



# ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

5–11 December 2025

Conversations with the  
**President**



## Thank you once again for coming together as South Africans to host a successful G20

**ADDRESS TO THE NATION BY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA  
ON THE CONCLUSION OF G20 SOUTH AFRICA, 30 NOVEMBER 2025**

I wish to address you... about the way South Africa led and managed the G20 process, culminating with the G20 Leaders' Summit that concluded its work exactly a week ago.

Allow me to express my profound gratitude to you all, as my fellow compatriots, for ensuring and enabling our beloved country to host a series of successful G20 meetings throughout the year, ending with the G20 Leaders' Summit.

When we launched our G20 Presidency a year ago, I said that this must be the People's G20. It cannot belong just to the leaders, but to the millions

of people who have a stake in the discussions and decisions of the G20.

This was the first time the G20 Summit was held on African soil.

We are humbled to have been that one country on the African continent to host the summit and represent the 1.4 billion people who live on our continent.

Participants of the G20 who attended from other countries experienced the friendship, hospitality and generosity that defines our nation and our continent. Many visitors commented on the vibrancy, warmth and

hospitality of our people.

Some had this to say, as related by a Dr Nick Eberl, who wrote: *"Your people are extraordinary."*

A German delegate is said to have commented: *"I've attended summits on six continents. I've never experienced warmth like this."*

A Japanese delegate had this to say: *"Your security guards smile while being vigilant. Your drivers share stories while navigating. Everyone – from the protocol officers to the coffee vendors – treats us like welcomed family, not foreign dignitaries."*

Commenting about our Ubuntu philosophy one trade representative said: “In other countries, hospitality is a transaction. Here, it feels like a tradition.”

A French delegate shared something profound: “We came to discuss economic frameworks. But what we’ll remember is how your people made us feel. That’s not soft power — that’s real power.”

Dr Eberl concludes by saying: “This weekend, the world’s most powerful people aren’t talking about our GDP or our credit ratings. They’re talking about our people. And that’s a currency no economy can print.”

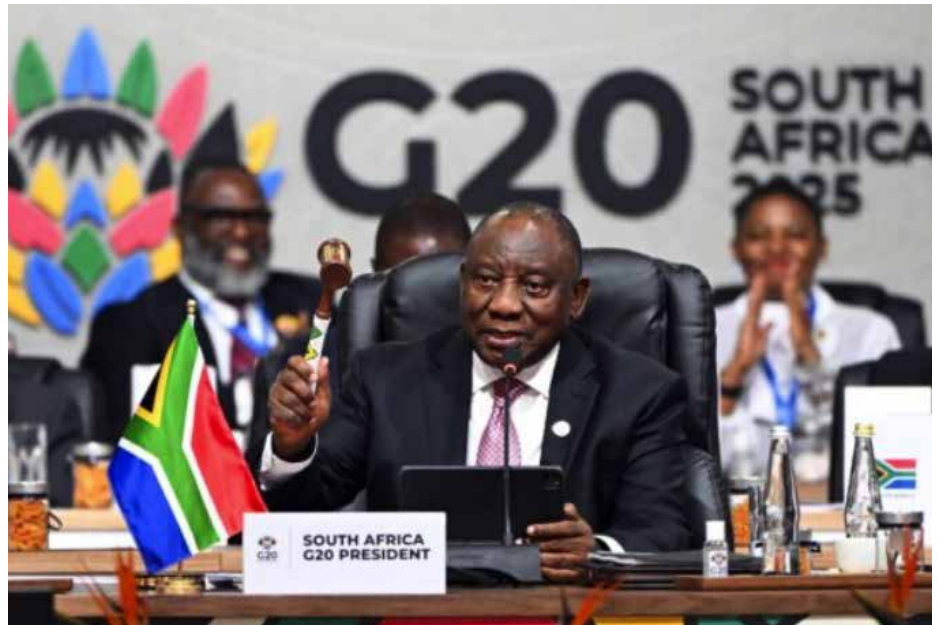
World leaders, diplomats, delegates and observers have been sharing their impressions online as well.

The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi said: “Thanks to the wonderful people of South Africa and the government of South Africa for organising the summit.”

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Kristalina Georgieva praised South Africa’s “incredible hospitality”.

Germany’s Chancellor Friedrich Merz posted: “In a difficult international environment, it is important to preserve the G20 as a forum for global coordination – and to firmly integrate Africa. Thank you for your hospitality and ambitious presidency in these turbulent times.”

The UN Development Pro-



gramme’s South Africa Representative wrote: “South Africa delivered a G20 that showed the world what African leadership looks like – dignified, strategic and people centred.”

A young global leader from Kenya wrote: “No matter the language, ubuntu is understood. South Africa brought that spirit to the G20 and the world felt it.”

This is what I would like to thank the people of South Africa for. For showing up for your country. For standing by your country.

For showing, time and again that no matter what difficulties we may face, when it comes down to it, you remain proudly South African.

And once again as your President, **I say thank you.**

Over the past year, our country has hosted tens of thousands of delegates in more than 130 meetings in every part of our country, from Gqeberha to

George, Cape Town to eThekweni, Hoedspruit to Polokwane.

We have also held meetings in other cities on the African continent and beyond our shores.

Drawing from Brazil’s G20 Presidency last year, we convened the G20 Social Summit to advance the voice of civil society.

The Social Summit, which was attended by more than 5,000 people from around the world, was an exceptional celebration of the diversity and vibrancy of global civil society.

I know some of you might have been inconvenienced by the influx of visitors to our country, road closures and other disruptions to your daily lives.

We thank you for being patient and we apologise for any difficulties you experienced.

We thank the many people from across the country who welcomed visitors to our cities,

towns, airports, hotels, conference centres, restaurants and tourist sites.

We thank our security services personnel who ensured that all G20 events took place without incident.

We thank all the members of different social sectors who participated in the engagement groups and in other G20 activities throughout the year.

We thank the business people who participated in the G20 business forums and the B20 for bringing together businesses from other countries.

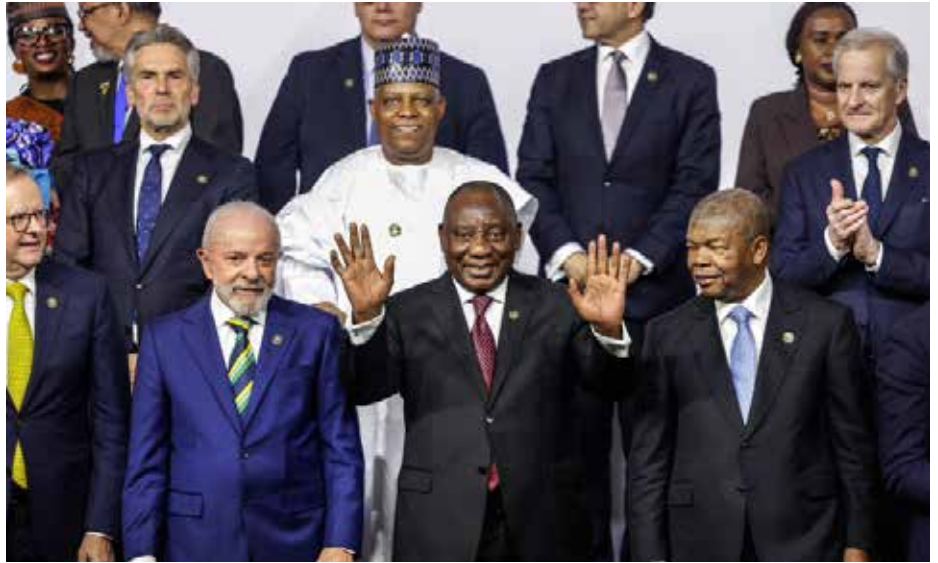
We thank the Presiding Officers and Members of Parliament, members of the Judiciary, academics and many others who organised G20 meetings.

We also thank our media for keeping our people informed about the G20 processes that were unfolding all over the country.

We thank our Premiers for having been such welcoming hosts.

We thank our Mayors, councillors and municipal workers that worked so hard to prepare our host cities for the arrival of our visitors, particularly in Johannesburg, which hosted the Leaders' Summit. These cities showed what can be done when a concerted and coordinated effort is made to fix potholes and street lights, to clean up our streets and maintain our infrastructure.

This must continue past the



G20 and must be expanded to areas of our towns and cities that have been neglected.

We thank our Deputy President, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, G20 Sherpas and government officials who guided the deliberations with wisdom and purpose.

Most importantly, I wish to thank each and every South African for contributing to this success, and for showing the world the strength of our values, the generosity of our people and the power of what we can achieve when we work together.

The impact of South Africa's G20 extends beyond the warm welcome and the memorable experiences of our visitors.

From the outset, we placed **Africa's growth and development** at the heart of the G20's agenda.

We undertook this responsibility at a time when the world is facing complex challenges, from wars and conflicts to rising inequality and the urgent threat of climate change.

These challenges cause hardship and suffering across the world.

They contribute to slower growth, weak investment and economic instability.

These challenges affect many countries, especially in the Global South.

Here in South Africa, our people are confronted each day with poverty, unemployment and the high cost of living, which are made worse by poor service delivery in many areas.

It is therefore essential that we work together so that we can attract investment, promote inclusive growth and create jobs.

Through the work we are doing together, we are beginning to see the green shoots of an emerging economic recovery.

Unemployment has fallen in recent months. Our public finances are improving, allowing us to steadily reduce our national debt. We have recently seen a sovereign credit rating upgrade.

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This progress was recognised in a recent speech by a prominent South African business leader, Mr Adi Enthoven, who said that after a decade of decline, South Africa has turned the corner.

He said our economic trajectory is positive and improving.

We are also working together to confront some of our greatest social challenges, such as crime and the violence perpetrated by men against women.

Just over a week ago, we classified gender-based violence and femicide as a national disaster.

This classification should provide us with a broader range of measures to intensify our shared effort to end this pandemic.

While some sought to create division and polarisation between nations, we used our G20 Presidency to reinforce our shared humanity.

We fostered collaboration and goodwill.

We affirmed that our shared goals outweigh our differences.

The Leaders' Declaration adopted at the summit is a clear demonstration that the spirit of multilateral cooperation is alive and strong.

The adopted declaration reinforces the importance of the G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, and its continued relevance in the face of a rapidly

changing global environment.

This is particularly important as the G20 represents approximately 85 percent of the world's GDP, more than 75 percent of world trade and around two-thirds of the world's population.

We have ensured that this G20 is inclusive and reflects the strength in our diversity.

Working with the leaders of G20 countries, we were able to find agreement on actions that will improve the lives of the people of South Africa, as they will improve the lives of the people of Africa and the world.

We found agreement on some of the issues that hold back the growth and development of our country and continent.

One of these issues is the national debt that many countries are burdened with.

Many countries, especially in Africa, spend more on debt than they do on health or education or infrastructure development.

The G20 Leaders agreed on further mechanisms to provide relief to countries with unsustainable debt levels, to reduce the cost of debt and to increase affordable financing especially from international development banks.

The G20 leaders recognised that climate change is having the greatest effect on those countries and communities that are most vulnerable.

They agreed on increased

funding and support for countries to prevent disasters and to rebuild in the wake of devastating climate disasters.

There was agreement on increased funding for climate action.

This is particularly important for countries like South Africa as we undertake a just energy transition to a low carbon economy in a manner that protects workers, businesses and communities.

The G20 leaders also agreed that the critical minerals that the world needs should benefit those countries and communities where those minerals are found and extracted.

There was agreement that countries like South Africa should be able to process and beneficiate the minerals they mine before selling them to other countries as finished products.

The agreements reflected in the G20 Leaders' Declaration are just the beginning.

We will continue to advocate for global progress on these and other priorities, building on the foundation laid during our G20 Presidency.

We will continue to fight, advocate and work for a more equal world.

South Africa commissioned the work of the G20 Extraordinary Committee on Global Inequality led by Professor Joseph Stiglitz, which produced the first G20 report on global inequality.

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ty. The report sets out a clear set of recommendations to address this global challenge.

We agreed that we will work with other willing countries to support the establishment of an International Panel on Inequality to provide authoritative assessments and recommendations to address this challenge.

The establishment of an International Panel on Inequality would be similar to the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, which has proven so important in ensuring that the world's response to climate change is informed by the best scientific analysis.

We will continue to call for more and better quality financing for developing economy countries to invest in their people and future.

The G20 agreed that the great technological advances of our time, in artificial intelligence and green energy, should benefit all countries and not just a few.

Through these global agreements and actions, we will be better able to grow our economy and create jobs for our people.

The G20 consists of 19 countries plus the European Union and the African Union.

As the G20 Presidency, South Africa invited 16 guest countries to participate in the G20 discussions, including especially a number of African countries, and Africa's regional economic communities and financial institutions.

All G20 members attended all the G20 related meetings throughout the year except for one member country.

It is regrettable that the United States of America, which is a founding member of the G20 and which takes over the Presidency of the G20 from South Africa in 2026, chose not to participate in the G20 Leaders' Summit and the final meetings leading up to it.

It is even more unfortunate that the reasons the US gave for its non-participation were based on baseless and false allegations that South Africa is perpetrating genocide against Afrikaners and the confiscation of land from white people.

This is blatant misinformation about our country.

We were most pleased that many organisations, businesses and individuals from the United States participated in large numbers in G20-related activities, such as the Business 20 Summit and the G20 Social Summit.

South Africa valued their constructive and enthusiastic participation.

Earlier this week, we formally handed over the G20 Presidency for 2026 to the United States observing the appropriate diplomatic protocols.

A few days ago, President Donald Trump made a statement to the effect that South Africa would not be invited to participate in the G20 in the United States.

He repeated untrue statements about genocide against Afrikaners and the confiscation of land from white people in our country.

We must make it clear that South Africa is one of the founding members of the G20 and South Africa is therefore a member of the G20 in its own name and right.

We will continue to participate as a full, active and constructive member of the G20.

Despite the challenges and misunderstandings that have arisen, South Africa remains a firm and unwavering friend of the American people.

We recall the great solidarity movement in the United States that stood by our side in our struggle for democracy and freedom.

We recall how the Bill of Rights in the US Constitution inspired us as we wrote our democratic constitution.

**We offer the people of the United States nothing but goodwill and friendship.**

**We affirm our commitment to continue to engage in dialogue with the United States government, and to do so with respect and with dignity as equal sovereign countries.**

**We value the United States government and its people as a partner.**

We have common interests, common values and a shared wish to advance the prosperity

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and well-being of the people of both our countries.

As a country, we are aware that the stance taken by the US administration has been influenced by a sustained campaign of disinformation by groups and individuals within our country, in the US and elsewhere.

These people who are spreading disinformation are endangering and undermining South Africa's national interests, destroying South African jobs and weakening our country's relations with one of our most important partners.

We must remind these people that South Africa is a constitutional democracy, with a Bill of Rights that guarantees equality under the law.

We have an independent judiciary, able to uphold our Constitution and defend the rights of all South Africans. We are a country that has a tradition of dialogue, that has an enduring ability to come together to confront the challenges we face.

South African problems must be solved by South Africans themselves.

We have now embarked upon a National Dialogue, where all South Africans – from all walks of life, of all races and creeds – are invited to forge a new future for our country.

We have determined, in the tradition of Nelson Mandela and other great leaders that have helped to build our nation, that no one must be excluded. Every voice and every perspective must be heard.

And so we invite those who are spreading misinformation about our country to bring their concerns – and their solutions – to the National Dialogue.

**We must never allow others to try to redefine our country and cause divisions among us or dictate who we are as a nation.**

We know who we are. We are South Africans. We are defined by our ability to work together and find solutions to the prob-

lems that beset our country.

**We live together, work together, learn together, laugh together, play together, pray together, mourn together, celebrate together and face our challenges together.**

**In the best and worst of times, we have stood together.**

We must work with greater focus and determination to address the many challenges our country is facing and make our South Africa a peaceful, prosperous and great nation.

And as our sports men and women have taught us, we are Stronger Together. Always.

Lastly, thank you once again for coming together as South Africans to host a successful G20.

You made us all proud.

*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso. God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa. Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.*



# WORLD AIDS DAY 2025

## Renewed Efforts and Sustainable Commitments to End AIDS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND SANAC CHAIR, PAUL MASHATILE  
AT THE OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION OF WORLD AIDS DAY

**E**VERY year, on the 1st of December, we join the world to observe *World AIDS Day*, not as a mere formality but as an opportunity to remember and strengthen our commitment to honouring lives lost.

The commemoration emphasises the importance of our commitment to accelerate our efforts to end AIDS.

This year, South Africa's theme of *"Renewed Efforts and Sustainable Commitments to end AIDS"* highlights the need to revitalise strategies to improve prevention and treatment. It stresses the importance of long-term investment in HIV amid funding cuts and changing global priorities.

Efforts against HIV and AIDS have achieved notable progress, including surpassing the first and third UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets, yet challenges persist in initiating and retaining diagnosed individuals on treatment.

Currently, South Africa's statistics are at 96-80-97, while global figures stand at 95-85-92.

To confront the stubborn second 95 target, we launched one of the most ambitious national recovery



efforts on February 25th, 2025, known as the 1.1 million **"Close the Gap" Treatment Acceleration Campaign**.

This campaign is not merely about reaching a number; it is about restoring life, reclaiming hope, and bringing our people back into a system they drifted away from for many complex reasons.

The 1.1 million gap in particular represents mothers who stopped treatment because transport was too costly, men who walked away after negative clinic experiences, young people who feared disclosure, and thousands who moved between provinces without continuity of care.

It represents the painful truth that success in HIV is never perma-

nent.

However, it must be defended every single day. The Close the Gap Campaign is our national call to action. We call for multi-sectoral coordination to ensure that we continue to perform various community-based interventions, such as door-to-door, ward-to-ward, and district-by-district mobilisations. These strategies are essential for encouraging re-engagement in care, highlighting that treatment remains free, life-saving, and a fundamental right for citizens to improve their lives.

Our progress to date shows something undeniable: when Government, Civil Society, Traditional Leaders, healthcare workers, and communities work together, South Africa moves.

South Africa heals. South Africa rises. Through this campaign, we are saying loudly: every person lost to care, matters!

As a country we are also acutely aware that to achieve the second 95 we must implement policies that improve access, retention, and re-engagement with treatment.

This includes policies that directly address structural inequalities and dismantle stigma, particularly for the most vulnerable among us.

I am referring to women and girls, people who use drugs, sex workers, and the LGBTQIA+ community. By prioritising equity and inclusion, we can create systems that protect and empower everyone.

We continue to make significant improvements in HIV testing, treatment and care through expanded access to antiretroviral therapy and innovative community-led prevention efforts.

Three weeks ago, Health Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi launched the 6MMD (Six-Month Multi-Month Dispensing) model in Bloemfontein in the Free State. This approach allows stable patients to receive a six-month supply of ARVs in one clinic visit, reducing clinic visits, saving time and transportation costs, and alleviating the workload at health-care facilities. The results will improve treatment adherence and patient outcomes, contributing to achieving the second 95 target.

South Africa faces a dual epidemic of HIV and tuberculosis (TB). The Global Tuberculosis Report of the World Health Organization of 2025, released last

month, shows that tuberculosis continues to be the world's top infectious killer disease.

In 2024, tuberculosis claimed the lives of 1.23 million individuals worldwide, with 54,000 fatalities in South Africa.

Despite a 61% reduction in tuberculosis incidence in South Africa from 2015 to 2024, the struggle against the disease continues.

We need to END TB. In line with this objective, on March 24, 2025, during the World TB Commemorative event in KwaZulu-Natal, I launched the END TB Campaign with the goal of testing 5 million individuals annually for tuberculosis, highlighting the urgency of combating the disease for its eradication.

Subsequently, Minister Motsoaledi launched the TB Dashboard to allow all stakeholders to monitor the campaign's progress by having access to near-real-time data.

To date, this campaign has reached 1.8 million, representing 62% of the target assigned from April 1st to September 30th, 2025.

The National Department of Health has introduced a novel 6-month regimen for patients with multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis, significantly shorter than the previous treatments of 9, 18, or 24 months. This new regimen has achieved an unprecedented treatment success rate of close to 80%, surpassing the target of 75% for Drug Resistant TB patients. We are performing well against national and global targets.

Another shorter, much more friendly treatment regimen of 4

months was also introduced for children. We look forward to further refinements in treatment outcomes among children receiving newer TB treatments in our facilities.

2025 marks two decades since the introduction of lifesaving antiretroviral therapy (ARVs). Prior to this policy shift in the early 2000s, HIV was a fatal disease with significant mortality, affecting over half a million lives and reducing life expectancy to just 54 years. The introduction of ARVs transformed this narrative, starting with the first pill administered in Khayelitsha, heralding a miraculous change.

Mothers that were initially given a terminal diagnosis have experienced health improvements, witnessing their children graduate and becoming grandmothers. Children thought unlikely to reach Grade 1 are now thriving at 21, flourishing in tertiary education. ARVs have reduced vertical transmission of HIV to below 2% in South Africa, allowing children born to HIV-positive mothers to achieve healthy milestones. This is what Ubuntu means when it becomes policy.

We hold this commemoration against the backdrop of a successful G20 Summit. One of the key activities on the sidelines of the G20 was the Global Fund 8th Replenishment Summit. The event was co-hosted by South Africa and the United Kingdom, led by H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa and H.E. Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

The 8th Replenishment campaign aimed to raise a total of 18 billion US dollars to fund the GC8 grant cycle from 2027 to 2029 was introduced. Its objective is

to save up to 23 million lives, enhance health systems, and accelerate efforts against HIV, TB, and Malaria.

Pledges amounting to 11.3 billion US dollars were raised globally, with significant contributions from the African continent, the largest recipient of Global Fund resources.

South Africa pledged 36.6 million US dollars through a public-private partnership between DIRCO, NDOH, Anglo-American, and Goodbye Malaria. South Africa has been a major beneficiary of the Global Fund to the tune of 2.3 billion US dollars over the years. Most recently, it secured 400 million US dollars for Grant Cycle 7, which started on 01 October 2025 and will run until 31 March 2028.

On this World AIDS Day, we celebrate the incredible progress that has transformed HIV from a death sentence into a condition that can be managed with dignity and hope.

Yet, our mission is far from over. Today, we stand at a defining moment – where science, compassion, and unwavering resolve can unite to end an epidemic that has cast its shadow for many years.

We are on the verge of a significant advancement in the prevention revolution. Lenacapavir is a groundbreaking long-acting prevention technology that provides 100% protection for up to six months with just one injection and requires only two injections per year, which will significantly enhance how individuals protect themselves in the next generation.

This innovation has profound implications for South Africa. It offers hope for young women who



cannot negotiate condom use. It empowers adolescent girls navigating relationships marked by power imbalances. It provides protection for key populations who face stigma and discrimination. It supports workers and learners who struggle with the burden of daily pill adherence. In other words, Lenacapavir speaks to the reality of our people's lives, that prevention must be practical, dignified, discreet, and compatible with the pressures of daily survival.

We collaborated with SAHPRA to achieve regulatory readiness, making our regulator the first in Africa and third globally to register Lenacapavir. Additionally, we are engaging with various stakeholders to explore local manufacturing opportunities, emphasising the importance of active participation in developing prevention tools to avoid relying on global supply chains.

Let me be clear: we cannot repeat the mistakes of the early ARV era, where life-saving tools reached our shores too slowly. This time, we move with urgen-

cy, with foresight, and with unity. Lenacapavir is not just a drug. It is a symbol of what becomes possible when science, political will, and community demand meet at the same table.

To close the 1.1 million gap and prepare for long-acting prevention, we must critically examine our efforts towards marginalised communities and our willingness to embrace new scientific advancements. Key considerations include ensuring accessibility, affordability, and sustainability, alongside a commitment to a future without HIV transmission at birth or resulting adult deaths from the virus.

Let us confront stigma with courage, fund research, and ensure treatment reaches everyone. This is a commitment to health, dignity, justice, and equality for all people.

Let us rise to this challenge together, renewed, resilient, and resolute, aligned to South Africa's World AIDS Day theme for 2025, Renewed Efforts and Sustainable Commitments to End AIDS.

## COSATU 40TH ANNIVERSARY

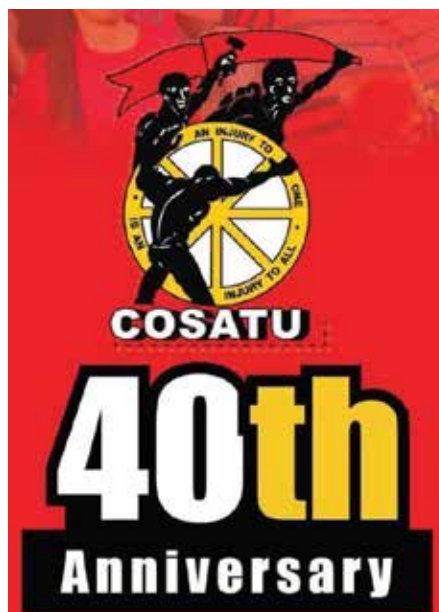
# Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of COSATU

■ By **MAHLENGI BHENGU**

On 1 December 2025 the Congress of the South African Trade Unions (COSATU) commemorated 40 solid years of its existence, years of unbroken struggles at whose primacy was the demise of apartheid and promotion of the working class struggles, the fight against poverty, and unemployment.

In the contemporary world of trade unionism, a new shift which has redefined workers' struggles from apartheid to democracy, new winds of change are blowing, necessitating the reorientation of the working class focus to advance the liberation struggles, the total obliteration of apartheid remnants. These struggles occur in a new setting, a changing global order against imperialism and neo-colonialism. In the South African matrix, the working class struggles involve workers' role in advancing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) towards a better life for all for total annihilation of the apartheid vestiges as the primary objective of the NDR.

Undoubtedly, the progressive world joins in these festivities, highlighting the difficult path traversed since its formation in 1985, at the height of apartheid and the gains amassed since its formation pre and post the democratic order. These are two dis-



tinctive periods, decorated by different epochs.

Today, central to these struggles is a reconfigured alliance, its unity and common objectives through an inclusive paradigm where all tripartite partners participate in shaping the country's developmental policy direction aimed at improving current efforts to address the stubborn challenges of inequality, poverty, unemployment, a stagnant economy, impediments hamstringing the goals of the NDR, the reversal of the apartheid frontiers advancing international solidarity for a free Palestine, the uplifting of the Cuban embargo and other working class struggles for a new global order.

This includes prioritising the

working class to ensure that the alliance remains a strategic centre of power that prioritizes the interests of the working class. This has been the historical mission of the alliance which does not begin now but remains embedded in the liberation struggles for many years. To demonstrate this, in 1955 when the Freedom Charter was adopted, it was declared that:

*"We call the people of South Africa, black and white – Let us speak together of freedom!"*

*We call the farmers of the reserves and trust lands. Let us speak of the wide land and the narrow strips on which we toil. Let us speak of brothers without land, and of children without schooling. Let us speak of taxes and of cattle, and of famine. Let us speak of freedom.*

*We call the miners of coal, gold and diamonds. Let us speak of the dark shafts, and the cold compounds far from our families. Let us speak of heavy labour and long hours, and of men sent home to die. Let us speak of rich masters and poor wages. Let us speak of freedom.*

*We call the workers of farms and forests. Let us speak of the rich foods we grow, and the laws that keep us poor. Let us speak of harsh treatment, and of children*

## COSATU 40TH ANNIVERSARY



*and women forced to work. Let us speak of private prisons, and beatings and of passes. Let us speak of freedom.”* (The Unbearable Thread by Julie Frederiekse)

There were great lessons of the power of organizing, the struggles for freedom, the unity of the congress alliance where the principles of the Freedom Charter became a lighthouse, a lodestar which is today more useful in harnessing our struggles. Ours is to work with society, progressive forces, to organise across the length and breadth of the country for decent living conditions.

The Freedom Charter nudges us to:

*“Let all who love their people and their country now say as we say here that these freedoms we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty.”*

The struggle continues. And say we **“The People Shall Govern.”** Today the people are governing through universal suffrage, reversing the legacies of apartheid as a core objective of the NDR to share in the country’s wealth and the minerals beneath the soil, the

land shall be shared among those who live in it. COSATU advocates for the non-racial South Africa as one of its primary objectives. We recommit ourselves, the working class struggles, reassert our conviction in the 70 years of the Freedom Charter, the 31 years of the passing of Elijah Barayi, the first President of COSATU who, like many other leaders of COSATU and the liberation movement, never lived to witness the momentous moment of 1994, the birth of our democracy. But his teachings, and values continue to inspire us as we prosecute the liberation struggle.

We reflect on the goals of COSATU, the capacity of the tripartite alliance to advance the struggles of the workers. We ask, is the current state of the alliance able to steer the NDR and surmount the difficult hurdles inhibiting transformation in the face of the anti-transformation counter-attack?

To respond to this, reconfiguration of the alliance is a not a mechanical process but the creation of a more unified, reinvigorated and action-oriented alliance to implement the agenda of the

NDR. A reflection of the vigorous path since the formation of COSATU, the dynamics of the time which demonstrate the power of unity to overcome these complex obstacles.

In assessing the effectiveness of the alliance, a journey into the future and shaping the unity of the alliance for struggles ahead, the ANC had successful engagements with both COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP) where a commitment was made to strengthen the alliance, develop programmes to countenance an ultra-left and right-wing agenda to undermine the NDR. This alliance, steeped in working class bias, defeated this destructive agenda when the ANC mobilised countries to the G20 Summit of world leaders to address the impact of climate change, malnutrition, diseases, penury, plundering, armed conflict, debt trap and other challenges facing the global populace, especially women, people with disabilities, youth, the poor and working class.

COSATU exists with an environment of building working class internationalism to advance the

working class struggles, common interests and to address shared challenges and class exploitation. In the face of new challenges, renewal is important to strengthen the alliance and to build a strong COSATU.

One of the immediate priorities is to develop an election strategy for an ethical local government capable of driving development and a people-driven vehicle to advance the aspirations of society, and to restore the dignity of the people. This includes decent housing and jobs, a living wage and safer working conditions and fight against the scourge of Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) whose gravity and deep scars, a human calamity declared a national disaster by President Cyril Ramaphosa, the President of the African National Congress and South Africa.

We celebrate this journey by paying tribute to the epic struggles of the founding leaders of the labour federation. This was the fight against separate development which confined the oppressed majority to the margins of the country, far away from the mainstream economy through an odious system of racial segregation, paltry wages, the Group Areas Act, eradication of the indecent hostel system and other laws. On its birth, the primary goal was the fall of apartheid as workers struggles could not be attained in hostile conditions.

The struggle continues!

**LONG LIVE COSATU! LONG LIVE THE ALLIANCE!**

**Mahlengi Bhengu** is a member of the ANC NEC and ANC National Spokesperson.



## **COSATU at 40: Challenges, successes and the way forward...**

■ By **DR. ZAMANI SAUL**

**T**HIS week, 1 December 2025, COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) turned 40 years old. COSATU emerged in 1985 as a response to apartheid oppressive labour regime, which systematically excluded black workers from decent work and union rights. While COSATU played a pivotal role in ending apartheid and shaping post 1994 labour law, it now grapples with bureaucracy and changing economy. This short article, briefly reflects on the achievements of COSATU and setbacks, and it also examines how apartheid's labour market distortions birthed the federation and continue to affect South African workers today.

Apartheid labour market confined

black workers to unskilled jobs; whites dominated ownership of the economy, technical and supervisory roles. Apartheid migrant labour system, pass laws and hostels fractured families, creating a cheap, exploitable workforce.

The apartheid labour market created spatial inequality as townships remain distant from economic hubs, increasing transport costs for black workers. It also resulted in a dual labour market, the formal versus the informal. The formal labour market, which is mainly white and the informal, which is mainly black. This dual labour market still persists, with black workers over represented in the precarious and marginalised informal work. These legacies

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perpetuate inequality, making the historic mission of COSATU still relevant today.

Under apartheid, black workers faced forced low wage, migrant labour contracts and union bans. COSATU unified 33 unions (+500 k workers) to demand collective bargaining, better wages, and political change. Key successes include:

- Securing industry wide wage agreements.
- Influencing the 1995 Labour Relations Act, which enshrined collective bargaining rights.
- Mobilising mass strikes that contributed to the anti apartheid momentum.
- The introduction of the minimum wage, with positive impact for workers in most vulnerable sectors of the economy.

These achievements improved living standards and institutionalised some rights of workers.

Despite its power, COSATU has faced notable challenges, such as bureaucratisation of the federation and unions leading to detachment of leaders from shop floor realities, fostering perceptions of elitism. Sometimes, the poor management of the politics of the Tripartite Alliance is a nagging political constraint for COSATU.

The post 1994 economic shifts and the current deepening of the neoliberal crisis lead to massive job losses and deindustrialisation. Hence, COSATU is now dominated by public sector unions with huge implications for its revolutionary outlook. Furthermore, the corruption scandals involving individual leaders and the factional battles have damaged the credibility of COSATU. These

factional battles led to break-aways like NUMSA (2014) weakened collective strength and the industrial base of COSATU. This weakness is still felt today, with many leaders in the Tripartite Alliance still praying for NUMSA to rejoin COSATU. This is not impossible!

The history of COSATU is a mix of major progressive victories for workers and some missteps. Its early role in dismantling apartheid labour oppression cemented crucial worker rights, yet political entanglements and economic restructuring have tested its continued relevance. The scars of apartheid labour market, which are racial segmentation, skills gaps, and spatial inequality are still prevalent today.

There is a much greater need to radicalise COSATU to protect vulnerable workers and confront the

challenges of the modern economy. It is therefore an imperatives to democratise internal structures to reconnect leaders of affiliates with union members and workers in general. COSATU must lead the struggles for stronger protections against precarious work and informalisation. To push for skills development programmes targeting historically disadvantaged communities.

A happy 40th anniversary to our reliable ally, the shield and spear of the workers in South Africa, the biggest worker federation in Africa with a duty to unite workers in the country and unionise the most vulnerable, such as farm workers.

***Aluta Continua.***

**Dr. Zamani Saul** is ANC Northern Cape Provincial Chairperson.

**01 DECEMBER 1985**

**ANC CONGRATULATES COSATU ON THEIR 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF WORKERS RIGHTS**

The African National Congress (ANC) salutes the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) for four decades of unwavering commitment to workers' rights, social justice and democracy.

From its historic founding in 1985 at the height of apartheid, COSATU united workers across industries and regions under a common vision to dismantle oppression and advance economic and social justice for all and to advance working class struggles.

Together in the Tripartite Alliance, we have fought for:

The end of apartheid and the dawn of democracy  
Progressive labour laws protecting workers' rights  
Improved wages, safer workplaces, and social protections

As we celebrate this milestone, we reaffirm our shared commitment to transform South Africa, defend workers' rights, and build a just society for all.

113<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
FREEDOM CHARTER  
1994-2014  
ANC

# Her Power, Africa's Future

ADDRESS BY PEMMY MAJODINA AT THE  
22ND ANNUAL STANDARD BANK TOP WOMEN AWARDS

**W**E gather here not merely to celebrate awards, but to celebrate power – Her Power, Africa's Future.

We have come here to affirm the power and promise of women who are shaping the social and economic future of our beloved country. For over two decades, these awards have been a torch-bearer for transformation, equality, and empowerment across all sectors of society.

This year's theme – “Her Power, Africa's Future”, speaks to a truth we all know too well: That the future of this continent is intimately tied to the empowerment, leadership and unstoppable resilience of women.

We are here to honour outstanding achievers – women who have refused to be defined by limits, who have walked paths uncharted, who have built, created, innovated and inspired even in the face of adversity. You have chosen not to ask, “*What will government do for us?*” Instead, you ask the more powerful question: “*What can we do to create a better life for ourselves, our communities, and our nation?*” This is the spirit of *vuk'zenzele*. This is the spirit that builds nations.

We honour the women whose brilliance fuels our economy, whose compassion strengthens our communities, and whose resilience shapes the destiny of our



country.

Our democracy brought a new dawn. Our Constitution enshrined women's rights as fundamental human rights. Legislation created the legal foundation for gender justice and economic participation. But laws must be implemented and enforced to have any practical meaning in the lives of women.

In the water and sanitation sector, we are reimagining how we secure the country's water future through innovation, technology, investment, and strong partner-

ships with the private sector – particularly women-led enterprises. As we strengthen infrastructure, expand access, and accelerate service delivery, we need the ingenuity, the agility and the entrepreneurial thinking that women leaders bring. Whether through green technologies, smart sanitation solutions, infrastructure development, or community-driven initiatives, your leadership is essential to building a water-secure and dignified future for all our people.

You are the women who can help

us eliminate unsafe sanitation, close infrastructure gaps, fight water losses and ensure that every household in every informal settlement and every rural village has access to dignified, safe, reliable water and sanitation services. Your innovations and enterprises are key to a future where no child grows up drinking unsafe water, where no girl misses school because of sanitation challenges, and where no community is treated as an afterthought in the country's development.

This is the kind of partnership South Africa needs: the partnership of women who refuse to wait for change but instead choose to be the change. Tonight's award recipients are the crystallisation of that spirit. You are the embodiment of a South Africa rising. You show us that greatness is not born from comfort, but from courage. You demonstrate that leadership is not a position, but a posture of service, excellence, and determination.

Women are not simply passive participants in the unfolding re-

construction and development of our nation. They are the foundation of our nation. They are the farmers who feed us, the entrepreneurs who innovate, the educators who shape young minds, the scientists expanding our horizons and the public servants strengthening the state.

Tonight is a reminder that honouring women must be a daily practice, not an annual event. Yes, we celebrate tremendous progress, but the hard truth remains: women are still underrepresented in leadership, in boardrooms, in science, mathematics and engineering fields, in politics and in senior management. Women are still paid less for equal work, still confronted with rigid cultural norms and still face barriers that limit their full potential.

We must accelerate change, and this requires the following urgent interventions: Investing in girls' education, Expanding economic opportunities, Strengthening legal protections, Inclusive policies that empower, not exclude, Bringing men and boys into the

conversation and Ensuring women's representation at every decision-making table.

We carry a responsibility to transform mindsets. In this regard, we must raise boys who respect girls. We must build companies where talent outweighs stereotype. We must shape communities that see the empowerment of women not as a threat, but as a pathway to a better, more prosperous future.

Tonight, we honour the courage of women who speak out, the resilience of those who carry responsibilities with grace, and the brilliance of leaders who move with vision and compassion. To all nominees and winners who will soon be announced, I salute you. Your excellence lights the path for generations to follow.

Let us make a solemn collective commitment to build a nation where every woman is safe, valued, respected, and empowered to rise without obstacles on her path.

In closing, I wish to commend Standard Bank and Topco Media for yet another powerful edition of the Top Women Awards. Your steadfast commitment to recognising excellence accelerates transformation not only in South Africa but across the continent.

To the women of our country, I wish to say: You are the heartbeat of South Africa. May *"Her Power, Africa's Future"* guide as we continue to confront the challenges and uncertainties of tomorrow.

May the rise of women continue to be the rise of our nation. ■

**Pemmy Majodina** is Minister of Water and Sanitation.



# Sanitation in a Changing World – Renewing Our Collective Commitment to Dignity, Health and Planet

■ By **DAVID MAHLOBO**

**S**ANITATION is one of the most fundamental expressions of human dignity. It is also one of the most enduring development challenges of our time and one of humanity's oldest public health interventions. It is where questions of dignity, equality, environmental protection, health, and economic opportunity intersect. It is, in many ways, the barometer of national development and a measure of our collective moral resolve.

As humanity approaches the final stretch towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and particularly SDG 6.2 on universal access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene, we must confront a sobering reality: the world is not on track. Unless we act with speed, unity and boldness, billions will continue to live without the most basic conditions for health, dignity, and safety. The consequences are devastating: preventable disease, gender-based exclusion, environmental degradation, unsafe living conditions, and the loss of billions in economic productivity.

But it is not all doom and gloom. There is also a story of innovation, political will, and communities demonstrating that progress is possible. A few days ago, I had the honour of representing South



Africa at the World Toilet Summit in New Delhi, hosted by the Government of India, Sulabh International and the World Toilet Organisation. What I witnessed and learned in India reaffirmed a truth we must collectively embrace, and this truth is that the sanitation crisis is solvable only if we choose to solve it. The Summit's theme – **“Sanitation: Collective Responsibility for Dignity and Planet”** – could not be timelier. It is a reminder that sanitation is not only a technical matter. It is a moral, social, environmental, and developmental imperative.

Our engagements at the Summit reinforced what our own national efforts reveal: That where leadership is bold and policy is backed by implementation, transformation is guaranteed.

The global sanitation landscape is marked by a troubling paradox. We know how to solve the sanitation crisis – the technologies exist, policy models are proven and the economic case is undeniable. Yet 3.5 billion people still lack safely managed sanitation, and over 1.7 billion are subjected to open defecation – an indignity that no human

being should ever endure. This exposes communities to preventable diseases, strips women and girls of safety and contaminates the environment. Climate change is also compounding these challenges by eroding existing systems faster than countries can build new ones. Droughts reduce water availability for flush-based systems; floods damage sewage networks and contaminate entire ecosystems with untreated waste.

At the Summit, one message resonated strongly: Many countries will not meet SDG 6. This is not due to a lack of knowledge or technology, but a lack of financing, coherence, and political resolve. But amidst this grim picture stands the Indian example – a decade-long national movement that built 110 million toilets and eradicated open defecation at an unprecedented scale, driven by political will, community mobilisation and a whole-of-government approach. I was struck by how India aligns federal government, local municipalities, civil society, and community groups behind one purpose. This is the kind of whole-of-society model the Global South must emulate. South Africa is already moving in this direction, but we can go further, faster.

The picture across Africa shows that the continent faces the world's steepest sanitation challenge. According to WHO's Africa Progress Report, achieving SDG 6.2 requires: a 13-fold increase in the provision of basic sanitation and a three-fold acceleration to eliminate open defecation. Most of our countries have strong policies but insufficient resources to implement them. Financing gaps, weak local capacity, expanding urban informal settlements and climate shocks continue to undermine progress. This is a concern



reflected in South Africa's statement at the World Toilet Summit: Most nations lack the resources to implement sanitation plans fully. Africa bears the heaviest sanitation burden, but the continent also holds enormous potential.

As I stated in New Delhi, waste is no longer waste. It is a new economy. Faecal sludge can be transformed into fertiliser, energy, hydrogen, industrial inputs, and agricultural products. This is not theory. It is happening now in India and other parts of the Global South. Africa must claim its place in this new economy.

On the other hand, South Africa's story is one of deep contrasts.

We have made major advances since 1994, yet stubborn inequalities that continue to expose millions to indignity persist. Since 1994, South Africa has made significant strides in restoring dignity through sanitation. Our Constitution guarantees every person the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being. Through the Water Services Act and coordinated national efforts, we have expanded access dramatically. Households with access to improved sanitation have increased from 61.7%

in 2002 to 83.3% in 2023. This is progress we must acknowledge.

As South Africa, we also launched the National Faecal Sludge Management Strategy (2023), a pioneering instrument in the continent, because 39% of South African households rely on on-site sanitation systems whose pits fill up, risking a reversal to open defecation. Despite all the progress, we must confront the truth with honesty: South Africa is not yet on track to achieve SDG 6.2 by 2030. Approximately 2.8 million households still lack adequate sanitation. Many wastewater treatment works require rehabilitation. Climate change, from KwaZulu-Natal floods to the Day Zero threat, is exposing the vulnerability of waterborne sanitation systems. Inequality persists across rural municipalities and informal settlements. These challenges demand accelerated implementation, stronger partnerships and new ways of thinking.

The Water Research Commission (WRC) has been a cornerstone of South Africa's sanitation research, driving evidence-based innovation that translates scientific knowledge into practical, scalable solutions for communities. Through extensive research programmes, pilot demonstrations, and national guidelines, the WRC has advanced cutting-edge work in faecal sludge management, non-sewered sanitation systems, decentralised wastewater treatment, water-efficient sanitation technologies, and resource recovery within the emerging sanitation circular economy. This progress is made possible through strong, long-standing partnerships with South Africa's universities. These institutions collectively ensure that new solutions are rigorously tested, context-appropriate, safe,

and ready for real-world deployment by municipalities.

Importantly, South Africa's sanitation innovation momentum has been reinforced by global partners such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, whose Reinvent the Toilet Challenge and investments in transformative sanitation technologies have catalysed new thinking on waterless, off-grid, climate-resilient systems. The Gates Foundation's support – including research collaborations with the WRC and South African universities – has expanded the country's access to international expertise and global knowledge networks focused on safe, dignified, and sustainable sanitation for all. Together, the WRC, universities and partners like the Gates Foundation are shaping a new era of sanitation innovation that aligns with South Africa's ambitions for dignity, resilience and universal access.

Water-scarce countries like South Africa must recognise that non-sewered sanitation is not a second-class solution, but often the most viable, sustainable and forward-looking option for our context. Far from being inferior, modern non-sewered systems are cost-effective, water-efficient, climate-resilient and capable of delivering dignified sanitation at scale, particularly where conventional sewer networks are impractical or prohibitively expensive. In rapidly growing informal or unplanned settlements, these systems offer an immediate pathway to restoring dignity, improving public health and strengthening the safety of women and children, who are disproportionately affected by inadequate sanitation.

By deploying well-designed non-sewered technologies gov-

ernments can dramatically accelerate the elimination of the bucket system, ensuring that communities receive safe, reliable sanitation without waiting years for full sewer reticulation. This is how we deliver dignity with speed, equity and innovation, while safeguarding precious water resources for future generations.

In South Africa, 60% of households use waterborne sanitation, but climate change is making this model increasingly unsustainable. Floods destroy sewage infrastructure; droughts reduce flushing capacity; pollution loads overwhelm treatment plants. We no longer have the luxury of flushing 5–9 litres of potable water with every toilet use. As a country, we must embrace water-efficient sanitation systems, non-sewered sanitation, decentralised wastewater treatment, circular economy solutions, waste-to-energy technologies and reuse of recycled water. This is how we build resilience in the face of climate change. This is how we protect public health. This is how we build the sanitation systems of the future.

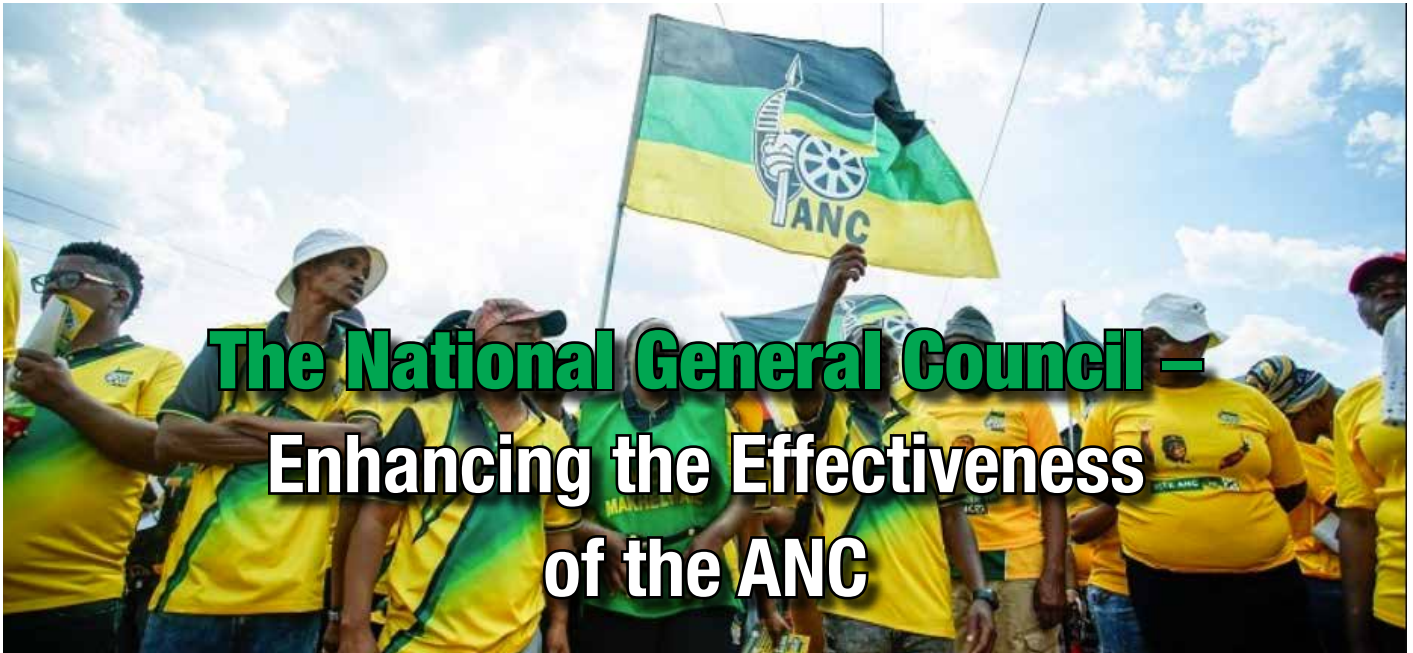
While progress is real, meaningful and in many respects acceler-

ating, it remains insufficient. We must confront the realities honestly, celebrate the gains courageously, and commit ourselves to the next phase of action with unwavering resolve. As government, we appreciate that sanitation is not just infrastructure. It is a matter of dignity, justice, gender equality, public health, and environmental stewardship. It affects whether girls stay in school, whether communities are safe, whether rivers run clean and whether economies grow. Yet, sanitation is also one of the most persistent and under-addressed global development crises of our time. We must therefore act with urgency and resolve.

As I stated in New Delhi, many nations will miss their SDG targets, but that must not deter us. Instead, it must ignite our determination. Achieving universal access to safe sanitation is not optional. It is a human right, a development necessity and a moral imperative. We have five years left. Let us use the remaining time boldly. ■

**David Mahlobo** is the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation.





## The National General Council – Enhancing the Effectiveness of the ANC

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

**F**ROM the 8th to the 11th December 2025 the African National Congress (ANC) will be convening its 5th National General Council (NGC), to assess the work of the organisation since the 55th National Conference of the 16-20 December 2022 and 5 January 2023.

In 2024, the African National Congress declared the period as “*THE YEAR OF UNITED ACTION TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND ADVANCE A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL: FORWARD TO A DECISIVE VICTORY.*” This set the priorities and an agenda to implement the work of the organisation and to ensure the decisive victory for the ANC in the 2024 National General Elections.

What is this victory, and how is it measured? The NGC discussion paper outlines the strategic thrust of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), the necessary task to advance the NDR and the implications of a weak organisation

on its vision of a better life, reversal of the legacy of apartheid and building the National Democratic Society (NDS) which pivot on the cardinal principles of a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic society based on justice, equality and freedom.

Under the overarching theme “*Let’s Do More, Together.*” the ANC developed a manifesto underpinned by key priorities:

- **PRIORITY 1.** Put South Africa to work: Our Jobs Plan;
- **PRIORITY 2.** Build our industries to achieve an inclusive economy. Expand and modernise our industrial capacity Invest in infrastructure Transform the financial sector to support employment and industrialisation Pursue a developmental macroeconomic framework Create more opportunities for young people;
- **PRIORITY 3.** Tackle the high

cost of living. Strengthen comprehensive social security Reduce the cost of living;

- **PRIORITY 4.** Invest in people. Ensure local government delivers Provide clean water for all Improve public transport and roads Improve education and skills Ensure health care for all Use science and innovation for development Build more houses and provide basic services to all.
- **PRIORITY 5.** Defend democracy and advance freedom 39 Keeping our homes and streets safe, protect our borders Support and assist military veterans Fight Corruption Building the developmental state Promoting nation building and social cohesion Transformation led by Honest, Dedicated and Capable Leader.
- **PRIORITY 6.** Build a better Africa and World

## FOCUS ON NGC2025

In the implementation of the priorities the ANC planned, mainstreamed and established accountability mechanisms to ensure the realisation of its vision. This NGC is one of the constitutional instruments to assess the capacity and work of the organisation, refine its strategies and enhance its muscles to improve its effectiveness. As true cadres committed to the life of the movement a sense of internal introspection and appraisal is inevitable as a tool to recommit ourselves to the organisation. The ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) took a giant leap in its candid admission of its failures, subjecting itself to scrutiny, re-connecting with communities and a roll call of its public representatives in view of the ailing state of local government and collapse of services across the country. Some of the interventions include the candidate selection criteria and a programme of an ethical developmental local government as a strategic service delivery vehicle by its closer proximity to communities.

The BRICS and G20 Summit, the UE-SA, SA-China, SA-Russia, ASEAN-SA relations and other relations were part of the agen-



da of inclusive multilateralism, progressive internationalism and trade cooperation to stimulate the economy, drive industrialisation create jobs through investment to give meaningful effect to these priorities, and what the ANC represents .

The NGC goes beyond the fulfilment of its constitutional responsibilities, but to improve its effectiveness to attain the goal of a better life for all by identifying its weaknesses, assessing the balance of power and refining its strategies by developing a new approach. . *“Let’s do More Together”* enjoins the entire organisation to reclaim its vanguard role in society, to renew, promote unity, fight corruption, build ethical leadership, reconnect and

work with communities and other progressive forces.

In the fight against corruption the ANC government established a number of Commissions of Inquiry, subjected the implicated leaders to the step aside rule. This was not act of tokenism but a true commitment to rid the organisation of the albatross of corruption on account of the acts of members and its image in society, reverting to its roots of an organisation committed to clean governance against cancerous corruption that erodes society’s trust and confidence in the ANC as a leader of society and an organisation capable of driving delivering on the vision of a better life for all.

These acts are perilous to the movement, with serious ramifications on the life of the organisation. These acts contributed to the organisation’s electoral decline and poor performance. Public trust diminished, the organisation suffered, resulting to unstable coalitions which affect seamless and uninterrupted delivery of services and fulfilment of its mandate as the custodian of the people, and its stature as a leader of society. From its inception in 1912 and different epochs which shaped and guided its evolution, its growth, resilience in different epochs of its colourful history.

To build effectiveness, the organisation must renew. That is why the organisation, both as a liberation movement and political party that contests state power, is intrinsically tied to both this characterisation to drive its objectives and the vision of the Freedom Charter.

To achieve this goal, the organisation must not mask its diffi-





culties. The path to its growth, the task of re-steering it from destructive detour and tangent rests with its members if it were to redeem itself, and reclaim public trust. These can only be reclaimed by delivery of services, building an economy capable of creating jobs, fighting crime and advancing the vision of the Freedom Charter.

Jiang Zemin teaches us that economic development is the key to governing and rejuvenating the country, believing that a ruling party must focus on the liberation and development of the productive forces, arming members with theoretical and ideological theories and tools, and the art of pragmatism. This fits within the current state of the organisation germane to the priorities of the state and the welfare of the people, hence a need to ensure the effectiveness of the ANC.

Instilling political discipline, encouraging political education and consciousness are necessary ingredients towards Zemin's theory of organisational building. This

will build an effective government, and run the country well whilst running an effective organisation. These are binary responsibilities.

Meeting in Khayelitsha, Cape Town in 2025 on the occasion of its 113 years of its existence to set the agenda for the year and beyond, the organisation declared the period as ***"The Year Of Renewal To Make The ANC A More Effective Instrument Of The People To Achieve The Vision Of The Freedom Charter: The People Shall Govern! The People Shall Share In The Country's Wealth."***

This is the continuing work of the organisation from 2024 and before. Again, we ask: What hindrances impede the ANC's mission of achieving the vision of the Freedom Charter, how do we improve the effectiveness of the organisation to surmount these hurdles and their implications on the National Democratic Revolution (NDR)? The NGC should be seized with these difficult questions.

Putting the cart before the horse, comrades are preoccupied with leadership tussles, virulent to the welfare of the organisation, its objectives and the aspirations of the people. When the organisation, against the fundamental objectives of unity, suffers setbacks, hands are washed in candour, with comrades absolving themselves from the problems facing the organisation. This cannot be left to its leaders but all members across all the tiers of the organisation.

The NGC is convened under difficult conditions and an ever-changing environment, a new political shift and geopolitical paradigm. Internationally, the world is undergoing metamorphosis with the balance of forces in favour of inclusivity, equality and progress internationalism as a drastic departure from imperialism, neo-colonialism and a unipolar world. The ANC's pillar of a better Africa and a better world and non-alignment enabled the movement to navigate a new complexities. The organisation occupied its rightful place in the community of

nations, forged new relations and maintained the country's sovereignty. Today, South Africa is one of the most influential countries in the world. Warts and all, the ANC remains a powerful bloc in the international arena, nailing its black, green and gold colours to the mast.

The NGC must give true transformational meaning to the wheel, the shield and the spear to capacitate the organisation, ensuring its effectiveness as an instrument to advance the NDR.

Domestically, the ANC exists within a heightened anti-transformation agenda deliberately orchestrated to reverse the gains of the 31 years of democracy. This includes the proliferation and mushrooming of political parties to enervate it.

Internally, as a push back and counter-offensive against forces opposed to change, nostalgic of the apartheid minority rule and as we renew the organisation, enhancing its effectiveness as a change catalyst and instrument capable of driving the NDR, we need to interrogate this question? Do we have the intellectual wherewithal and political capital in our arsenal to achieve our objectives? This is one of the questions that we must not shy away from. But we are reminded, that "better less but better" as opposed to a weak and dysfunctional mass organisation without



the ideological and theoretical clarity, disjointed in the vision of an effective organisation and capable leadership. Quality should trump mediocrity.

The NGC must focus on strategies for the effectiveness of local government, address immigration, revamp villages and cities and take bold and decisive steps to change the face of society, fight the monstrosity of gender based violence and femicide, root out corruption, crime, create jobs and eradicate poverty towards a prosperous country.

In the leadership and delegates to the NGC reside hope and aspirations of the masses of the peo-

ple. The outcome of the NGC should be underpinned by purpose. We need to be educated by the lessons of Morogoro Conference which obviated serious hurdles, united and repurposed the organisation and re-steering it to its path. The ANC fought and defeated apartheid under hostile and difficult conditions. In a new environment, the ANC can defeat any impediment, and deliver on its goal of a better life. How is that achieved? To make the ANC a more effective instrument of

the people to achieve the vision of the Freedom Charter.

The three years since the 55th National Conference of the ANC have been a period in which we have kept blazing new trails in a pioneering spirit, and a period in which we have continued to forge ahead in testing times. The two periods of the 112th and 113th anniversaries have been great lessons and painful periods of major setbacks, especially the local government poor performance and the loss of majority in the National General Elections. These are lessons which are a lodestar to a future of a healing and revamped organisation, preened in its cause of a better life.

**We shall overcome!**

# NGC 2025: Reclaiming hegemony in the Battle of ideas

■ By **YONELA DIKO**

**T**HE ANC's 55th National Conference, in its resolutions, acknowledged that the national mood and disposition in the country had changed towards the ANC, as clearly shown by the outcomes of the local government elections held a year before in 2021. There was a clear and palpable anti-ANC sentiment in both the media and in public opinion.

There were effectively three reasons why the public mood and sentiment had turned against the ANC resulting in severe electoral decline in the 2021 local government elections.

Firstly, according to the conference, the decline was as a result of low levels of economic growth and the slow rate of transforming the economy. Effectively, the economy was not growing and it was not transforming.

The second challenge, which resulted from the first, was that Inevitably, an economy that is not growing leads to high levels of unemployment and poverty. An economy that is not transforming leads to high levels of inequality where the economic power and opportunity continues to be concentrated in minority white hands with black people largely outside looking in.

The third challenge was public concern on poor service delivery



of basic services at local government level which inevitably resulted in negative public sentiment towards the ANC government.

Attached to this challenge is ANC's inability to hold its employees in government to account, which resulted in the poor delivery of services and a government that is seen as ineffective and inefficient.

While these were difficult and present challenges that needed to be solved, the ANC also noted that such challenges were exacerbated by the ANC's lack of effective communication on key government interventions. The ANC government was working hard to solve these difficult challenges however it was struggling

to tell its story to the public about all these efforts.

Effectively, the ANC had not been as aggressive in championing its positive story of progress and what it stands for, given the prevailing anti-ANC statements that sought to undermine the work of the ANC government. The conference felt the ANC had in-fact retreated in its communication to a rather reactive communication strategy which seemed to put the party on the back foot.

The result of all this was that the ANC's historic image and brand had been battered and the ANC leadership had not always behaved in a manner that protects its own brand and its iconic historical standing.

### The media landscape

The reality however that the ANC has to always contend with is that despite its obvious shortcomings, what ends up as public opinion about ANC and its performance in government is a contested terrain.

The American Journalist Walter Lippmann wrote a century ago in his critically acclaimed book *Public Opinion* (1922, p. 29) that for most of us *“The world we have to deal with politically is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind. When connecting to the world outside our family, neighborhood, and workplace, we deal with a second-hand reality created by media sources”*.

Effectively, what the media chooses to say about the ANC is what the public knows and thinks the ANC is. If the Media says ANC is corrupt, even when corruption constitutes no more than 3% of state money, then public opinion will say ANC is corrupt. The same goes for service delivery.

American sociologist Herbert J. Gans on the other hand researched news selection in the 1970s by observing journalists at work in their natural environment:

The scholar noticed that *“political and ideological inclinations of the news organisation, as well as the type of readership, shaped the stories and the angles pursued by journalists”*.

Most researchers have noted that most news organisations and journalists lean to the liberal way of thinking. So in South Africa, the ANC, which is largely seen as a centre left organisation, may not have favourable media coverage compared to a Democratic Alliance because the latter, as a

liberal organisation aligns a lot more with the thinking of most Journalists.

The individual Identity of journalists and media organisations is also a key factor in how they cover news. Historically, most journalist based their news search through the eyes of North American and European newsrooms. This means most journalists have a biased gaze in how they view and cover news, looking at stories through a perspective of white, largely male, upper-class individuals.

All this means the ANC has to constantly contend with the agenda setting power of the media on Public Opinion about what the ANC is and does, which is not favourable to what the media is and stands for.

The same media bias applies to the owners of digital media platforms. In 2021, in documents submitted to the United States Congress, The Washington Post showed how Facebook’s algorithms deliberately circulated posts that triggered angry interactions through their infamous angry emoticon on its newsfeed.

The report found that Facebook had the capability ability to generate people’s feelings of anger and the company had actively contributed to the spread of false and misleading information.

Given this hard reality about media bias, the ANC has its work cut out and must double its efforts with very little margin for error.

### Solutions

On the other side of agenda setting are those who have a privilege of constant media attention

such as the President. Through rhetorical skill and how he performs his duties, a President can set a different agenda to influence public opinion that would trump even the most negatively inclined media organisations and journalists. In this regard, President Ramaphosa has done an excellent job.

The second tier that gets the kind of media attention that could alter public opinion are ministers and media professionals who work for those ministers. This requires outstanding communications skills and an ability to articulate clearly the policies and programmes of government.

Most importantly, knowing how negatively bias the media is towards the ANC and other left leaning organisations, the margin for error and personal faults does not exist. Every small mistake will be blown into stratosphere proportion so that the public will not be able to have a comprehensive information to assess one’s performance.

The performance of ANC employees, greater standards in service delivery and a growing economy remains a great buffer for positive public opinion about the ANC.

The ANC can reclaim its hegemony in public opinion and battle of ideas, despite the hostile reality of the media landscape by elevating its own agenda setting tools and leaving no margin of error for external media to dictate its public image in the eyes of the people. ■

**Yonela Diko** is an Author of the Book *‘Ramaphosa – The Long Game’*.

# Capturing the Guardians: Sydney Mufamadi, the Crisis of State Security, and the Imperative of Intelligence Reform in South Africa

■ By **ADVOCATE RICHARD THABO MOLOKO**

**T**HE integrity of a democratic state's security architecture is foundational to its stability, legitimacy and capacity to govern. In South Africa, the post-apartheid intelligence community was designed to break from the authoritarian legacy of the past and to embed intelligence work within a constitutional, rights-based framework (Nathan, 2010). Yet, by the late 2000s and 2010s, evidence accumulated that the State Security Agency (SSA) and broader intelligence architecture had been repurposed for partisan and factional objectives, rather than the protection of the constitutional order and the national interest.

The High-Level Review Panel on the State Security Agency (hereafter "**the Panel**"), chaired by Dr Sydney Mufamadi and reporting in 2018, represents the most comprehensive and authoritative diagnosis of this institutional decay (Republic of South Africa, 2018). Its findings expose a pattern of politicisation, parallel structures, financial malfeasance, and the erosion of professional intelligence capacity. These failures contributed to South Africa's vulnerability to internal unrest, organised crime, economic sabotage and foreign interference, culminating in, inter alia, the widespread violence and



**Sydney Mufamadi**

instability of July 2021 (Sithole, 2022).

This article offers an analysis of Mufamadi's assessment and its implications. It proceeds in five steps. First, it provides a brief historical overview of post-1994 intelligence reform. Second, it synthesises the core findings of the High-Level Review Panel. Third, it analyses the structural drivers of the crisis, including politicisation, governance failures and institutional design flaws. Fourth, it situates South Africa's experience in comparative perspective. Fifth, it advances a set of nor-

mative and practical recommendations for reforming the ailing security apparatus, grounded in both local conditions and international best practice.

The central argument is that the crisis of state security in South Africa is not merely about individual misconduct or "bad apples," but about systemic capture of the intelligence services by political and private interests. Effective reform therefore requires **deep depoliticization, institutional redesign, renewed oversight, and the reconstruction of a professional intelligence cadre.**

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### Post-1994 Intelligence

#### Reform: Promise and Fragility

The transformation of South Africa's intelligence services after 1994 was guided by a deliberate rejection of apartheid-era practices. The apartheid security establishment – including the National Intelligence Service (NIS), Security Branch, and Military Intelligence – had operated as instruments of repression, deeply implicated in human rights abuses, destabilisation and covert operations (Ellis, 1998). In response, the new democratic order sought to embed intelligence within a constitutional, rule-of-law framework.

#### 1. Constitutional and Legislative Framework

The 1996 Constitution set the normative baseline: national security must reflect the resolve to “live as equals, in peace and harmony” and be pursued in compliance with the law, including human rights (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, s. 198). Intelligence structures were subsequently regulated by the **National Strategic Intelligence Act 39 of 1994**, the **Intelligence Services Act 65 of 2002** and related statutes. These provided for:

- The creation of domestic and foreign intelligence services;
- Oversight through the **Inspector-General of Intelligence (IGI)**;
- Parliamentary supervision via the **Joint Standing Committee on Intelligence (JSCI)**;
- Ministerial responsibility and executive accountability.

The creation of the **National Intelligence Coordinating Committee (NICOC)** was intended to ensure integrated analysis and coordination across domestic, foreign and defence intelligence.



#### 2. Early Reform Trajectories

In the first decade of democracy, the intelligence services were formally re-oriented towards defending the constitutional order, supporting foreign policy, and addressing new threats such as organised crime, corruption and regional instability. Yet this period also revealed **structural vulnerabilities**: a heavy reliance on executive discretion, weak public transparency (due to the inherent secrecy of intelligence), and under-developed parliamentary oversight capacity. These vulnerabilities would later facilitate capture and abuse.

#### Sydney Mufamadi's High-Level Review Panel:

##### Key Findings

The High-Level Review Panel was appointed by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2018 against a backdrop of scandal and public concern about the SSA's conduct during the Zuma administration. Its report, released publicly in redacted form, paints a picture of systemic institutional degradation.

#### 1. Politicisation and Factional Capture

The Panel's most striking conclusion is that the SSA was deliberately **repurposed** to serve

factional interests:

*“There has been a serious politicisation and factionalisation of the intelligence community, in particular the SSA, which has resulted in it being almost fully captured by political and personal interests”.*

Rather than focusing on genuine national security threats, intelligence resources were used to:

- Monitor internal political opponents within the governing party;
- Protect certain elites from accountability;
- Interfere in political and civil society processes;
- Undermine investigative journalism and whistle-blowing.

This shift constitutes a direct violation of both the Constitution and statutory mandates, which require intelligence to serve the state and the people, not a party or faction.

#### 2. Parallel Structures and Rogue Operations

The Panel revealed the proliferation of parallel structures, including illegal units and covert projects operating outside lawful chains of command. These included “special operations” units with undisclosed budgets, un-

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clear mandates and involvement in politically sensitive operations. The existence of such units:

- Undermined formal command-and-control;
- Allowed unaccountable actors to deploy state resources;
- Raised the risk of domestic covert action against political opponents.

In effect, the Panel confirmed that the SSA had generated rogue intelligence capabilities akin to those seen in other cases of authoritarian backsliding.

### 3. Financial Mismanagement and Corruption

The Panel documented extensive financial irregularities, including:

- The use of large cash sums without adequate records;
- “Non-accounting” projects funded off-budget;
- Procurement abuses and inflated contracts;
- Lack of credible auditing and financial reporting.

These practices rendered the SSA not only a security risk but also a conduit for corruption and patronage, blurring the line between criminality and state action.

### 4. Erosion of Professional Capacity

The Panel described a severe skills and capacity crisis. Cadre deployment, patronage appointments and purges of professional staff eroded institutional memory and expertise. Analysts and operatives with technical, linguistic or regional expertise were displaced by politically compliant but underqualified individuals. Training and professional development declined. As a result, the SSA struggled to produce high-quality strategic analysis or operational intelligence aligned with contemporary threats.

### 5. Oversight Breakdown

Although formal oversight mechanisms existed, the Panel found that they were systematically undermined:

- The Inspector-General of Intelligence lacked sufficient independence, resources, and political backing.
- The JSCI often acted more as a shield than a check, with secrecy frequently invoked to avoid meaningful scrutiny.
- Internal audit and compliance functions were marginalised or circumvented.

This oversight failure created structural impunity, enabling abuses to be normalised.

### 6. Loss of Strategic Mission

Overall, the Panel concludes that the SSA had “drifted away from its core mandate”. In practice, the agency no longer focused on:

- Strategic threats to the constitutional order;
- Economic security and illicit financial flows;
- Cyber threats and technological vulnerabilities;
- Transnational organised crime and terrorism.

The consequences were later visible in the intelligence community’s inadequate anticipation and mitigation of the July 2021 unrest, which exposed serious weaknesses in early-warning and inter-agency coordination.

### Structural Drivers of the Intelligence Crisis

Mufamadi’s findings point to deeper structural drivers rather than isolated failures. At least four dimensions are crucial: politicisation, executive dominance, institutional design flaws, and the broader political economy of state capture.

### 1. Politicisation and Party–State Fusion

The politicisation of the SSA reflects a broader pattern of party–state fusion, where ruling party dynamics and state institutions become intertwined. Intelligence services are particularly vulnerable because:

- Their secrecy shields them from public transparency;
- Their proximity to the executive encourages loyalty to leaders rather than institutions;
- Their coercive capacities can be attractive tools in intra-party power struggles.

Mufamadi’s report situates the SSA’s capture squarely within the context of the state capture project documented by the Zondo Commission. Intelligence structures were both enablers and protectors of corrupt networks.

### 2. Executive Dominance and Weak Checks

The formal architecture granted immense discretion to the executive, especially the Minister of State Security and the President. While this is not unusual in comparative perspective, it became problematic in a context of weak horizontal checks and partisan oversight. Where parliamentary oversight is dominated by the ruling party, and where the Inspector-General lacks teeth, executive overreach can occur with minimal resistance.

### 3. Institutional Design and Coordination Challenges

The amalgamation of domestic and foreign intelligence functions into a single SSA (in 2009) created coordination and governance challenges (Republic of South Africa, 2018). The Panel suggested that this restructuring lacked clear strategic rationale and undermined the distinct professional

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cultures and mandates of domestic and foreign intelligence. At the same time, inter-agency coordination with police crime intelligence, defence intelligence and financial intelligence (FIC, SARS) remained fragmented.

### 4. *The Political Economy of State Capture*

Finally, the SSA's crisis cannot be divorced from the political economy of state capture more broadly. Intelligence budgets, covert funding channels, and secret projects offered lucrative opportunities for patronage and rent extraction. The same networks that targeted state-owned enterprises (e.g., Eskom, Transnet, SAA) also sought to neutralise investigative efforts by leveraging intelligence structures. The SSA thus became both a victim and an instrument of systemic corruption.

### Comparative Perspectives: Intelligence Failure and Democratic Backsliding

The South African case resonates with broader comparative evidence on intelligence services in new democracies and hybrid regimes. Three themes stand out.

#### 1. *Intelligence Services as Tools of Regime Security*

In many transitioning democracies, intelligence agencies are repurposed from protecting national security to protecting regime security. Cases such as Turkey, Hungary and some Latin American states illustrate similar patterns of politicised intelligence, surveillance of opposition, and harassment of civil society. South Africa's experience underlines how fragile democratic gains can be when security institutions are not firmly insulated from partisan manipulation.

#### 2. *The Oversight Challenge*

Comparative studies highlight that effective intelligence reform requires robust and independent oversight, combining parliamentary committees, inspectors-general, courts and, where possible, limited public transparency (Born & Caparini, 2007). South Africa's formal architecture looked sound on paper, but weak capacity, political deference, and secrecy norms undermined implementation.

#### 3. *Professionalisation and Meritocratic Cadres*

States that succeed in depoliticising intelligence – for example, some European democracies after authoritarian rule – typically invest heavily in professionalisation, merit-based recruitment, modern training and strong ethical codes. The hollowing-out identified by Mufamadi is thus not unusual but particularly damaging in a high-crime, high-inequality society where effective intelligence is urgently needed to counter organised crime, corruption and instability.

#### Towards a Reformed Security Architecture: Normative Framework

Any serious response to Mufamadi's diagnosis must be anchored

in a **normative framework** that affirms:

1. **Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law:** Intelligence must be bound by law, overseen by democratic institutions, and compatible with rights.
2. **Human Security:** National security is not merely regime survival, but the protection of people's safety, livelihoods and rights.
3. **Professionalism and Integrity:** Intelligence work must be conducted by trained professionals, not political operatives.
4. **Accountability and Transparency (to the extent compatible with secrecy):** Oversight actors must have real power and access.

These principles are not merely idealistic; they provide practical guidance for institutional redesign.

#### Policy and Institutional Recommendations

Building on Mufamadi's findings and comparative practice, at least seven clusters of reform are required.

1. *De-politicisation and Legal Safeguards*
  - Criminalise political misuse



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**of intelligence:** Legislation should explicitly prohibit the use of intelligence resources for party political or factional purposes, with clear criminal liability for authorising officials.

- **Clarify mandates in statute:** Domestic and foreign intelligence should have tightly defined roles, excluding political surveillance of lawful opposition or civil society.
- **Merit-based appointments:** Senior leadership – including the Director-General and deputies – should be appointed through transparent, merit-based processes requiring parliamentary confirmation and public vetting.

### 2. *Dismantling Rogue Structures and Forensic Audit*

- **Comprehensive audit of projects and units:** An independent multi-agency task team (Auditor-General, IGI, National Treasury, SAPS) should audit all covert projects, accounts and units created over the last 15 years.
- **Terminate unlawful units:** Any unit operating without clear legal authority or formal approval should be closed, with prosecutions pursued where criminal conduct is identified.
- **Recover misappropriated funds:** Civil and criminal processes should be used to recover assets and deter future abuses.

### 3. *Strengthening Oversight and Accountability*

- **Empower the Inspector-General of Intelligence:** The IGI should have powers to conduct unannounced inspections, subpoena documents and witnesses, and issue binding remedial directions, subject to judicial review.



- **Reform the JSCI:** The parliamentary committee should include cross-party representation, supported by non-partisan expert staff with security clearance. Its reports should include a public, declassified component to enhance transparency.
- **Judicial oversight of intrusive powers:** Interception, surveillance and intrusive operations should require prior judicial authorisation, with robust record-keeping and ex post review.

### 4. *Rebuilding Professional Capacity*

- **National Intelligence Academy:** Establish (or reinvigorate) a dedicated institution for training analysts and operatives, with curricula in constitutional law, ethics, intelligence tradecraft, cyber security, languages, and regional studies.
- **Skills audit and re-vetting:** Conduct a skills and integrity audit of existing staff; those who fail competence or integrity checks should be reassigned or removed according to fair procedures.
- **Competitive recruitment:** Introduce open, advertised recruitment streams targeting graduates in law, economics,

data science, languages and area studies.

### 5. *Reorienting Intelligence to Real Threats*

- **Strategic early-warning:** Develop robust early-warning systems for unrest, critical infrastructure sabotage, organised crime and foreign interference. The July 2021 events must be treated as a case study in failure.
- **Economic and financial intelligence:** Enhance intelligence on illicit financial flows, corruption networks, and economic sabotage, in close coordination with SARS and the FIC.
- **Cyber and technological capabilities:** Build specialist units focused on cyber-defence, cyber-espionage counter-measures and the protection of critical national infrastructure.

### 6. *Integrated National Security Coordination*

- **National Intelligence Fusion Centre:** Institutionalise a multi-agency fusion centre bringing together the SSA, SAPS Crime Intelligence, Defence Intelligence, SARS and FIC. This should be overseen by NICOC, with clear protocols for data-sharing and joint analysis.
- **Updated National Security Strategy:** Develop an explicit national security strategy grounded in human security, constitutionalism and regional cooperation in SADC and the AU.

### 7. *Protecting Whistle-Blowers and Civil Society*

- **Whistle-blower protection:** Strengthen legal protections and support mechanisms for insiders who expose wrongdoing.

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ing in intelligence structures.

- **Constructive engagement with civil society and academia:** Encourage controlled but meaningful dialogue between intelligence agencies and independent experts, to improve accountability and analytical quality.

### Conclusion

Sydney Mufamadi's High-Level Review Panel has provided an unambiguous warning: South Africa's state security architecture, particularly the SSA, has been hollowed out, politicised and partially captured by private and factional interests. The result is a security apparatus that often protects elites rather than citizens, undermines rather than safeguards the Constitution, and fails to anticipate or mitigate serious threats.

The challenge is not merely technical but political. Intelligence reform will succeed only if there is sustained political will to relinquish the temptations of partisan control over secret apparatuses, and to accept robust oversight and professional autonomy. At the same time, reform must be sophisticated enough to respond to a rapidly changing threat environment, including organised crime, cyber threats, and regional instability.

If implemented with seriousness, the reforms outlined by Mufamadi — and extended in this analysis — can transform South Africa's intelligence community from a site of vulnerability into a pillar of democratic resilience. Failure to do so risks entrenching a dangerous trajectory: where the "guardians" of the constitutional order become its gravediggers.



# The Enemy Within: When Pseudo Revolutionaries Root Against Their Own Country

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

**I**N my previous piece, I argued that we should not be distracted by the predictable chorus from Solidarity and Afriforum. Their billboard was not a revelation. It was a repetition. These organisations have long made it clear that they yearn for the good old days when African leadership was reduced to labour, not authority, when the country served a minority's comfort rather than a majority's dignity. Their hostility towards South Africa's democratic project is neither new nor surprising. It is the politics they have always advanced, dressed in the language of grievance and wrapped in the illusion of victimhood. They are upfront about their contempt for the present order. Because they are honest

about their intentions, we engage them for what they are.

But there is a far more dangerous current in our public discourse, one that hides behind ANC colours while working tirelessly to undermine the country's progress. It is a current that pretends to defend the movement yet behaves like the most destructive opposition. Its members claim to be guardians of revolutionary purity, but their actions mirror the politics of those who wish to see this country fail.

These are the comrades who cannot tolerate even a whisper of optimism about South Africa. In their narrow imagination, any acknowledgement of improve-

ment is a form of praise singing for President Cyril Ramaphosa. To them, to say Eskom has stabilised is heresy. To say trains have returned to service is betrayal. To recognise a sovereign credit upgrade is to sell out. To accept that institutions are recovering is to commit an unpardonable sin.

They scour the internet daily, hunting for every scrap of bad news about South Africa, real or imagined, and circulate it feverishly in ANC aligned WhatsApp groups as proof that the country is a failed state. Their days are spent producing and distributing despair, not solutions. Their nights are spent fantasising that once the president they hate is removed, the country will miraculously rise from the ashes like a phoenix.

In their warped logic, South Africa must burn temporarily so that their factional dreams can be fulfilled.

These comrades do not argue for accountability. They argue for collapse. They do not demand better governance. They demand humiliation of those they despise. They are not driven by concern for the country. They are driven by bitterness masquerading as revolutionary critique. And because their politics are fixated on personalities rather than principles, they cannot accept the possibility that a country may progress even if led by someone they dislike.

This mindset is profoundly dangerous. Because unlike Afriforum and Solidarity, who oppose our democratic project openly, these individuals wrap themselves in the ANC's historical legitimacy as camouflage for their destructive impulses. They use the



movement's name as a weapon against the movement's achievements. They hold membership cards but behave like external saboteurs. They curse every green shoot because its existence undermines their narrative of permanent failure.

When we write or speak about areas of progress, no matter how modest, these comrades erupt in fury. Their irritation is not born out of ideological disagreement but out of the fear that hope threatens their factional script. They cannot bear that someone might speak of South Africa without first asking which faction will benefit or lose. To them, the country itself is collateral in a psychological war against one man.

But this is where they are fundamentally mistaken.

Cyril Ramaphosa is not the ANC. He is not the liberation movement incarnate. He is simply *primus inter pares*, first among equals, entrusted temporarily with leadership responsibilities, as others were before him. His term, like theirs, will inevitably

come to an end. He will receive both praise and criticism, as all leaders should. But the country itself continues beyond him. The movement continues beyond any individual. And the consequences of wishing South Africa ill extend far beyond factional triumphs and losses.

To root against South Africa because one dislikes a president is to betray future generations. It is to misunderstand the very purpose of political leadership, which is to steward the nation, not to personalise it. It is to confuse temporary emotions with long term responsibility.

We must be clear. Where Ramaphosa errs, we will speak. We have done so before, and we will do so again. No leader is immune to scrutiny. But where progress is visible, we will also say so because progress benefits the country, not a faction. A stable Eskom does not belong to Ramaphosa. A recovering rail system does not belong to Ramaphosa. A strengthened SIU does not belong to Ramaphosa. These belong to the South African people.

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To recognise progress is not bootlicking. It is intellectual honesty.

Those who sulk at the idea that the country is moving forward are therefore worse than Afriforum and Solidarity. At least those organisations are upfront about their agenda. They do not hide their disdain for African leadership. They do not pretend to champion national renewal. They do not feign concern for the ANC. Their intentions are clear.

But the pseudo revolutionaries who claim to be ANC while actively rooting for state failure are far more insidious. They pretend to care. They pretend to defend the movement. They pretend to love the country. Yet every piece of progress irritates them. Every sign of recovery frustrates them. Every moment of stability disrupts the collapse narrative they need to fulfil their factional fantasies.

Their politics is not about principle. It is about resentment. And resentment, when elevated to a political programme, becomes a corrosive force.

South Africa cannot afford this. The stakes are too high. Our challenges are too real. Our future is too precious to be subordinated to the emotional insecurities of men and women who cannot distinguish between personal grievances and national responsibility.

The ANC has always been at its best when it placed the country above individual ambition. When it understood that leadership is temporary but the people's aspirations are enduring. When it practised the discipline of self critique without succumbing to the nihilism of self sabotage. We honour our history not by manufacturing despair, but by safeguarding hope wherever it emerges.

Those who mock improvements because they dislike the face in the Union Buildings are free to do so. But they cannot do so in the name of the ANC. They cannot do so in the name of the people. And they cannot pretend that their bitterness is patriotism.

As for the rest of us, we will continue to speak honestly about the

country, its progress, its failures, its opportunities and its challenges.

We will not allow our national narrative to be shaped by those who hate the present because it does not serve their personal dislikes. Nor will we accept the lazy idea that optimism is a crime.

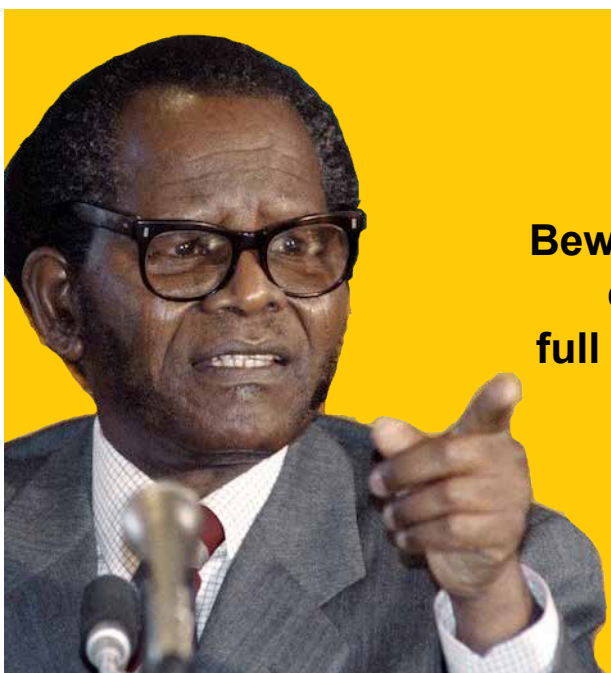
South Africa's recovery is fragile, incomplete and uneven. But it is real. And those committed to its success, whether inside or outside the movement, must have the courage to say so, even when it irritates those who would rather see the country stumble than see their least favourite comrade succeed.

If the choice is between truth and factional myth, we choose truth.

If the choice is between hope and nihilism, we choose hope.

And if the choice is between South Africa's progress and the tantrums of those threatened by it, the choice is obvious.

We choose South Africa.



**Be vigilant, comrades  
The enemy is vigilant.**

**Beware of the wedge-driver, the man who creeps from ear to ear, carrying a bag full of wedges, driving them in between a group and another, a man who goes around creating splits and divisions. Beware the wedge-driver, comrades. Watch his poisonous tongue.**

# The ANC must revisit earnestly and urgently how it elects its leadership

■ By **MOSES ZOLA KA-MANAKE**

**T**HE ANC must revisit earnestly and urgently how it elects its leadership. The cry by many concerned members on how money is used to determine or influence the outcomes of the elected leaders has been heard and talked about in all the regional, provincial and national conferences.

**WHY ARE WE NOT TAKING MEANINGFUL DECISIONS TO STOP THAT ROT?**

It is simple because those with big pockets don't want to change things because it favors them.

**IMAGINE THE FOLLOWING:**

Branches meet to nominate their preferred leaders. The Electoral Commission led by comrade Kgalema Montlante develops a live dashboard to filter in information as pronounced by each branch. Delegates are also captured live on the dashboard and allow objections if any to correct and contest what is projected on the dashboard. By the end of the period for the BBGMS everyone knows who has been nominated where and by how many Branches. The dashboard will also indicate who and how many comrades have met the threshold.

The Electoral Commission develops a ballot paper based on Branch nominations. On the agreed date and times of that conference members are in-



formed to log in and cast their votes. Independent institutions count the votes cast and the leadership outcomes is announced. We have technology to do exactly that. In that way you have taken the powers from few comrades who are elected as Delegates to decide on behalf of all members. That is power to the Branches and it's members. Currently two Delegates decide for more than 100 branch members. Those delegates are now "conference delegates" and as delegates a have a right to persuade and be persuaded by other conference delegates. Branch nominations fly outside the windows of the conference venue and vultures with big pockets strike by using money to buy delegates to back their preferred candidates for leadership. Taking powers away from delegates to elect leadership will definitely eliminate money usage to influence the leadership outcomes.

One member one vote and real power will reside where it belongs and not to vulnerable delegates.

VDs will have laptops with the portal of members in good standing (voters roll) to assist those who don't have smart phones. That will allow each member with a unique OTP number linked to his/her membership number to vote. Including all other sophisticated security measures that will ensure that the processes is waterproof from any leaks.

I know that all systems have their own flaws. But we can't avoid innovation and empowering members to vote for their preferred leaders. Most importantly this will eliminate vote buying at ANC conferences moving forward.

A humble thought from me as a concerned member of our beloved ANC.

## Holding the Line in a World Unravelling: Ben Turok, Trumpism and the Future of Global Justice



■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

**S**ITTING in a hall named after Ben Turok, listening to Zane Dangor speak about Gaza, Ukraine and the G20, I was struck by a simple thought: if Ben were alive and on that stage, he would not have been surprised.

He spent his life warning that power, left unchecked, will always bend law to its advantage. He knew that global capitalism and imperial arrangements do not reform themselves. They are forced, inch by inch, to concede space to justice.

What was different in Dangor's lecture was not the diagnosis of hypocrisy – that is old. It was the clarity that we have reached a tipping point.

The international system itself is being contested: not only by the Global South demanding fairness, but by powerful actors who no longer even pretend to believe in universal rules.

The choice in front of us is stark: either the world slides toward post-democratic, post-legal hegemony, or middle powers and movements succeed in forcing a new, more equal multilateralism.

South Africa, carrying Ben Turok's legacy and our own history of struggle, now stands on that fault line.

### **Trumpism: Symptom of a Deeper Revolt Against Democracy**

To understand our moment, we must be clear-eyed about Trumpism. It is not just a populist tantrum, or the madness of one man. Trumpism is the political expression of a deeper project: a revolt of oligarchs and reactionaries against the idea of equal citizenship.

The emotional fuel is real: decades of deindustrialisation, social decay, exploitation, and humiliation in the lives of ordinary

people. Communities betrayals by their own elites. A hollowed-out middle class.

But the engine of Trumpism is built from the top down.

People like Peter Thiel say plainly that they no longer believe “*freedom and democracy*” are compatible. The subtext is obvious: freedom for capital, not for people. Democracy is tolerated only as long as it does not threaten the power of a small, wealthy, tech-driven elite.

This is why they bankroll projects like Project 2025 – a blueprint to:

- politicise and purge independent civil servants;
- concentrate power in the presidency;
- roll back civil rights, climate protections and equality norms; and
- weaponise security institutions internally.

It is a counter-revolution against

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the very idea of a rule-based republic. If implemented, it will normalise authoritarianism in the United States and give cover to strongmen everywhere.

From a South African vantage point, this matters for two reasons:

1. It reshapes the global centre of gravity away from multilateral norms toward naked power.
2. It signals to oligarchs and would-be strongmen across the world that democracy is optional, and that they can govern around the people, not through them.

This is the world in which South Africa took Israel to the ICJ. This is the world in which we must defend both our Constitution and global legal norms.

### **Ben Turok's Lesson: Reform, Don't Abandon, Multilateralism**

Ben Turok never romanticised the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, or the so-called “rules-based order”. He knew they were born of an unequal world.

But he also understood something vital: if you are small or middle-sized, you need rules. You cannot survive in a world of pure might-makes-right. You must fight to reform multilateralism, not to burn it down.

This is exactly what Dangor was describing at the G20: On one side, the traditional G7 powers defending their dominance, selectively invoking international law when it suits them.

On the other side, a growing bloc of BRICS+ and other middle powers insisting that issues like



debt, development banks, ratings agencies and climate justice be brought into the centre of the agenda.

In practice, the G20 today is not just a talk shop. It is G7 + BRICS+ and the undecided middle. That middle is where the future will be decided.

If we simply resurrect the old Non-Aligned Movement posture – stand aside, stay neutral, issue statements – that will not be enough. Non-alignment in 1961 meant refusing both Cold War blocs. Non-alignment today, if it means passivity, is not progress; it is abdication.

We do not need more spectators. We need system shapers.

That means: Staying inside multilateral forums, Fighting to change them, Expanding the agenda, And above all, holding the normative line when others retreat.

### **Diplomacy as System-Shaking, Not Status-Quo Management**

Traditional Western diplomacy imagines itself as the art of stabilising the world. Manage con-

traditions. Contain crises. Keep markets calm. Protect “strategic interests”.

The diplomacy we need now is different.

Diplomacy must become a tool for:

- Exposing double standards – for example, condemning annexation in Ukraine while enabling occupation in Palestine.
- Insisting on consistent language on human rights, occupation, apartheid, and genocide, even when it embarrasses allies.
- Embedding values into communiqués, declarations and resolutions, so they cannot be easily erased later.
- Building consensus where possible – because norms survive when many endorse them – but refusing to dilute them into meaninglessness.

Dangor's interventions at the G20 – fighting for language on occupied Palestinian territories, on sustainable development, on reform of international financial institutions – are not just semantic battles. They are normative trenches.

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This is what “*holding the line*” means in practice:

- You stay at the table.
- You resist bullying.
- You demand that the final text reflects, however modestly, the reality of the oppressed.
- You make it harder for the powerful to erase their crimes with diplomatic silence.

### Breaking and Making Solidarity: East Africa and Beyond

One of the clearest themes in Dangor’s account is the deliberate fragmentation of the Global South – especially Africa.

External powers know that:

- A coordinated African position on Palestine, debt, climate, or trade would be a serious force.
- A united African voice at the UN, G20 or WTO could tilt outcomes.

So they invest heavily in divide-and-rule:

- Security guarantees here, aid packages there, military cooperation over there;
- Bilateral deals that pull states away from collective positions;
- Targeted lobbying, media pressure, and elite capture.

We can already see this in East Africa, where external money and security pacts shape positions on global issues; and in parts of West and North Africa, where coups, counter-coups and transactional alliances fracture regional blocs.

The lesson for South Africa is clear: values-based diplomacy must be backed by coalition-building.

We need to work, consistently and strategically, to:



- Strengthen AU positions on Palestine, debt and governance;
- Build working alliances with Latin American progressives, Asian middle powers, and European outliers like Ireland, Spain or Norway when they break from the mainstream;
- Connect state-level diplomacy with city diplomacy (like Zohran Mamdani’s New York) and with social movements, unions and faith networks.

Solidarity must be multi-layered: states, cities, movements, churches, mosques, synagogues, campuses.

### Ending Impunity at Home and Abroad

We cannot demand justice in Gaza while tolerating impunity in Gugulethu, Khayelitsha or Qqerberha. We cannot preach rule of law abroad while people experience law at home as a weapon of the rich and connected.

To honour Ben Turok’s legacy, our stance must be consistent:

- Internationally, we oppose genocide, occupation, racial hierarchy and economic strangulation – whether by Israel, Russia, the US or anyone else.
- Domestically, we oppose cor-

ruption, gender-based violence, police brutality, local government collapse, and corporate abuses with equal vigour.

If we fail at home, we hollow out our moral authority abroad. If we retreat abroad, we embolden reactionaries at home who dream of their own Project 2025.

The root of Trumpism – and its global cousins – is a democracy that has become procedural theatre while inequality explodes and elites operate without consequence. If we allow the same here, we will breed our own strongmen, our own oligarchs, our own Thiels and Trumps in African clothes.

### The Middle Power Mandate: Building a New Centre of Gravity

So what is South Africa’s task?

It is not to replace one hegemony with another. It is not to romanticise BRICS as an automatic alternative its members are themselves contradictory. It is not to float above the fray under the banner of non-alignment.

Our task is to help build a middle power front that:

- Protects and reforms multilateralism, rather than abandoning it;
- Expands the normative space for human rights, equality and anti-racism;
- Makes G20 truly G7 plus BRICS+ and the Global South, not G7 dictating terms to the rest;
- Pushes language and practice on debt relief, sovereign equality, climate justice, and Palestinian freedom into the centre of global discussions.

## VIEWPOINT

In other words: to widen the space between empires and oligarchs and populate it with values, rules, and the voices of those who have been excluded.

### Conclusion: Ben Turok's Question to Our Generation

Ben Turok's life was a long refusal: refusal to accept apartheid as law, refusal to accept corruption as normal, refusal to accept injustice as inevitable.

Today, Trumpism and its global echoes are a different species of refusal: a refusal of equality, a refusal of shared rules, a refusal of the idea that ordinary people – women, Black, poor, migrant – have a right to shape their future.

Our generation must decide which refusal will define us. Will we retreat into cynicism, transactional diplomacy, and domestic complacency?

Or will we hold the line – at The Hague, at the G20, in Parliament, in our municipalities, in our movements?

To honour Ben Turok is not to quote him. It is to act in a way that would have made him nod, slowly, and say:

*"At least they tried to bend the world, not just describe it."*

In a world unravelling, this is our mandate:

- to keep multilateralism alive but make it more equal;
- to build a new middle that resists all hegemons; and
- to ensure that, whatever else collapses, human dignity and justice do not.

**Faiez Jacobs** is an ANC member and Community Activist.



## Remembering Tata Madiba

■ By **THEMBILE NQABENI**

**T**HE recent remarks by President of the United States of America Donald Trump were a painful reminder of their hostility towards South Africa.

President Trump's negative attitude towards our country, fueled mostly by an unpatriotic minority hellbent on seeing our country in ruins, has spread to some of the

members in the White House.

Nowhere was that toxicity more on display than when White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said President Cyril Ramaphosa was *"running his mouth."* Her unfortunate, but unsurprising remark, reeks of an arrogant, uppity individual whose mind has been polluted by stereotypical views about our coun-

try. President Ramaphosa, to his credit, has maintained a dignified silence.

It is unfortunate that some of the people who have been stoking the fires that have put our country on a collusion course with the USA claim to love this country. They have taken the trouble of travelling around the world, telling lies to anyone who cared to listen about an imaginary White Genocide. They have convinced some of the most powerful leaders that they, and only they, are victims of violent crime. And they have succeeded in their propaganda. President Trump fell for their lies hook, line and sinker!

Let us not pretend not to see what their lies are all about. Let us call it for what it truly is about.

They have not made peace with the death of the evil apartheid system and the birth of a democratic country. And let us be brutally frank. These people cannot stand the thought of a black man leading this country.

They oppose everything, no matter how progressive, this government does. These are people who still long for the return of apartheid. They hate this country so much that they are willing to tell lies about it on international media platforms. The irony is that, they are not willing to take President Trump's offer of fleeing the "genocide" to USA. They won't because they know that the so-called genocide is a lie.

They have it good in South Africa and they will NOT go to America. Any logical person would flee and seek refuge from manic warlords. Not racist South Africans. They are sitting comfortably, enjoying the ill-gotten gains their

ancestors accumulated at the expense of the majority citizens of our country.

During a visit to the USA in 1990, President Nelson Mandela prophetically said: *"I am primarily concerned with what the people of the USA and its organs of government are doing to promote the struggle against apartheid in our country."*

It is telling that in this day and age, there are people who consider themselves so superior that they have even convinced themselves that they are being singled out and targeted by criminals when crime affects all South Africans.

As we mark 12 years since the passing away of our beloved Madiba, we are reminded of his resilience in the face of adversity.

We remember President Mandela as a strong proponent of a

just and peaceful world. We are reminded of his fierce opposition to, amongst others, the unlawful invasion of Iraq by Britain and the USA. We are also reminded of his forgiving spirit.

We will do well not to allow ourselves to be provoked by unrepentant racists in our country and outside. We have a responsibility to future generations to build a prosperous country at peace with itself, which is what we have been busy with. All the other noise must be ignored because we have a big task on our hands.

May the spirit of President Mandela continue to guide us and may his soul find eternal peace.

**Thembile Nqabeni** is the Acting Director Social Relief & Distress, National Archive Advisory Council Member, Provincial Political Education Coordinator and Former OR Tambo School National Coordinator.

"We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference."

-Nelson Mandela  
(1918-2013)



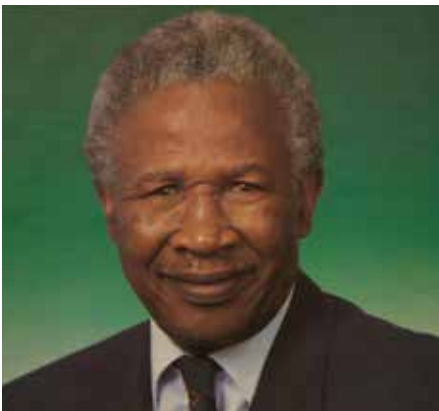
## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

6–12 December 2025

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

### 6 December 1928 PAC leader Clarence Makwetu born



Clarence Mlami Makwetu, former president of the Pan Africanist Congress, is born in Hoyita, in the Cofimvaba district of the Transkei.

### 7 December 1900 Emily Hobhouse travels to South Africa

Emily Hobhouse, a British campaigner travelled to South Africa as the Anglo Boer War drew to a close and exposed conditions of Afrikaner women and children held in concentration camps by the British. She also encouraged the Guild of Loyal Women, who advocated around this issue to visit camps for Blacks. Emily Hobhouse was deported from South African in 1901.

### 7 December 1973 Robert Resha passed on in exile

Robert Resha was born in 1920, in Bolotwe, Queenstown. Resha, an activist and journalist, was a prom-



inent member of the new generation of leaders who emerged from the ranks of the ANC Youth League. He completed eight years of formal schooling and in his late teens went to work as a miner on the Reef. After several years, he was dismissed as a troublemaker, after which he took up freelance journalism, moving to Sophiatown in Johannesburg around 1940. He later became sports editor of *New Age* and also wrote for *The World*. Resha was co-opted onto the ANC's National Executive Committee in December 1952. In early 1953, he replaced Diliza Mji as Transvaal president of the Youth League. Resha took over as acting president during 1954 and 1955 when bans restricted the league's national president, Joe Matthews. He was jailed for participating in the Defiance Campaign as a member of the ANC Youth League. Resha was one of the Treason trialists, but was acquitted in 1961, after which he left the country for Algiers, where he became ANC representative. Resha was instrumental in enlight-

ening the international community about the struggle of black South Africans. He died in London in 1973.

### 7 December 1988 Mandela moved to Victor Verster Prison in Paarl

After being moved from Robben Island following his illness from tuberculosis, which Mandela contracted in prison, he was moved to hospital in Cape Town. On 7 December 1988, Madiba was again moved, this time to Victor Verster Prison, imprisoned in a house separate from other prisoners. He was eventually allowed to meet with other leaders as a precursor to negotiations, and on 2 February 1990 was released from this prison, after his sentence of 27 years.

### 8 December 1991 Chris Hani elected as SACP General Secretary



Former Umkhonto we Sizwe commander and ANC National Executive Committee member,

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Chris Hani, was elected as secretary-general of the South African Communist Party (SACP) at its first legal congress in four decades after its unbanning in February 1990. He took over from Joe Slovo, who resigned as result of ill health. Hani served in this position until he was assassinated in 1993 by two right-wingers, Clive Derby-Lewis and Janusz Walus.

### 8 December 1988

#### Second major Archeological find at Sterkfontein

One of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century was documented in the South African Journal of Science on this date. Dr Ron Clark of the palaeo-anthropological research institute of the University of the Witwatersrand discovered the petrified skeleton of a 3,5 million year old hominid in the Sterkfontein Caves near Krugersdorp. The near-complete skeleton, belonging to the Australopithecus species, is 1.22 metre tall. Australopithecus preceded the genus Homo, to which we belong. Scientists believed the find to be the most significant since the discovery in 1924 of a skull belonging to the so-called Taung child, also in the Sterkfontein caves. Sterkfontein was declared a World Heritage Site in 2000. The area, in which it is situated, was named the Cradle of Humankind.

### 8 December 1993

#### Winnie Madikizela Mandela elected ANC Women's League President

At the national conference of the ANC Women's League held in Durban in 1993, following its re-establishment in 1991, Mam Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was elected as President of the ANC Women's



en's League, succeeding Mam Gertrude Shope, who was elected President at the 1991 conference in Kimberley. Mam Winnie was elected despite opposition from sections of the ANC leadership, and was re-elected in 1997 at the Rustenburg ANCWL Conference, a position she held till 2003, when cde Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula succeeded her as president of the League.

### 9 December 1961

#### Tanzania gains independence



Tanzania, formerly known as Tanganyika was colonised by Germany, and after this country's defeat in the first World War, handed over to Britain, and later under the trusteeship of the United Nations. Liberation movements like the Tanganyika Africa National Union (TANU), headed by Julius Nyerere fought for and won the independence and freedom from colonial rule.

### 9 December 1966

#### Choirmaster and composer Mkhonto Kumalo passed on

Alfred Assegai (Mkhonto) Kumalo, choirmaster and composer who was a founder member and first secretary of the Bantu Social Centre in Beatrice Street, Durban (YMCA), died in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg. He showed a talent for music from an early age and his first attempt at composition was in 1899. Most of his songs were widely acclaimed and are still regarded as amongst the best of Zulu choral music. He retired in 1961, but was, even after that date at times commissioned to write church music.

### 9 December 1982

#### Apartheid government conduct Maseru Massacre



In the early hours of December 9th, 1982, South African Defense Force commandos crossed the border into Lesotho. Their target was a cluster of houses on the outskirts of Maseru where members of the African National Congress (ANC) were believed to be in hiding. Meeting no opposition from Lesotho's 2 000-man paramilitary force, they blasted their way through numerous homes. By morning 42 people were dead, 30 of them believed to be members of the ANC. The remaining victims were Lesotho residents, including five women and two



**The Maseru Massacre**

children. Their mission accomplished, the members of SADF returned across the border to South Africa without incident. In a dawn announcement in Pretoria, General Constand Viljoen, chief of the South African Defense Force, explained that the raid, named “*Operation Blanket*,” had been a pre-emptive strike against the ANC. The “*Maseru Massacre*” as it came to be called, was one of many brazen cross-border raids conducted by the SADF during the 1980s. The late Phyllis Naidoo wrote a book about the Maseru Massacre, called *Le Rona Re Batho*.

### **10 December 1981** **BBC announces HIV epidemic in USA**

On 10 December 1981, the BBC reported that concerns about the disease were spreading in the United States due to the death of 75 people who were thought to have been infected. This was compounded by doctors’ inability to pinpoint the cause of the epidemic. This unknown condition was eventually

named the AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) virus.

### **10 December 1939** **Artist Allina Khumalo Ndebele is born**



Allina Ndebele was born on 10 December 1939 at Ekuhlengeni Mission, in KwaZulu-Natal. She was one of six children raised by her mother because the migrant labour system forced her dad to work in Johannesburg. Ndebele obtained a junior certificate, and in 1962 applied to Ceza Hospital for nursing training. While waiting to be accepted, she worked as an interpreter for occupational ther-

apists. A Swedish couple named Pedar and Ulla Gowenius, who taught spinning, weaving, drawing and sewing awakened and nurtured Ndebele’s latent talent and creative spirit. She was the first to enroll when the Rorke’s Drift Arts and Craft Centre was set up in 1963, and soon won a scholarship to the Dals Langed Art School in Sweden to train as a teacher of weaving. Back at Rorke’s Drift, she spent 12 years devoting her life to teaching weavers. She returned to her birthplace near the Black Umfolozi River and constructed a small workshop in her father’s kraal, installed two second-hand looms which had been her farewell present from Rorke’s Drift and embarked on her life’s work. She started weaving classes for local women and, in the evenings, worked on her own tapestries. Her inspiration came from Zulu folktales told by her grandmother, the vivid pictures in her mind being transferred directly to the tapestry without any preliminary drawings. Dyeing wool required a walk of almost two kilometres to the river, and the work on her tapestries done by the light of candles or paraffin lamps because there was no electricity. She formally exhibited for the first time at the Pretoria Art Museum in 1985, later exhibited in other galleries, including Sweden’s Orebro Lans Museum. Since then, she has exhibited as far afield as Washington DC and the Netherlands, and has received several awards. Today Allina Ndebele’s tapestries with their depictions of African myths and legends as well as Bible stories can be seen in a number of major art galleries and collections. Each piece represents not just an irreplaceable part of the broader South African heritage, but a small monument to the indomitable spirit of an artist who overcame many obstacles to bring her art to her country and to the world.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 10 December South Africans awarded Nobel Prize

10 December each year is the day that the Noble Peace Prize is announced and four South Africans were honoured on this day. Nkosi Albert Luthuli in 1960, Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 1984 and joint Nelson Mandela and FW De Klerk in 1993. Three of the four Nobel Laureates also at some point in their lives lived on Soweto's famous Vilakazi Street.



### 10 December 1996 Mandela signs Constitution into law

Two years after the first democratic election, the President

of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, signed the final draft of the constitution into law at Sharpeville, Vereeniging on 10 December 1996. The date on which the constitution was signed marked International Human Rights Day.

### 11 December 1911 Naguib Mahfouz, Egyptian and Nobel laureate born



Naguib Mahfouz was born in Cairo, Egypt. He knew from a very young age that he wanted to be a writer. He began writing at the age of eleven and at 17 published his first article. At 21 he published his first novel entitled **Old Egypt**. Mahfouz's most controversial novel, **The Children Gebelawi**, with its religious overtones, angered the conservative Muslim community and threats were made on his life. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, the second African writer after Wole Soyinka (1986) and the first Arab to be so honoured. He published more than 50 novels and several short stories and screen plays throughout his career. Mahfouz died in 2006 at the age of 94.

### 11 December 2013 President Nelson Mandela's remains lie in state at Union Buildings

On 11 December 2013, Nelson Mandela's body was taken to the

Union buildings in Pretoria. As the body was transported from the Military Hospital, people waiting guard of honour was formed in Madiba Street near to the Union Buildings. The body lay in State for three days with a glass top coffin so that people could view Mandela's body.

### 12 December 1933 Manu Dibango born



Cameroonian musician and songwriter was born in Douala. Manu Dibango's familiar saxophone, combined with traditional Cameroonian music and jazz, with elements of funk creates an infectious danceable sound, with widespread influence.

### 12 December 1963 Kenya declares Independence

Kenya gained its independence from Britain with Jomo Kenyatta as the country's first Prime Minister. The Union Jack was replaced by the black, red and green flag of the new nation. This followed the first all-inclusive elections on 27 May 1963. A year later Kenya was declared a Republic. The campaign for independence in Kenya dates back to the 1940s before Kenyatta became the leader of the Kenya African Union (KAU) in 1947 and birth of the Mau Mau rebel movement. In 1952 in re-

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



response to the Mau Mau rebellion, the government declared a state of emergency which lasted for eight years. During the state of emergency a number of Mau Mau operatives, including Kenyatta and Achieng Aneko were arrested. In 1953, Kenyatta was charged with leading the Mau Mau rebellion and sentenced to seven years in prison. When Kenya became a Republic on 12 December 1964, Kenyatta was named Kenya's first president, with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga as his vice-president.

### 12 December 1964

#### Ringo born

Sandile 'Ringo' Madlingozi, was born in Peddie, Eastern Cape. He found fame as member of the bands Peto and later Gecko Moon, as well as his first solo album Vukani. Ringo combined traditional Xhosa instrumentalism with contemporary elements.

### 12 December 1968

#### Arthur Ashe ranked #1 in tennis

African-American Arthur Ashe became the first man of African descent to be ranked number 1 in professional tennis. He was a direct descendant of Amar, an enslaved West African woman brought to America in 1735 on the slave ship *The Doddington*.

Ashe's family were kept as slaves by Samuel Ashe, the governor of the state of North Carolina, and given his surname.

### 12 December 1984

#### UDF leaders charged with Treason

Three leading members of the United Democratic Front (UDF), Archibald Gumede, Paul David and Billy Nair were charged with high treason. These anti-apartheid activists sought refuge in the British consulate in Durban after the South African Government was trying to arrest them for organising a boycott of elections in August 1984 of the racist Tricameral Parliament and a 90 days sit-in protest.

### 12 December 1996

#### ANC and PAC handed in Amnesty applications to TRC

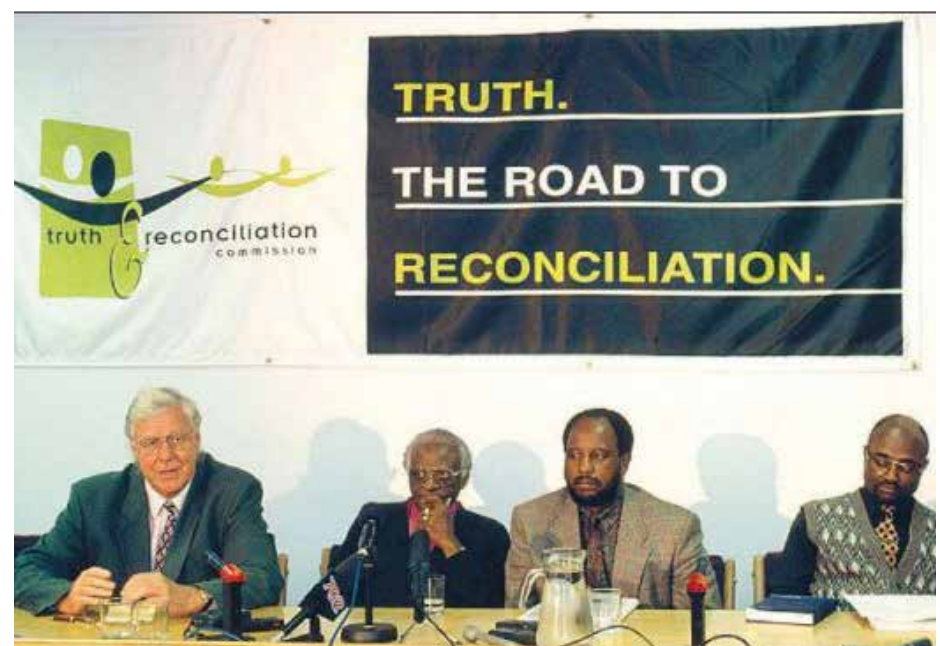
The African National Congress (ANC) confirmed it had forwarded 300 applications from its members to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for amnesty and was expecting to submit at least another sixty. The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)

announced that at least 600 of its members, including the 'high command' of its armed wing Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), had applied.

### 12 December 2000

#### Algiers Agreement ends Ethiopia-Eritrea War

Eritrea, made an Ethiopian province by vote of parliament in 1962 gained independence from Ethiopia after a referendum in 1993 overwhelmingly (99%) voted for independence. In 1998, a dispute that led to one of the continent's most bloody wars between two African countries broke out, over the disputed territory of Badme, hence also known as the Badme or Ethiopian-Eritrean War. The Algiers Agreement signed on 12 December 2000 affirmed the ceasefire agreed on earlier, provided for exchange of prisoners, the return of displaced persons, a Boundary Commission to demarcate the border and a Claims Commission to assess damages caused by the conflict. Despite the Agreement, sporadic hostilities between the two countries continued for decades, known as a No-War-No-Peace situation.



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

6–12 December 2025

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

### 7–13 December #ReadingAfrica Week



Reading Africa Week is an annual event for all publishing companies, readers and authors who want to share their love for African literature. Started in 2017, each year, during the first full week of December, we ask book-lovers of all kinds to use the hashtags #ReadingAfrica or #ReadingAfricaWeek across social media on posts that spotlight African literature.

### 7 December Africa Telecommunications and ICT Day



Africa Telecommunications and ICT Day is celebrated under the leadership of the African Telecommunications Union, to highlight access and innovation in the continent's participation in the information revolution. This year the African Telecommunications Union celebrates its 48th anniversary.

### 7 December International Civil Aviation Day



The day commemorates the importance of civil aviation and raises awareness on the industry. Civil aviation (which includes both commercial, state and private) are one of the two branches of aviation, the other is military aviation. Most countries are part of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), which sets regulations, standards and practices for the sector across the world. The aviation sector in Africa provides over 500,000 direct jobs, supports 7.7 million jobs and contributes around 63 billion USD to the continental GDP. Through the African Union and African Civil Aviation Authority, there is a programme to create a single African Aviation market.

### 9 December International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime

The UN Genocide Convention (article 2) defines genocide as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group ...”, including: Killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or



mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. The Convention confirms that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or war, is a crime under international law which parties to the Convention undertake “to prevent and to punish” (article 1). The Genocide Convention does not simply condemn genocide; it obligates states to act, to prevent, and to protect. It places a legal and moral duty on governments to identify and respond to the risk of genocide wherever it arises.

### 9 December International Anti-Corruption Day



Fighting corruption is a global concern because corruption is found in both rich and poor countries,

and evidence shows that it hurts poor people disproportionately. It contributes to instability, poverty and is a dominant factor driving fragile countries towards state failure. Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, the media and citizens around the world are joining forces to fight this crime. International Anti-Corruption Day is commemorated annually on 9 December in recognition of the United Nations Convention against Corruption which was signed in Mexico in 2003.

### 10 December International Human Rights Day



International Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December – the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR proclaims the inalienable human rights of all – regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. It is the most translated document in the world, and is available in over 500 languages.

### 11 December International Mountain Day

Mountains are home to 15% of the world’s population and host about half of the world’s biodiversity hotspots. They provide freshwater for everyday life to half of humanity. Their conservation is a key factor for sustainable development. Unfortunately, mountains are under threat from climate change and overexploitation. As the global climate continues to warm, mountain people – some of the world’s poorest – face even greater struggles to survive. The rising temperatures also mean that mountain glaciers are melting at unprecedented rates, affecting freshwater supplies downstream for millions of people. This problem affects us all. We must reduce our carbon footprint and take care of these natural treasures.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 12 December World Choral Day



Choirs form an important part of musical traditions, in religious and educational institutions but also more generally for the love of music. Every second Sunday of December, choirs across the world come together to perform on World Choral Day. South Africa has a rich tradition of choirs and choral forms, including isicathamiya, the isiZulu music form brought to the world stage by Ladysmith Black Mambazo and amakwaya, with choirs emerging from mission schools. South Africa also hosts Ihlombe!, one of the largest international choir festivals in the country, according to the Cape Times, with over 90 choirs competing.

### 12 December International Day of Neutrality

Neutrality in international relations is defined as “as the legal status arising from the abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states, the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality...”. Countries can practice neutrality in a particular conflict or

permanent neutrality in all future wars. Switzerland is an example of a permanent neutral country, with its policy of “armed neutrality in global affairs”. It’s the oldest and most well-known of neutral states (since 1515), but Costa Rica, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Japan and Ireland are amongst modern day neutral states, although definitions differ. (<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/neutral-countries>)

### 12 December International Day of Universal Health Coverage

In the context of the global Coronavirus pandemic, the importance of public health and universal health coverage have once again been pushed to the fore. The WHO defines universal health coverage as “ensuring that all people have access to needed health services (prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliation) of sufficient quality to be effective... (without exposing the user the financial hardship... is fundamental to ensuring social protection for health. The poorest populations often face the highest health risks and need more health services. A key element of financing for universal health coverage is sharing resources to spread the financial risks of ill-health across the population.” South Africa has universal health coverage, because any person can go for treatment to public health facilities. However, it needs the National Health Insurance (NHI) to ensure that resources for health are equitably distributed and shared. At the moment, health resources are extremely skewed. 17% of South Africans have private medical insurance, yet private health care accounts for 4.2% of GDP, as against 4.4 of GDP accounted for by the public health sector (Section 27).



**To deny people their human rights  
is to challenge their very humanity.  
To impose on them a wretched life of  
hunger and deprivation is to  
dehumanize them.**

**NELSON MANDELA**