, including the ANC and the DA. It fought its own way into municipal chambers. When the 2024 elections produced a hung Parliament,

the ANC chose the difficult path of inclusion: building a Government of National Unity rather than a narrow coalition. The ANC’s June 2024 statement, “**ANC welcomes political parties to the Government of National Unity,**” made the spirit plain:

“The GNU is founded on the will of South Africans as expressed in the national vote and on the commitment of all participating parties to work together in rebuilding our country.”

That is partnership, not puppetry.

The PA joined as an equal signatory, not as a creation of anyone’s hand. Its leader, now a cabinet minister, has publicly affirmed that the party remains “*independent, proud, and accountable to*

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its voters.” The ANC’s posture has been one of cooperation, not possession. These are facts on record, not whispers in a political corridor.

Those who peddle the opposite narrative are not defending democracy; they are defending ego. The DA’s mythology relies on a simple formula: if the ANC succeeds in building unity, the DA must declare that unity illegitimate. When Johannesburg’s governance began to stabilise under Mayor Dada Morero, when service-delivery programmes moved from slogans to visible clean-up operations across regions, the opposition found itself with no tangible failure to parade. The answer, as ever, was to invent betrayal where there was only cooperation.

I speak not as a spin doctor but as a citizen who has watched this city struggle for breath. Johannesburg’s redemption lies in evidence, not echo chambers. The High-Impact Service Delivery programme, launched under Morero’s tenure, has documented operations, budget line items, and measurable progress. These are available in council reports, media statements, and Audi-

tor-General reviews. You can disagree with pace or priority, but not with existence. Facts, unlike opinions, leave fingerprints.

The DA’s latest fiction – linking the Patriotic Alliance’s birth to ANC manipulation – is a symptom of a deeper anxiety: the fear that its moral capital has expired. When movements of the oppressed begin to organise without permission from the self-appointed gatekeepers of liberal virtue, panic sets in. So they rewrite history. They pretend every alliance is a conspiracy, every handshake a betrayal. It is an old colonial habit: if you cannot own the narrative, discredit the storyteller.

But Johannesburg knows better. This city, born of struggle and soot, recognises the difference between those who fix pipes and those who perform outrage on television. The ANC, under Dada Morero, has chosen the harder work – street by street, ward by ward. The GNU, for all its imperfections, represents the possibility of a politics based on results, not resentment.

Let me be clear: South Africa’s democracy will not be rebuilt through myth. It will be rebuilt

through accountability, inter-party cooperation, and the humility to admit that no single organisation owns the truth. The Patriotic Alliance’s history is written in public record. The ANC’s invitation to the GNU is written in public record. Those who ignore both are not seekers of truth but architects of confusion.

In one of his reflective letters from Robben Island, Nelson Mandela warned that *“honesty in politics is not a matter of decency, but of survival.”* It remains true today. The survival of our democracy depends on truth-telling – not on the comfort of convenient lies. And so, to those who still insist that the ANC birthed the Patriotic Alliance, I offer the only remedy that works against propaganda: evidence. Read the founding papers. Read the council reports. Read the GNU declaration. Then decide whether myth can survive the weight of fact.

Johannesburg will continue to rise under leaders who build, not those who broadcast. The truth may be slower than rumour, but it endures. And in the end, history will not record the loudest voice – it will record the most accurate one. ■



A Rejoinder to Blade Nzimande's "Rescuing the Revolution": Why the SACP Must Resist the Temptation to Break the Alliance

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

HAVING taken the time to read Comrade Blade Nzimande's discussion paper titled "*Rescuing the Revolution and Reaffirming the SACP's Historical Mission: A Call for a Special Congress*", I found it both intellectually stimulating and politically necessary. I must admit that I have not read his writings for some time, and I found this one particularly refreshing. The paper reflects the depth and theoretical discipline that have long characterised the South African Communist Party's approach to difficult political questions.

At the heart of the document lies one of the most consequential resolutions in the Party's recent history: the decision to contest local government elections in its own right. Nzimande's paper does not treat this as a mere organisational experiment. He situates it within the crisis of the national liberation movement, the decline of the African National Congress (ANC), and the weakening of worker and popular formations. He also cautions that the decision must be approached with sobriety, guided by concrete analysis rather than emotion. It is this call for caution that deserves deeper reflection.

The Party's resolution to contest local government elections is un-



derstandable in context. The state of the movement, the frustration of activists, and the slow pace of transformation have created a sense of disillusionment. Many cadres feel that the Alliance has lost its vitality and that the working-class voice is being drowned out. Yet the challenge is to determine whether contestation under the current conditions will advance or undermine the National Democratic Revolution (NDR).

The balance of forces described in Nzimande's paper suggests that the conditions for independent contestation are not favourable. The working class is divided, the trade union movement is weaker than at any time since 1994, and political fatigue has spread across the progressive camp. The ANC, despite its de-

cline, remains the central political expression of the liberation movement. The SACP's strength, historically and ideologically, has been in its ability to provide guidance within that collective, not in acting outside it.

The National Democratic Revolution remains unfinished. Its key tasks are far from complete. The first is the transformation of the economy so that ownership, control, and benefit reflect the aspirations of the majority. The second is the achievement of genuine social justice, including access to quality education, healthcare, housing, and basic services for all. The third is the construction of a capable, ethical, and developmental state that can drive inclusive growth and social transformation. The fourth

is the strengthening of worker unity and consciousness across formal and informal sectors. The final task is the consolidation of democracy and the defence of progressive values against the rise of populism and reactionary politics.

None of these objectives can be achieved by an isolated political formation. They require a united Alliance with a coherent strategy, shared accountability, and disciplined leadership. The SACP's resolution to contest local elections must therefore be evaluated not only as a tactical question but as a strategic one. The central issue is whether such a step would strengthen or fragment the forces needed to complete these historic tasks.

The experience of recent years provides important lessons. The emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters in 2013, driven by the belief that the ANC had lost its revolutionary edge, resulted in a fractured progressive vote and unstable local governance after the 2016 elections. The same pattern reappeared in 2024 with the formation of the MK Party, which claimed to represent the true soul of the liberation movement. Less than a year later, the MK Party has shown no coherent alternative vision, and as the official opposition both nationally and in KwaZulu-Natal, it has struggled to demonstrate readiness to govern. Its internal disarray has exposed how anger and nostalgia cannot replace strategy and organisation.

The SACP must avoid falling into a similar trap. The desire to restore credibility and reconnect with communities is legitimate and commendable, but this can be achieved without standing



alone. The Party can, through disciplined activism, ideological clarity, and mass mobilisation, help to renew the Alliance from within. It can influence local governance through cadre development, political education, and participatory democracy rather than through parallel electoral structures that risk dividing the working class.

Nzimande's insistence that the Special Congress make a sober assessment of the situation is crucial. That congress must ask whether contestation at this moment will advance the revolution or simply deepen the fragmentation that already weakens the movement. The evidence before us points to the latter. The fragmentation of progressive forces has already reduced the political space for transformation. Each breakaway has not only weakened the ANC but has also diluted the collective moral authority of the liberation movement.

To contest independently at this stage would not create a stronger left; it would produce competing claims over the same shrinking constituency. To renew unity within the Alliance, however, would create the foundation for

collective strength. The tasks of the revolution demand coherence, not dispersion.

The SACP has always been more than a political party. It is a school of thought, a custodian of principle, and a moral centre within the liberation movement. Its current challenge is to restore that role with greater vigour, not to replace it with an electoral pursuit that may satisfy organisational pride but leave the working class weaker.

The revolution cannot be rescued through further division. It will be rescued through unity, ideological renewal, and disciplined collective action. The unfinished tasks of the National Democratic Revolution require not new slogans or separate ballots but a united front of progressive forces capable of thinking strategically and acting together.

Comrade Nzimande's document is therefore timely and valuable. It invites reflection rather than rebellion. It reminds us that the struggle for transformation remains far from complete and that the road ahead demands patience, clarity, and unity of purpose. The resolution to contest local government elections must be tested against these principles.

If the Party acts with caution and discipline, it will strengthen the revolution. If it acts out of frustration and emotion, it risks weakening the very project it seeks to rescue.

The revolution must be completed through renewal, not rupture. The unity of the motive forces remains the only viable path to the transformation of our society and the fulfillment of the historic promise of freedom. ■

The Spectacle of Grand Entrances in the Post-Colony

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

I started writing this in July 2023 after I saw Somizi Mhlongo enter the Durban July horse race hoisted in a cage like ancient European kings. A few days before that I had seen viral TikTok videos of pimped up taxis parading in small KwaZulu-Natal stadiums on trailers and flatbed trucks, entrances as spectacular as Somizi's. When I shared this idea with a friend she insisted I read certain works to make the point more credible. Eventually it's here.

The roots of obsession with grand entrances go back further than stadium lights, concert halls, red carpets or TikTok fame. They go back to the colonial era, when power was staged and performed. When the coloniser arrived, they didn't just step in, they exploded in. Brass bands announced the sovereign in India, Jamaica, South Africa and beyond. Victorian brass bands fitted with cornets and polished uniforms accompanied governors, viceroys and royalty. Their purpose was not simply musical. They stunned, impressed, disarmed. They said without words we own this. Arrival was theatre. The colonised learned awe as they learned loss.

That archive lingers. V S Naipaul, observing post-colonial political pageantry in West Africa in *The Crocodiles of Yamoussoukro*, shows how power adapted the architecture and performance of

empire, with grand entrances, retinues, fountains and choreographed welcomes. Even the feeding of crocodiles was spectacle for the crowd, a display of unassailable presence under the sun. Guy Debord later theorised this in his book *The Society of the Spectacle*. He argued that we live in a society where social relations are mediated by images, and seeing becomes believing. To appear is to exist, and not appearing is to die. The spectacle is not just parade. It is the system in motion.

As Shakespeare reminds us in *As You Like It*, all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players, they have their exits and their entrances. The moment of arrival is already a performance, one that signals status long before the script un-

folds. Kings did not just rule, they entered. Jesus rode into Jerusalem not on a gilded chariot but on a humble donkey, a carefully chosen gesture of spectacle that communicated humility, divinity and defiance. The entrance was the message. The gaze of the people, the applause, the symbolism, these are ancient currencies of power.

In the post-colony the ritual of grand entrances was not discarded. It was recycled. Today the spectacle of arrival takes new forms, but the logic remains. Politicians, tenderpreneurs, slay queens, gang bosses, taxi millionaires and celebrities don't merely appear. They ascend, descend, drop in, rise up.

Khuzani Mpungose once descended into Moses Mabhidia



VIEWPOINT

Stadium suspended by a rope. Julius Malema rose through confetti from beneath the stage at FNB Stadium in a red lift. Beyoncé descends from the heavens or climbs in light like a secular angel. These are modern self-coronations. The hoist is the chariot, the crane the royal steed, the audience the procession. The spectacle has outlived the empire. It has only changed costume.

And the audience. They know the rules. They look, record and repost. The camera is now the cymbal, the screen the drum. The crowd celebrates the arrival through likes and clips. The spectators give life to the spectacle, and the spectacle in turn gives power, temporary and curated power, to the performer. Power feeds on eyes and envy.

This logic has crept into the smallest corners of social life. In rural towns like Msinga and Mpangeni, taxis are lifted onto trailers and paraded like aircraft carriers in slow procession. Gucci hat, Brentwood trousers, Pringle golfer, Carvela shoes and a 9mm pistol complete the ensemble. At matric dances, boys show up in coffins or arrive in rented helicopters. At funerals, mourners appear in supercars to honour or outshine the dead. Grand entrances soothe fragile egos. They reinforce the clay legs of self-doubt. A man no one would notice on an ordinary day becomes someone if he steps out onto a red carpet flanked by bodyguards or strolls through a mall in dripping designer labels. VIP has become a cure for invisibility. *Izishimane ziba ama big dogs.*

Even ancient traditions have been drawn into the ritual. In days gone by the arrival of the king was announced by an im-

bongi, the praise singer whose voice sculpted the air. Today that is no longer enough. The king must arrive with blaring sirens, a convoy of SUVs, dozens of men in bootleg designer shades, news cameras, digital banners and a helicopter waiting in the field. Arrival has become ritual. Ritual has become machinery. All things ministerial and presidential in the post-colony.

In some ways empire never ended. It went local. The pageantry was repossessed and refitted by new actors. The old bands and guns have been replaced by cranes, choppers, speakers and sirens. This is also how we must understand the behaviour of those who loot state resources. They spend most of it on supercars and warehouse-size houses with chandeliers the length of a township street and triple-volume entrance halls. These are not built for comfort. They are exhibitions, stages for the grand entrance to re-enact the language of power. The message stays the same. You must watch because I must exist.

If I may digress, we took at Inanda have our own spectacle of entrance; a nauseating traffic



circle that represents spectacular failure of town planning by eThekweni Municipality. Thousands of cars get stuck here every afternoon for hours. New shops spring up but no expansion of the road and no provision for a taxi rank.

The strange thing is that we all know it. We see the show for what it is, yet we play along. In a world of scarcity, spectacle becomes hope. The slaying king and queen, the tenderpreneur, the pastor, they shimmer in the square because shimmer is the closest thing to victory. Slaying is a candle in the dark cave of deprivation. It manufactures a nobility the world has denied and sells it back online. Sorry Wynton Marsalis for misallocating your words.

And so the spectacle expands. The supercar at the tavern. The giant throne with red cushion. The beads stitched from Nigeria to KwaZulu. The son raised in air like a newborn deity. Each entrance says I matter, I am seen, I have arrived. The body consumes and is consumed, in the Bakhtinian sense. The performer feeds on the envy of eyes.

The irony is that the spectacle was once used to control the colonised. Now it is used by the marginalised to impose power over their own community. Still the logic remains tragic. The display is not life. It is the image replacing life, a show that turns flesh into billboard.

The pen dries again. Maybe that is the point. The page waits while the annoying convoy moves scoundrels, politicians, celebrities and ilk. The words sit still while the hoisted cage rises. In the end the spectacle wins, not because it is real, but because it is seen. ■



*Flames of Wars of
Independence of Latin
America, Revolutionaries
Writing their own History:*

The Story of Manuela Sáenz, the Liberator of the Liberator

■ By **AMBASSADOR PHATSE JUSTICE PITSO**

Awoman guerrilla fighter of tremendous courage, revolutionary wars on the mountain ranges of the Andes, fascinating peaks of the volcanic Chimborazo, splendour biodiversity on the beautiful valleys of Mindo and Vilcambamba, tumultuous water of river Rio Napo, tranquil haven of serenity, heartland of the rainforest of the Amazon, unfathomable creation of the universe, golden sunset of glittering billions stars, enchanting sunrise giving eagles impetus to fly the skies, echoes of the triumph of human spirit, Ecuador the oasis of titans, mother of the American wars of independence, Manuela Sáenz, the liberator of the liberator.

Dinosaur of unrelenting struggles for freedom, dreams of the universe our humanity, her shadows no more, heroism giving rise to legends of tomorrow, on the valleys of myths and reality, encompassing shrines and temples of the Antilles, bowl of the science of the universe, the beginning

and the end of the sun, moon and planet, feeling of love no more, the universe is love, mother conquering patriarchal narratives, enduring tales of selflessness and determination, trumpets of ferocious battles, Manuela Sáenz, what the future is yet to know.

Amazon the garden of hope, fountain of humanity aspirations, theatre of humanity consciousness, shaping destiny of generational millennia, bounds of love of the thousands hills of the rainforest, her symbolism, tenacity and heroism, beautiful flower of Simon Bolivar, Manuela Sáenz, glimpse of humanity freedom, revered revolutionary soldier of the people, foundations of its beginning, freedom of our America.

Vessel of great frontiers of humanity struggles, legend born out of societal stereotypes, moral foundations of medieval kingdoms, secret pregnancy of Spanish military officer and indigenous criollo woman, Simon Sáenz Vergara and Maria Joaquina Aizpurru, shame and os-

tracism, a child becoming a property of no one, without relationship with parents, relatives and community, growing with disappointment and misfortune, condemned for giving the world her eyes and ears, birthplace of rebelliousness and defiance, Manuela Sáenz, like billion stars over the horizons of our creation.

Consciousness the fabric of the universe, emblematic difficulties of nature, far beyond our imaginations, in the habitat of our mother nature, what will be to become who we are, creation of our universe, journey of eternity, our struggles today our freedom tomorrow, no measure of esteem, raised and schooled by philanthropism, Nuns at the convent of Santa Catalina in Quito, learning how to write and read, revolutionary not losing her dreams, giving answers to questions never asked, power of wisdom and knowledge, our future, our gratitude.

Professor Geneviève Carlton, renowned writer, researcher and

historian, her scholarly articles, dedicated to the revolutionary life of Manuela Sáenz, depicting her tormenting childhood, says:

"It is said that in a magnificent bed covered with velvet in satin, and adorned with an abundant fringe and precious gold ornaments, with coverlet in same style and sheets embroidered in Belgian lace, was her luxurious birth covered with dark scandal born out of wedlock."

Married to a wealthy English merchant, Dr James Thorne, living at the conservative aristocratic suburb of Pueblo Libre in Lima, Republic of Peru, heartbeat of Spanish oligarchy, privileged to the corridors of power relations, understanding the political, social and economic realities, colonial oppression, necessity of struggles for freedom of indigenous people, defying her husband, support the struggles of the people, joining patriotic forces for the liberation of our America, the struggle continues, our universe our humanity.

Her proximity to the ruling class, infiltrating the Spanish colonial loyalist forces, spying, supplying information and arms to independence movement, acts of sabotage, mobilising Spanish military officers, defecting into the ranks of revolutionary forces – led to General Jose de San Martin, conferring unto her, the order of the Sun, highest decoration within the ranks of the patriotic forces, recognition of her outstanding contribution, revolutionary struggles against Spanish imperialism and colonial domination.

General Antonio Jose de Sucre, the most decorated soldier, declaring victory of liberated Ecuador and Upper Peru, naming Bolivia, honour of the liberator Simon Bolivar, cognisance of her incalculable contribution, decorum of highest oratory tribute, made this



profound attribution to Manuela: *"My Gracious Lady, the noble of your possessions, for the defense of the state, is already suggested by your generosity, please accept the gratitude, of the whole corps of the Army of liberation, in whose name, I am able to declare, that there are heroines, such as yourself, with whom, they can share their glory."*

Animosity led Manuela Sáenz abandoning her husband, who was vehemently opposed to her involvement and clandestine activities of the forces for liberation, compelling her to return to Quito, where she continued her courageous revolutionary work, gathering information, distributing pamphlets, organising financial resources for the activities of the underground, providing shelter, clothing and medical care to combatants.

Flames of her rebelliousness, brighter than her fears, a woman freedom fighter with unsubmissive character, traits of outstanding military knowledge and leadership, defining moments of a romantic affair, in the mist of fierce battlefield, glance of the most handsome patriotic soldier, the liberator seeing a creative desirable woman, who he did not just take as a lover, but a confidant, who without exception, managing his personal affairs, with highest honour, a woman Commander giving orders to men and woman,

bedrock of sacrifice, guerrilla of a special type.

Manuela Sáenz, wrote a painstaking letter to her English husband, knowing well what she mean to say, I do not love you anymore, my heart stolen by the liberator Simon Bolivar, love the ultimate truth at the heart of the universe:

"Do you believe, after being the mistress, of the General for seven years, with the security of possessing his heart, I could prefer to be a mistress of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or Holy Trinity. If I feel anything it is that you haven't accepted, any better your having being deserted, I know very well that nothing can unite me with you, under the auspices that you call honour. But do you believe me less honourable for his being my lover and not my husband? Ah! I do not live under social preoccupation invented for mutual torment. Leave me, my dear Englishman. Let's make a deal, in heaven we will marry again, but on earth, No."

Manuela Sáenz played a crucial leadership role during the battle of Pinchincha, decisive battle during Ecuadorian wars of independence, which took place on 24 May 1822, proving her prowess of freedom struggles, alongside General Antonio Jose de Sucre, defeating loyalist forces of the Spanish colonial government, paving the way for the formation of the Republic of Ecuador. She was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in recognition of her heroic leadership role during these battles.

When the patriotic forces, led by Simon Bolivar, marched through the streets of Quito, celebrating victory, over Spanish occupational forces, admiring the liberator, as he passed before her house, Manuela Sáenz, threw flowers unto him from the balcony. Later that evening at the reception,

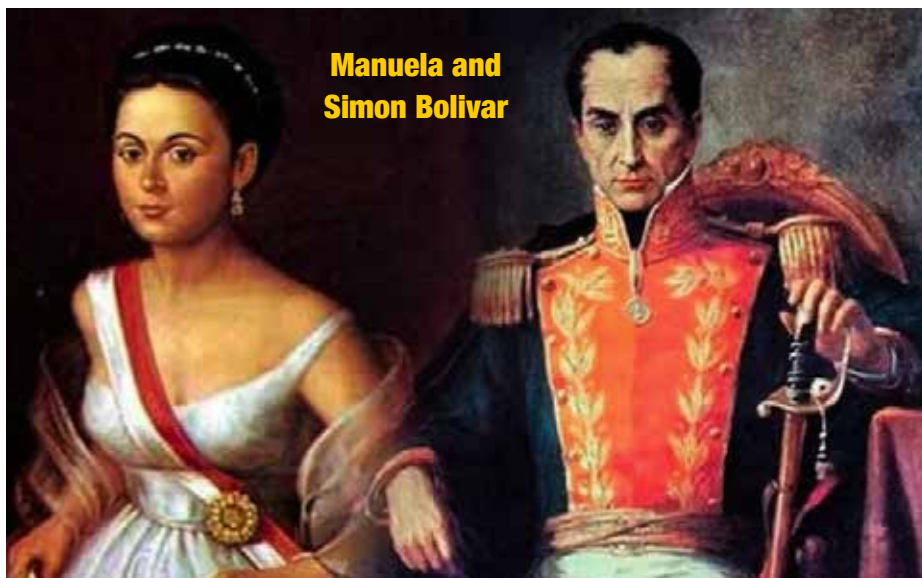
celebrating the victory of the liberation of Quito, she danced in his honour, and Bolivar, with an ingratiating smile, during his address said *“if all my soldiers had your aim, I would have won all the battles”*, later writing her a letter saying *“learn to love and do not leave me, not even to go with God himself”*.

She was equally a participant, during the historic conference of Guayaquil, of 26- 27 July 1822, when Simon Bolivar and Jose San Martin, discussed the future of the post independent Latin America, two diverse different views, with Jose San Martin favouring the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, Simon Bolivar a republican form of government, a debate Bolivar won against Martin. In an unprecedented gesture of the unity of revolutionary forces, General Martin, saluted Simon Bolivar, declaring him the father of the wars of independence of Latin America:

“I have finished my public life, I shall go to France and live out the days of my life in retirement. Only time and events will say which of us has seen the future with clarity.”

Manuela took the centre stage, as a cavalry officer, fighting battles, alongside the revolutionary patriotic forces of Simon Bolivar, earning the rank of a captain during the battle of Junin, which took place on the 26 August 1824 Peruvian war of independence, that saw Simon Bolivar defeat the loyalist forces, in the valleys and mountains of the Andes.

During an outlandish evening, in a room at Palacio des San Carlos in Bogota, Colombia, 25 September 1828, Manuela Sáenz with Simon Bolivar, whispering into his ears, a romantic poetry, flower of the peacock, crown of the liberator, from the deep sleep, sweet dreams and melodies, tormenting



Manuela and Simon Bolivar

sounds, footsteps from the assassins, dogs barking at the moon, for no reasons, she persuaded him not to take fight, with the gang of immorality, escaping through the window, into the wilderness, redeeming the life of the liberator.

Manuela Sáenz proved her loyalty and unequivocal support to Simon Bolivar, when the rest walked away.

After the death of Simon Bolivar, disillusioned, demoralised, persecuted, betrayed, exiled, prodigal daughter, before the eyes of the Generals, the only crime her everlasting love to the liberator, Manuela ended up destitute in the streets of Jamaica, selling tobacco and writing letters to whalers, courting Latin American women, died of the deadly disease of diphtheria, buried like a pauper in a mass grave.

In memory of her magnanimous life, a legend born out of adversity, shining the brightest in the mist of difficulties, remembered by her enduring spirit, her liberation ideals, encompassing humanity freedom, posthumously conferred the honorary General of the Republic of Ecuador by President Rafael Correa in 2007, her symbolic remains were buried alongside

Simon Bolivar, at the National Pantheon in Caracas, Republic of Venezuela by President Hugo Chavez.

Manuela Sáenz, the mother of all revolutions, heroine born out of humanity struggles, heart filled with glorious spirits of bravery and selflessness, a legend living forever in the hearts of the people, her immortal actions never to be forgotten by history, triumph of humanity against adversity, our universe, our humanity, the path of storms into the future, sacred values struggles, freedom and equality, we shall achieve.

She remains a revolutionary to be honoured by posterity, walking billions of miles into the horizons of the stars, for generations to come. Inspired by her exemplary, the old shall be the new, our freedom our future humanity, heroism of the women of the Antilles, on the mountain top of the Andes, garden of the rainforest of the Amazon, journey of great titans of humanity, the eyes and ears of our beautiful universe. ■

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

Ramaphosa: The Long Game

AN EXTRACT

■ By **YONELA DIKO**

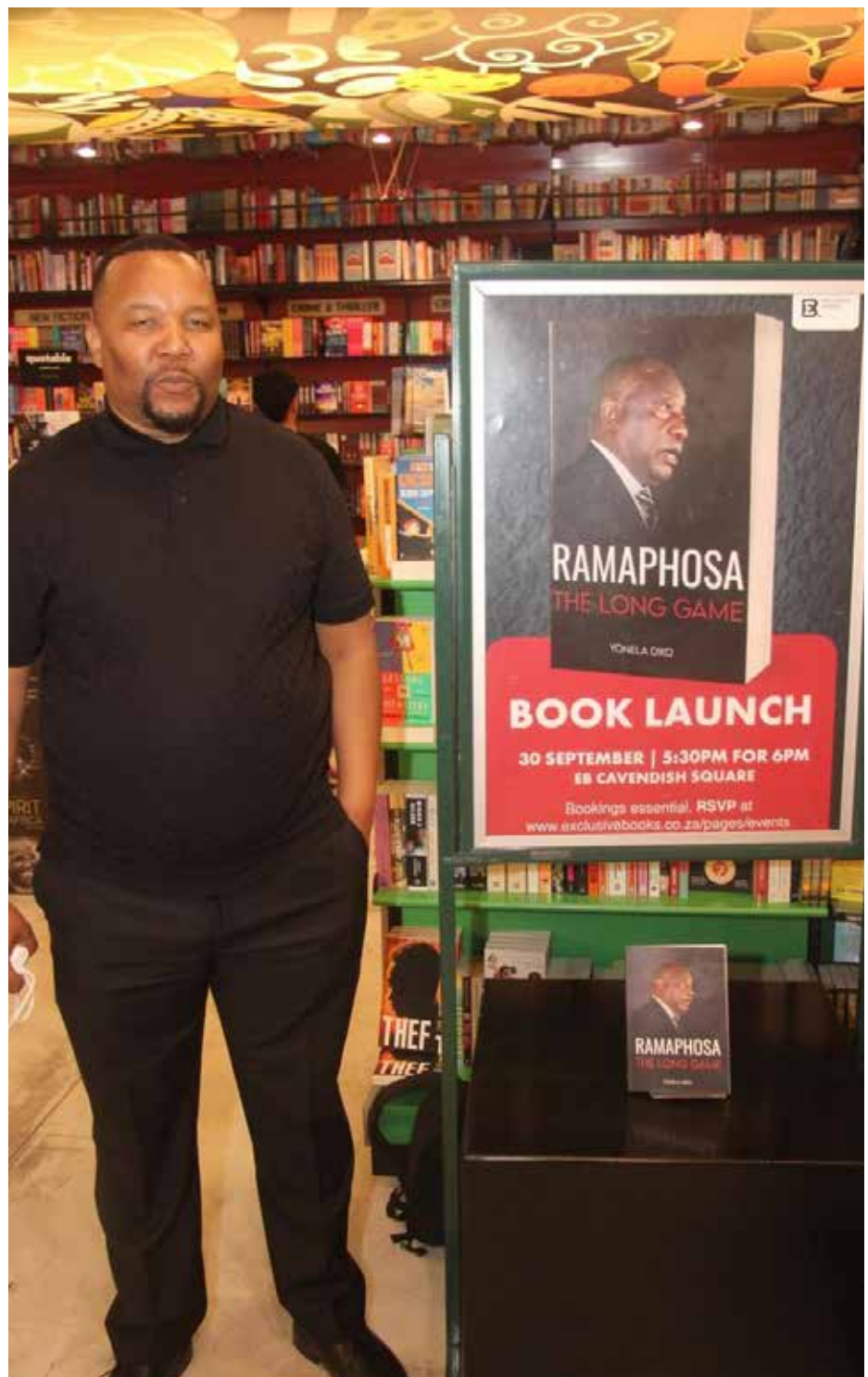
THE election of Cyril Ramaphosa as President of the ANC in December 2017 was seismic, and the expectations for his presidency were nothing less than the rebirth of a nation.

The ANC had finally reached its 'Kairos moment' in 2017. Just a year before the ANC had suffered its most humiliating electoral defeat, losing the governance of all the Metros except Buffalo City along with the loss of billions in budgets to make a difference in people's lives in the Metros. A year before that, at the 2015 NGC, the ANC had acknowledged that it had dropped by 10.5% in the urban vote in the 2014 national elections, with EFF gaining 11% and DA gaining 6.5%. Depending on how the party chose its leaders in 2017, the party was without a doubt going to lose the 2019 National and Provincial elections. Something had to give.

Ramaphosa therefore represented the best possible chance for the ANC to halt its immediate decline and change trajectory.

But first, a transition had to happen. The old was refusing to die, and the new was struggling to be born. There was a rocky start to the term of the new President.

To sustain the goodwill and restoration of hope and trust that



a Ramaphosa election as ANC President in December 2017 ushered in for the ruling party and the country, the continuation of Zuma as the country's president was no longer tenable.

The ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) took a decision early in 2018 that Zuma had to go and Ramaphosa needed to take over as the country's president in the new year, as early in the year as possible, and preferably before the February 2018 State of the Nation address.

This NEC decision led to a tussle between Ramaphosa as President of the ANC and Jacob Zuma as the President of the Republic at the start of 2018.

Ramaphosa's approach of soft persuasion rather than aggressive enforcement of the NEC resolution for Zuma to step down came across as reluctance with authority, and for a country that had truly run out of patience with Zuma, this soft hand began to seem like weakness, so that people began to wonder if this new ANC President was up for the hard decisions that lay ahead to save the Republic from the wreckage of Zuma.

Back-to-back meetings began between the two Presidents: The meetings went on for days on end, into weeks, and Ramaphosa started missing appointments as the new President of the ANC and the popular kid in town, to the dismay of supporters and organisers. The reason was that he was still locked in meetings with Zuma, trying to persuade him to accept the NEC decision.

Rumours that Ramaphosa was considering accepting Zuma's request to stay longer for one rea-

son or another did not help in the emasculation of the new President in the eyes of the public.

After weeks of asking Zuma to step down to no avail, Zuma would finally resign only after the NEC threatened to remove him through a parliamentary vote.

Ramaphosa would eventually give his first State of the Nation Address a few days later. He had lost some political capital, and a seed of doubt about his firm hand when it was necessary was planted. Nonetheless, he remained popular a lot longer in what would be dubbed 'Ramaphoria'.

Since those early signs of lacking boldness and a firm follow-through, a public narrative that Ramaphosa is indecisive has been reinforced, and this has almost become an enduring and defining feature of his public perception.

The expectation on Ramaphosa's Presidency was that he would act like a Bull-in-a-china-shop, kicking doors on every government department and state entity and firing everyone accused or implicated in corruption. When that did not seem to be Ramaphosa's approach, many people started accusing him of dragging his feet on important decisions, particularly consequential ones that had the potential of rendering his Presidency ineffective.

The President seemed slow to act on many critical things, including acting on all the reports of various commissions he had instituted since becoming President, particularly the High-Level Report on State Security, whose failure to implement became almost catastrophic for him, giving one Arthur Fraser time to plot

and attack first, over and against what is Fraser's inevitable and deserved day in the dock for a multitude of his alleged sins.

Even more difficult for Ramaphosa was firing non-performing people and those who publicly defied him as President.

Indecisiveness or strategy?

Some people remember Ramaphosa as a very decisive leader, ruthless even. People like Kuben Pillay, who worked under Ramaphosa in the early days of NUM, or respected and accomplished leaders like Cheryl Carolus, who was deputy secretary-general of the ANC when Ramaphosa was secretary-general. Carolus remembers Ramaphosa as a leader who never buried his head when hard decisions had to be taken and certainly not afraid to tighten the ropes when people broke the rules.

If Ramaphosa is a decisive leader, ruthless even, could he have calculated, wrong or right, that a hard wired approach, though it may win him praise in the short term as decisive, only serves to deepen divisions in the party and strengthens the hand of detractors, leading a leader to alienate himself from their own organisation and, in the end, to leave the organisation bitter and angry, with a troubled legacy.

The lingering question is whether this hesitant-posture is a strategy. Certainly, with time, Ramaphosa has stung many of his past formidable opponents in ways that have been fatal to their political careers.

The President seem to have concluded that if he wanted to accomplish anything, whilst keeping

BOOK REVIEW

the ANC and country united, he had to start where most citizens agree, at rebuilding and strengthening institutions and then accomplish all his Presidential wishes through those recalibrated institutions.

Ramaphosa's end in mind was clear: a strong ANC and a strong Government that can fulfil the aspirations of members and citizens. Inheriting both the ANC and government at their weakest, battered by years of being hollowed out and wrecked for greed and gluttony, the President knew that we are far from where we need to be, and the road will be hard, but we know where we need to be.

The rebuilding and strengthening of institution would require a painful process of laying the institutions bare, opening them up

to intense scrutiny, eliminating all rogue elements, and replenishing them with new and principled personnel who will execute the countries vision towards a fairer and equal society. The commission's of inquiry that have been spread across different departments and different entities have been that vehicle for restoring and rebuilding state institutions.

Through renewed institutions, Ramaphosa has achieved remarkable things. It is the renewed NWC and NDC that would remove the most disruptive and divisive Secretary General the ANC had ever had, one Ace Magashule. It would be the renewed and rejuvenated ANC Caucus in Parliament that would hold the rouge Public Protector accountable in her singular mission which seem to have been to remove the President from office.

The renewed State Owned enterprises, who had become basket cases for the state started showing green shoots. More State Institutions, The NPA, PIC, State Security and others were laid bare and recalibrated with new personnel and turned away from being used as tools for political survival of one political leader.

Ramaphosa's first term was a test in endurance and single mindedness, with heavy winds and strong currents, one crisis after another, but in the end, through patience and a clear end in mind, much has been accomplished.

Indeed it has been a long game. The Journey continues. ■

Yonela Diko is the Author of the book **Ramaphosa – The Long Game**.



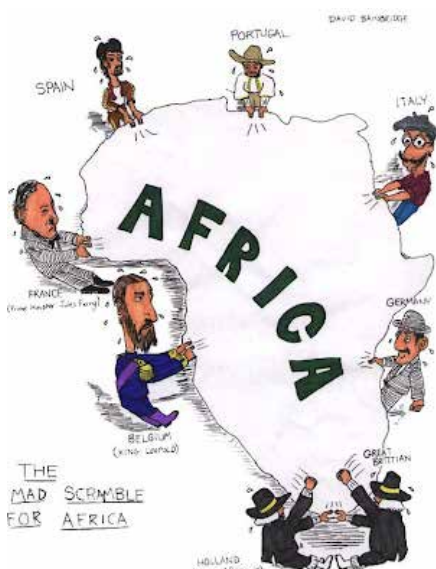
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

15–21 November 2025

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

15 November 1884 Start of Berlin Conference that formalized Scramble for Africa



On 15 November 1884, the Berlin Conference of Western colonial powers was convened by Germany's first chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, lasting until February 1885. It resulted in the General Act of the Berlin Conference that divided Africa amongst colonial powers, set colonial boundaries, rules for further colonization of African coastal territories, internationalised the rivers Niger and Congo, and gave King Leopold of Belgium control over the Congo. The 14 countries represented at the conference, in addition to Germany, were the Austria-Hungary Empire, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, United States of America, Italy, France, Britain/United Kingdom, Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Sweden-Norway and the Ottoman Republic.

15 November 1920 First General Assembly of the League of Nations

The League of Nations, formed after World War I was the forerunner to the United Nations Organisation (UN). It was formed on 19 January 1920 with 48 member countries, including the Union of South Africa. Its first General Assembly was held on 15 November 1920.

15 November 1931 Sculptor Lucas Sithole born



Lucas Sithole, renowned South African sculptor, was born in KwaThema, Springs, Transvaal (now Gauteng) to a Zulu father and a Swazi mother. He created more than 800 sculptures in wood, stone liquid steel and bronze. Sithole often used to give an explanation why he made his sculptures. As one of South Africa's best known sculptors internationally, about 200 works are in collections in the Americas and

Europe. Lucas Sithole passed on in 1993, but his work can be viewed on the commemoration site <http://www.sithole.com>

15 November 1988 Barend Strydom kills 8 people in Pretoria

On 15 November 1988, 21 year-old Barend Strydom went on a killing spree with his pistol and attempted to shoot every Black person he encountered. He killed 8 people and seriously wounded 16 before he was confronted and stopped by Simon Mukondoleli, a taxi driver working in the capital. Strydom claimed to be the head of a white supremacist group called the Wit Wolwe. Upon investigation, it was found that the organisation did not exist and was a figment of Strydom's imagination. He claimed that his actions were a necessity to the survival of his tribe. An eyewitness account of the event is contained in the book, *Undercover With Mandela Spies: The story of the boy who crossed the square*, by Bradley Steyn.

15 November 1994 RDP White Paper tabled in Parliament

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was the ANC's blueprint for the transformation of South Africa into a non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous democracy. It formed the basis of the ANC's elections

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Manifesto of 1994, with its credo of a **Better Life for All**. The White Paper on the RDP tabled in 1994 addressed the issues of transformation, but within a fiscal and monetary framework that eventually laid the basis for the GEAR. It also introduced the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC).

15 November 1996 Vanessa Nakate born



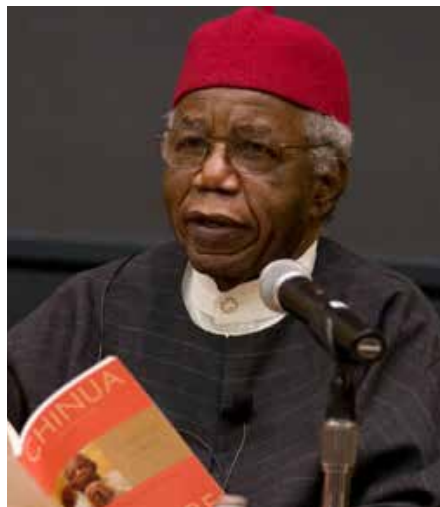
Ugandan environmentalist activist, founder of **Youth for the Future of Africa** was born in Kampala. Nakata staged protests for months across Kampala, including outside the parliament, to raise awareness of climate change and the degradation of the country's rain forests. She wrote her autobiography, *A Bigger Picture* in 2022.

16 November 1860 First Indian indentured labourers arrive in South Africa

The first Indian indentured labourers imported by the Dutch in South Africa were reported to have arrived on board the *Truro* from Madras to work in the sugar cane plantation in Port-Natal. The group was made up of 197 men, 89 women and 59 children. Most returned to India at the end

of their term, but a few stayed behind. Those that stayed quickly established themselves as industrial and railway workers, clerks and interpreters. Today, Durban in Kwazulu-Natal has the highest population of people of Indian origin, outside of India.

16 November 1930 Author Chinua Achebe born



Chinua Achebe (1930–2013) is one of the most prominent African writers, famous for his novels and other writings on Nigeria and the African continent. Achebe was born in Ogidi, Nigeria, the son of a teacher in a missionary school. He attended Government College in Umuahia, followed by the University College of Ibadan, where he studied English, history and theology. He worked as a journalist and public servant and during the Nigerian Civil War (1967–70) Achebe was in the Biafran government service, and then taught at US and Nigerian universities. Achebe wrote his first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), the most translated African novel; followed by novels, essays and poetry collections *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966), *Beware, Soul Brother* (1971), *Girls at War*

(1972), *How the Leopard Got His Claws* (1972), *Christmas in Biafra* (1973), *Morning Yet on Creation Day* (1975), *The Trouble with Nigeria* (1983), *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), *Hopes and Impediments* (1988), *There was a Country. A personal history of the Biafra* (2012). In 1990 Achebe was paralyzed from the waist down as the result of a serious car accident. Despite the setback, he remained active and continued writing and publishing. In 2007 Achebe won the **Man Booker International Prize** for fiction.

16 November 1989 South African beaches open to all races



The Separate Amenities Act of 1953 divided all public (and private) amenities on the basis of race, from hospitals, buses, trains and government offices, to parks, cinemas, restaurants and beaches. After the second Defiance campaign started by the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) in 1989, where activists defied apartheid petty laws by going to swim on whites-only beaches, then President De Klerk announced on 16 November 1989 that South African beaches would be opened to all people across the racial lines. The Act was repealed in October 1990.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



17 November 1952 ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa born

President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa was born on 17 November 1952 in Soweto, Johannesburg. Ramaphosa began his studies at the University of the North in 1972, where he became involved in student politics, joining the South African Student Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention (BPC). He was detained in 1974 for organising pro-Frelimo rallies that were held to celebrate the independence of Mozambique. He was detained for the second time in 1976 following the Soweto student uprising and later imprisoned. Ramaphosa became the first general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers in 1982. In 1991, he was elected ANC Secretary-General and subsequently became head of the ANC team that negotiated the transition to democracy. Following the country's first democratic elections in 1994, he was elected chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly, which wrote South Africa's new democratic constitution. Comrade Ramaphosa moved into the private sector in 1996. He was the executive chairperson of Shanduka Group, which he founded in

2001. He served as the deputy chairperson of the National Planning Commission from 2010 until 2014. Comrade Ramaphosa was appointed Chairman of the National Planning Commission on 3 June 2014. In December 2012, he was elected Deputy President of the African National Congress (ANC) and at the 2017 national conference he was elected as President of the ANC, and re-

elected President at the 2022 national conference. He served as Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa from 25 May 2014 until 15 February 2018. Cde Ramaphosa serves as President of the Republic of South Africa since his election on 15 February 2018.

17 November 1989 Anton Fransch killed by apartheid police

Anton Fransch was born and raised in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town. He was the second youngest of 7 siblings. He attended Modderdam High School where he joined COSAS. He joined Bonteheuwel Military Wing and went to Angola to join Umkhonto we Sizwe and receive military training. He returned in 1989 to expand the Western Cape MK operations. His position was discovered and on the 17th November 1989. He was killed in a house in Athlone, Cape Town, after a 6 hour gun battle with apartheid security forces.



THIS DAY

ANTON FRANSCH KILLED BY APARTHEID POLICE

17 NOVEMBER 1989

Anton Fransch was born and raised in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town. He was the second youngest of 7 siblings. He attended Modderdam High School and joined the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). This was during the 1980's when the resistance against the apartheid regime was intensifying. He also joined Bonteheuwel Military Wing. He went to Angola to receive military training. He returned in 1989 to expand the network and actions of the Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC. His position was discovered and on the 17th November 1989, he was killed in a house in Athlone, Cape Town, after a 6-hour gun battle with the security forces of the apartheid regime.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

17 November 2004 Breyton Paulse included in Springbok team after challenge by ANCYL



Although South African rugby was united after years of apartheid segregation and discrimination, leading to the return of the Springboks to international rugby in 1992 and winning the Rugby World Cup in 1995, transformation remained difficult. In 2004, Breyton Paulse, a Black rugby player was omitted from the Springboks prior to a test with England. The ANC Youth League challenged this decision, stating that *“transformation cannot be put in reverse. Attempts to keep rugby as an exclusive sport for Whites will never work”*. On 17 November 2004, Paulse was included in the national team. Breyton Paulse is known for his tremendous speed on the pitch. He was selected for both the 2003 and 2007 World Cup finals. He played for the French Clermont Auvergne and the local Stormers and was named as the player of the year in 2000.

18 November 1951 Clements Kadalie passed away in East London

Founder and Secretary General of the Industrial Commercial

Union (ICU), Kadalie died in East London. The ICU was formed in 1919, and by the end of that year Kadalie led the dockworkers strike in Cape Town. Kadalie was born in Nkhata Bay District, Malawi in 1896. At 16, he graduated from the Livingston Missionary Institute as a teacher, with honours. He taught for a year, but went travelling southwards, working as a clerk in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and visiting other parts of Southern Africa, and eventually ending up in Cape Town, where he settled in 1918. Kadalie became a militant leader of black workers, and eventually settled in East London with his family, where he was also organiser for the ANC, and lived till his passing. Academic, activist and author Rhoda Kadalie is one of his granddaughters.

18 November 1989 Chikane, Lekota and Molefe convicted of Treason

Popo Molefe, Patrick Lekota and Moses (Moss) Chikane, prominent UDF leaders and anti-apartheid activists were arrested in April 1988 and charged with treason. The government accused the United Democratic Front (UDF) of being responsible for the Vaal uprising and arrested UDF officials Lekota, publicity secretary, Molefe, national secretary, and Chikane, Transvaal Pro-

vincial secretary, together with more than 20 other suspects. Though several were released on bail after one year, the three were kept in Pretoria Central Prison. Lekota, Molefe, Chikane and Tom Manthatha were found guilty in Delmas of treason on 18 November 1988.

19 November 1981 Griffiths Mxenge assassinated

Griffiths Mxenge, African National Congress (ANC) veteran and apartheid lawyer and activist from KwaZulu Natal, was assassinated and his body was severely mutilated in an act of barbaric brutality on 19 November 1981. The magistrate at the inquest into his death found that his death was caused by the act of some unknown person or persons. In 1996, at the Truth and Reconciliation, his self-confessed murderers applied for amnesty. They are Dirk Coetzee, Almond Nofomela, Joe Masabela, Brian Ngqulunga and David Tshikalanga, policemen and agents of the apartheid government's death squads. They were granted amnesty by the TRC.



**A MOST COURAGEOUS
HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTIVIST. HE
REMAINS A BEACON
OF HOPE. A FEARLESS
STRUGGLE ICON WHO
PAID THE ULTIMATE
PRICE FOR OUR
FREEDOM**

**#ZWELIMKHIZE
ON GRIFFITHS MXENGE**



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

20 November 1604 Emperor Fasilides, Founder of Gondar born

Ethiopian Emperor Fasilides is born in Bulga, Shewa. A noted planner and builder, he established Gondar as the Ethiopian Empire's capital city and created civic complexes, bridges and churches. He cut ties with Europe, banished Catholics and supported the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He was emperor from 1632-1667.

20 November 1923 Nobel Laurette Nadine Gordimer born



Author, cultural activist and winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize for Literature, Nadine Gordimer, was born in Springs. One of South Africa's most prolific novelists, she also wrote non-fiction on various South African subjects and made TV documentaries. She was one

of the founders of the Congress of South African Writers (COSAW). Gordimer received 15 honorary degrees from universities all over the world. She published 13 novels and 10 short story collections (translated in 40 different languages). Gordimer passed away in July 2014.

20 November 1957 University College Hospital of Ibadan commissioned

West Africa's largest hospital, the 1000 bed University College Hospital of Ibadan in Nigeria is commissioned after completion on this day. Today, it remains The flagship tertiary health care institution in Nigeria, offering world-class training, research and services.

20 November 1988 UN condemns South Africa's actions against neighbours

After decades of terrorism by South Africa against its neighbours who gave support to liberation movements, including invading these countries, planting bombs and killing not only liberation fighters but also citizens of these countries, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed resolutions condemning South Africa's aggression against its Southern African neighbours.

The UN General Assembly re-affirmed the legitimacy of the region's struggle against apartheid and the legitimacy of armed resistance.

20 November 1994 Lusaka Protocol for Angola peace signed

The Lusaka Protocol to end the 19-year civil war in Angola is signed in Zambia, between the Angolan government led by MPLA and the UNITA rebel movement. Despite the Protocol, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi continued the war, until his death in 2002.

21 November 1947 Poet Jared Angira born

The poet was born in Siaya, Kenya. Angira published his first collection of poems, Juices in 1970, edited literary magazine Busara and was a founder of the Kenya Writer's Association.

21 November 1984 Operation Moses starts

The operation to airlift 8,000 Ethiopian Jews from refugee camps in Sudan where they fled famine in their country to Israel starts. Today there are some 160,000 Israelis of Ethiopian origin.

21 November 1985 Mamelodi Massacre

Thirteen residents were gunned down in Mamelodi by South African police during a peaceful protest. This followed the declaration of a State of emergency on 25 July 1985 by President PW Botha in 36 of South Africa's 260 magisterial districts. Within the first six months of the Emergency, 575 people were killed in political violence. Under the provisions of the

The truth isn't always beauty,
but the hunger for it is.

Nadine Gordimer

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



“We were expected to destroy one another and ourselves and collectively in the worst racial conflagration. Instead, we as a people choose the path of negotiation, compromise and peaceful settlement. Instead of hatred and revenge, we chose reconciliation and nation-building.”

NELSON MANDELA

Emergency, organisations could be banned and meetings prohibited; the Commissioner of Police could impose restrictions on media coverage of the Emergency; and the names of detained people could not be disclosed.

21 November 1989

Last SADF troops withdrawn from Namibia

The Citizen reported that the remaining 1 500 South African troops in South West Africa (Namibia) had been withdrawn during November. South Africa ruled Namibia as a protectorate taken over from the Germans after World War 2. The SADF fought against those fighting for the liberation of Namibia, led by SWAPO and also used the country as a basis to destabilise its neighbours. The battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988, was a turning point in the history of southern Africa, and soon after negotiations started. On 21 March 1990 the country gained independence from South Africa as the Republic of Namibia, with Swapo leader Sam Nujoma elected as president.

21 November 2000

Baphumelele origins

Retired teacher Rosie Mashale found a toddler abandoned on her Kayelitsha doorstep and expands

into an orphanage and daycare centre, which eventually provides refuge and service to some of the 14,000 homeless street children in Cape Town. She established the Baphumelele Foundation (meaning ‘you have progressed’) to teach job skills to homeless teens.

21 November 2004

NCOP Chairperson Joyce Kgoali passed on



The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Joyce Kgoali, passed away following complications after a minor operation. Kgoali was also a National Executive Committee (NEC) member of the African National Congress Women’s League (ANCWL) and a Provincial Executive Committee member of the ANC in Gauteng. She

was MEC for Public Works and Transport in Gauteng before appointed as substitute to Naledi Pandor as the chairperson of NCOP. Mam Joyce was born in Lesotho on 13 January 1950, and worked in the textile sector where she joined the trade union movement and became a leader in SACTWU. She was also active in the ANC underground structures, in the UDF and the Federation of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW).

21 November 2013

First CubSAT satellite

Students from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology launched South Africa’s first CubeSat, type of nano-satellite, into space. It provides valuable space weather details, orbiting Earth up to 15 times a day at an altitude of 600km.

21 November 2017

President Mugabe resigns

After 37 years in power, Zimbabwe President Robert Gabriel Mugabe (93) resigned after internal ructions in his party ZANU-PF following the sacking of former vice-president Emmerson Mnangagwa. His letter of resignation was read out in Parliament, and he was replaced by President Mnangagwa. ■

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

15–21 November 2025

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

15 November

International Day against Transnational Organised Crime



Organised crime thrives worldwide, affecting governance and political processes, and weakening the advancement of the rule of law. It encompasses, inter alia, illicit trafficking of firearms, drugs, protected species, cultural property, or falsified medical products and, among its most severe manifestations, human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. It also includes the laundering of proceeds of crime and obstruction of justice. Moreover, with all forms of organized crime shifting ever more to being dependent on or incorporating online aspects, including the use of virtual assets, its reach and capability of harm is increasing. Organized criminal groups are flexible in changing or expanding their illicit businesses for profit. They misuse vulnerabilities and crisis situations such as economic downturns, natural disasters, and armed conflicts exploiting them for their own purposes.

15 November

Global Women's Entrepreneurship Day

Women still face disadvantage in the labour markets, with higher unemployment and under employment. Entrepreneurship therefore provides an important avenue for economic inclusion and financial independence. 80% of employment in the continent is offered by SMEs. The United Nations reports that



women reinvest around 90% of their income in the health and education of their children and community, compared to just 35% by men, indicating the importance of supporting women's entrepreneurship to effect socio-economic upliftment. The UN further notes that women are responsible for around 70% of informal cross-border trading in Africa.

16 November

International Day for Tolerance

The day is celebrated by the United Nations to strengthen tolerance by fostering mutual understanding among cultures and peoples. This is at the heart of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is more important than ever in this era of rising



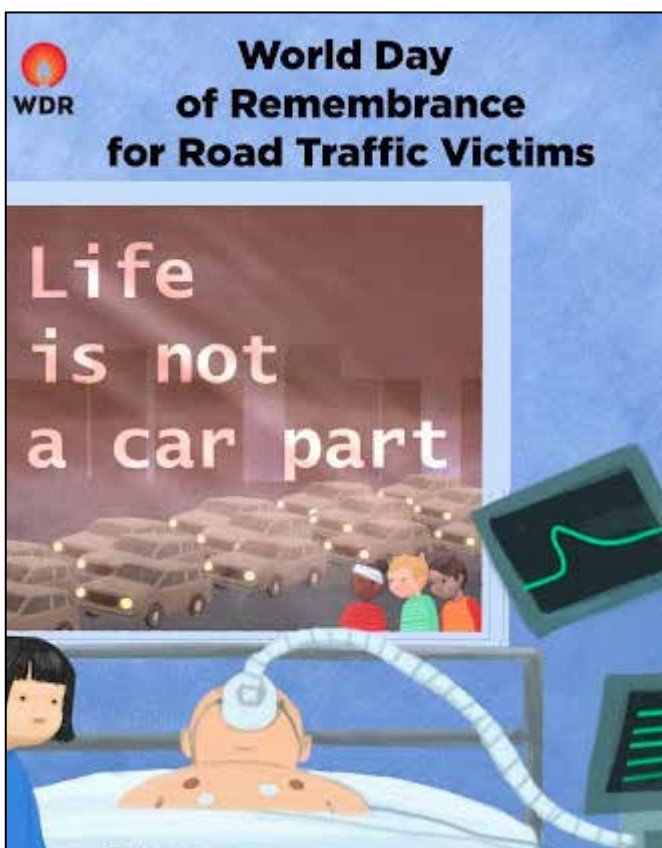
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

and violent extremism, racism and other intolerances, gender-based violence and widening conflicts that are characterized by a fundamental disregard for human life.

16 November

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims (WDR) is commemorated on the third Sunday of November each year – to remember the many millions killed and injured on the world's roads, together with their families, friends and many others who are also affected. It is also a Day on which we thank the emergency services and reflect on the tremendous burden and cost of this daily continuing disaster to families, communities and countries, and on ways to halt it. Road deaths and injuries are sudden, violent, traumatic events. Their impact is long-lasting, often permanent. Each year, millions of newly injured and bereaved people from every corner of the world are added to the countless millions who already suffer. The cumulative toll is truly tremendous. The grief and distress experienced by this huge number of people is all the greater because many of the victims are young, because many of the crashes could and should have been prevented and because governments' and society's response to road death and injury and to bereaved and injured



victims is often inadequate, unsympathetic, and inappropriate to a loss of life or quality of life. This special Remembrance Day is therefore intended to respond to the great need of road crash victims for public recognition of their loss and suffering. It has also become an important tool for governments and those who work to prevent crashes or respond to the aftermath, since it offers the opportunity to demonstrate the enormous scale and impact of road deaths and injuries and the urgent need for action.

18 November

African Statistics Day

The day was designated by the African Union, to strengthen statistics capacities in member states. Statistics help us to understand our communities and countries, major trends and form the basis of public policy.

18 November

International Day of Islamic Art

The day raises awareness of past and contemporary artistic expressions of Islam, and the contribution of culture through Islamic Art to civilization. Islamic art spans a period of over 1400 years, and include architecture, calligraphy, painting, glass, ceramics, and textiles, among others. Islamic art has become an integral part of the art expression of the African continent, with the first Islamic Diaspora found in Africa, when the Prophet Muhammed sent some of his family to safe refuge in Ethiopia as he fled Mecca for Medina.

19 November

World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse



Globally, countless young individuals are victims of sexual misconduct and exploitation. Such violations are pervasive, cutting across all nations and societal strata. Children, especially girls, are at a great-

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



er risk of experiencing forced sex and sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, including both online and offline, and it's also a common situation during armed conflicts. Rising inequalities, deepening poverty, and structural discrimination on intersecting grounds, continue to exacerbate the situations that expose children to exploitation, abuse and violence. Child victims and survivors of such crimes can face long-lasting negative impacts on their physical, mental, and sexual health and development. Such trauma on children may even amount to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Many victims and survivors never disclose and/or seek justice, rehabilitation or support because of the shame.

19 November World Toilet Day



The day raises awareness about the importance of clean and accessible sanitation. Human waste cre-

ates illnesses, and access to toilets is therefore a basic human right. We still have more than 4.2 billion people living without safely managed sanitation options in the world today. In South Africa, pit toilets in schools and communities continue to take lives of children, and we must recommit to eradicate pit toilets from our schools, and access to sanitation for all.

19 November

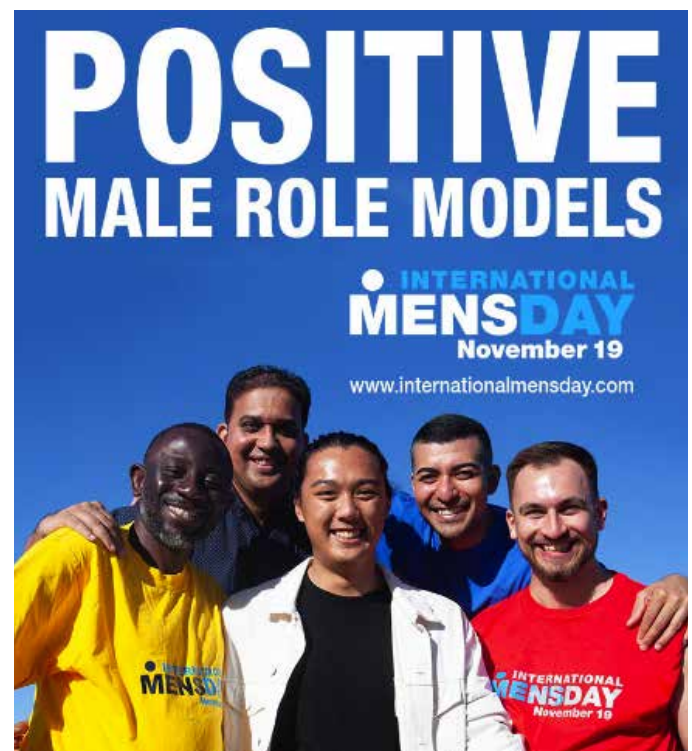
Geographic Information Systems Day

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are digital platforms for storing, analyzing, and visualizing geographic data. These systems help users understand patterns and relationships in spatial data. GIS technology combines location data with descriptive information to provide detailed maps and analyses. It's widely used in various fields, such as urban planning, environmental management, and public safety. GIS Day falls on the third Wednesday of every November.

19 November

International Men's Day

International Men's Day is celebrated to look at alternatives to toxic masculinity, and a chance to teach boys about the values, character, and responsibilities of being a man. Focus areas for the day therefore include health, well-being, integrity, improving gender relations and working for gender equality, highlight positive male role models, fight-



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

ing gender based violence and promoting human rights of all. When men lead by example, they help to create a fair and safe society. Their positive actions allow everyone to prosper.

20 November Africa Industrialization Day



It was declared African Industrialisation Day by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1989, to promote industrialisation and value addition in the continent, with its rich natural resources. According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) *“industrial development is (important) for sustained and inclusive economic growth in African countries. Industry can enhance productivity, increase the capabilities of the workforce, and generate employment, by introducing new equipment and new techniques. Industrialization, with strong linkages to domestic economies, will help African countries achieve high growth rates, diversify their economies and reduce their exposure to external shocks. This will substantially contribute to poverty eradication through employment and wealth creation.”*

20 November Universal Children’s Day



Universal Children’s Day is celebrated every year on November 20 to raise awareness of children’s rights, education and healthcare throughout the world. It also aims to take steps towards children’s welfare and protect vulnerable children. The day inspires everyone to advocate, promote, and celebrate children’s rights, and indulge in dialogues and actions that will build a better world for children. The day also marks the day of the adoption of the **Declaration and Convention of Children’s Rights**.

20 November World Philosophy Day

Every third Thursday in November, World Philosophy Day promotes the intellectual culture of philosophical debate that respects dignity and diversity. The day also encourages academic exchange, highlighting the role philosophy plays in addressing global issues. It underlines the enduring value of philosophy for the development of human thought, for each culture and individual. Philosophy refers to the approach to and the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence.

21 November World Television Day

Television continues to be the single largest source of video consumption. Though screen sizes have changed, and people create, post, stream and consume content on different platforms, the number of households with television sets around the world continues to rise.



21 November World Fisheries Day

More than two-thirds of the world’s fisheries have been overfished or are fully harvested and more than one third are in a state of decline because of factors such as the loss of essential fish habitats, pollution, and global warming. The World Fisheries Day highlights the critical importance to human lives, of water and the lives it sustains, both in and out of water. Water forms a continuum, whether contained in rivers, lakes, and ocean. Fish forms an important part of the diets of people around the world, particularly those that live near rivers, coasts and other water bodies. ■