



ANC TODAY

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Conversations *with the* President



Congratulations to the CLASS OF 2025

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress congratulates the Matric Class of 2025 following the release of the National Senior Certificate results, which reflect a historic national pass rate of 88%, the highest in South Africa's democratic history. This achievement surpasses the 87.3% recorded in 2024 and confirms a steady upward trajectory in the performance of the public education system.

This milestone is a testament to the resilience, discipline, and determination of the largest cohort to ever sit for the NSC examinations, with over 900,000 candidates writing in 2025. Of particular significance is the achievement of 345,000 bachelor passes, an increase of more than 8,000 from the previous year, underscoring a

continued improvement in the quality of outcomes that open pathways to higher education and future leadership.

Provincial performance across the country demonstrates collective progress. KwaZulu-Natal leads with an outstanding 90.6% pass rate, followed by the Free State at 89.33% and Gauteng at 89.06%. Strong performances were also recorded in North West (88.49%), Western Cape (88.2%), Northern Cape (87.79%), Mpumalanga (86.55%), Limpopo (86.15%), and the Eastern Cape (84.17%). Notably, every district in the country achieved a pass rate above 80%, reflecting systemic improvement across all provinces.

These outcomes are the result of the collective effort of educa-

tors, parents, school governing bodies, education workers and communities who continue to carry the responsibility of nation building under difficult conditions. They affirm the effectiveness of curriculum recovery interventions and the commitment of the ANC-led government to restoring learning, strengthening teaching, and expanding access to quality education, particularly in historically disadvantaged communities.

While we celebrate excellence, the ANC also extends encouragement to learners who did not achieve the results they had hoped for.

These outcomes do not define your future. Multiple pathways remain available, including bridging programmes, the Second Chance Matric Pro-

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

MATRIC 2025 RESULTS: 88% NATIONAL PASS RATE



The ANC congratulates the Class of 2025 on achieving a historic 88% national pass rate, the highest in South Africa's democratic history. This achievement reflects resilience, hard work, and the collective effort of learners, educators, parents, and communities across the country.



gramme, technical and vocational education and training, learnerships, and opportunities to rewrite matric as part of a broader system of lifelong learning.

Learners are advised that universities and institutions of higher learning will communicate admission outcomes and registration processes through official online platforms. In light of the large volumes involved, physical enquiries are discouraged to avoid overcrowding and unnecessary administrative strain.

Young people are further encouraged to explore the full basket of post-school opportunities, including service through the South African National Defence Force and the

South African Police Service, as well as government supported programmes such as Funza Lushaka, nursing training, and other priority skills development initiatives.

Learners could access their individual results from 06h00 from 13 January 2026 through their schools or approved official platforms.

The ANC reaffirms its conviction that education remains the cornerstone of nation building and social progress. There is hope beyond every setback.

The doors of learning remain open, and the task before us is to ensure that every young person is supported to walk through them with purpose, resilience, and confidence.

MATRIC 2025 RESULTS: A MESSAGE TO LEARNERS



We celebrate those who excelled and encourage those who faced challenges. Results do not define your future. Opportunities remain open through higher education, TVET colleges, learnerships, defence and police services, government programmes, bridging courses, and matric rewrites. There is hope and there is a path forward.



ANC VETERANS LEAGUE MESSAGE TO THE 114th BIRTHDAY OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

■ By **DR SNUKI ZIKALALA, ANC VETERANS LEAGUE PRESIDENT**

THE ANC Veterans League welcomes the theme for the 114th year of the African National Congress, the *Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy*. We welcome the January 8th Statement delivered by Cde President Ramaphosa and the call to action as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the June 16th uprising and the 30th anniversary of the coming into being of our democratic Constitution.

With a world in turmoil, marked by increasing illegal military aggression, it is an honour to be part of and contribute to a movement that has respected and promoted democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and peace since its birth in 1912.

As the Veterans League, we add our voices to the condemnation of the capture of the President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro and his wife by the United States government. As many have said, the rules-based international world order is being severely undermined by the President of the United States at great risk to all of us.

It is a tribute to the legacy of the African National Congress that the newly elected Mayor of New



York quoted our Freedom Charter in his inauguration speech – using the phrase from the Freedom Charter, that New York belongs to all who live in it. Indeed, an ongoing guarantee for peace and security in South Africa is that we embrace all who live in it.

This year, the people of our country will be putting the ANC to the test. We will pass the test not only if we improve delivery to our people, but also if we respect and involve them in building our country and the economy. And the most essential way to restore respect in the ANC is for us to demonstrate ethical leadership.

2026 is the year of the local government elections. To those local government councillors who are working hard with residents to provide services, keep our cities and towns clean and safe, we salute you. Your service to the people is the best guarantee of the ANC returning to power and of your return to your posts.

To those who have sought office for access to tenders and jobs, who engage with water tanker mafia or with shack farming, who do not report back to residents, and do not build ward committees, you have no place in the ANC as our political representatives.

Towards the end of last year, the NEC approved the process for the nomination of councillors for the forthcoming elections. In the past, we have erred in adhering to these processes. We have not verified all prospective candidates; there have been allegations of list manipulation, and we have often neglected or paid lip service to the steps set out for community consultation.

As the Veterans League, we call on all ANC structures to diligently observe these codified processes. We must ensure that the best, most upright, most diligent and most energetic leaders in our community are nominated as councillors. There must be checks in place, such as police clearance certificates, to ensure that candidates who are unworthy of nomination do not make their way onto ANC election lists. Veterans League members, many of whom have served as political representatives, are here to offer support and guidance throughout this process. In addition, we stand ready to support and monitor ANC councillors so they can address service delivery challenges.

While many local government challenges require systemic solutions, including a review of legislation and strengthening governance mechanisms, in the run-up to the elections, improvements can be achieved through rapid-response teams and councillors becoming more responsive to residents. All ANC members should play a role by reporting through the ANC-established WhatsApp and email lines.

We recently held a successful National General Council, with a strong focus on renewing the ANC. We expect that the NGC



will take forward the resolutions to ensure strong ethical leadership, strengthen branches, and review internal election procedures.

We want to see the strengthening of step-aside measures so that no one with allegations of corruption is in positions of authority that could taint the ANC's image. We want to see machinery put in place so that lifestyle audits and verification do indeed happen timeously.

Work must start soon on proposed amendments to the ANC Constitution to strengthen members' responsibilities, the role of branches and electoral reform, so that these amendments can be adopted at our 2027 National Conference.

The Veterans League stands behind the efforts of the ANC leadership to renew the ANC and to continue leading the country in a turbulent world. As the Veterans League, we continue to grow. At the end of last year, we successfully held our Gauteng Provincial Conference, where 300 delegates represented 1,695 members from 36 branches. They elected a 20-member-strong PEC, led

by Cde Firoz Cachalia as chairperson and Cde Ruth Lungu as secretary.

This year, we will continue championing political education and intergenerational learning, especially as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the June 16th uprising. We now have amongst the ranks of the veterans' league, the youth of the 1976 generation. We will answer the call made by Cde President in the January 8th Statement to complete the mission of national liberation and transformation. But we will not hold onto the baton that today's generation of youth must take over to become the principal agents of the struggle for a social and economic transformation.

We must work hard to win the coming local government elections. The Veterans League will be joining and urging all ANC members to roll up their sleeves for face-to-face, door-to-door engagement and community meetings from today to reconnect with our people!

Amandla! Maatla!

Forward towards a local government election victory!



A reflection on the ANC's 114th Anniversary

■ By **CHARLOTTE LOBE**

TODAY, I make an obeisance in honour of the party of the revolution, the African National Congress on the celebration of yet another milestone, its 114th Anniversary. *Ka Sesotho, ke le rolela kgaebana.* There are a few things I wish to reflect on following the success of the January 8th Rally for us to ponder as we renew, unite and modernise our movement as an instrument of change in hands of the people.

First and foremost this landmark celebration comes at the most challenging time primarily characterized by unstable, unpredictable, and constantly changing geopolitical landscape. We need to appreciate that today the party of the revolution operates in a world different from the one it op-

erated in at its formation, during its years as in exile and even different from the first thirty years of a democratic South Africa. The modern world the movement is operating in today is increasingly unpredictable, marked by rapid technological change, economic volatility, climate crisis, and geopolitical instability.

If the 114th birthday celebration at Moruleng Stadium in North West is anything to go by, the shifting sands clearly necessitates new approaches to the organisation of work and processes as the old ways such as filling stadiums as a show of strength or optical gymnastics may prove to be not as effective as they used to be in the past. So, the movement has to move with times. Others have argued that this form of mobilisa-

tion is good for optics but outdated and not in sink with the needs of the modern world.

As we renew the movement the vexing questions are: Can the movement be modernised and adopt modern ways of mobilising and showing strength? Is the notion of fill-up stadiums still strategic in 2026 let alone its financial implication and strain on our already stretched budgets?

Is it possible to break down this type of rallies into small, manageable iterations (like sprints in Scrum) where people can basically walk from home to a celebration venue and turn the whole country black, green and gold thereby allowing the message of the President to vibrate throughout the country and localise the

celebration? Will it be a sin for the President to address from us from a local hall in Rustenburg and his address broadcasted live and crossing over to various locations in the country where NEC, PEC and REC members can be deployed and celebrate with ordinary members?

By saying this I do not undermine the work that was done these past few days leading up to the main rally. I think there is beauty in this simplicity. Maybe this theory could be tested with the Mayihlome and Siyanqoba rallies in the upcoming local government elections. This will allow for frequent feedback loops, enabling leaders on ground to inspect and adapt their plans based on real-time reports and data arising from these focused sessions or mini rallies.

This type of engagement could also elevate the concept of "OHANA" or "Family", meaning no one is left behind or forgotten. The renewal of the ANC is taking us back to basics where no one should be left behind or forgotten. This will take our efforts of mass mobilisation to greater heights. The celebration of this milestone would then be a great platform for an inclusive participation of the rank and file and not a purview of a selected few. This will ensure broad reach and awareness. It will be excellent way of broadcasting this annual message to a vast audience and generating public visibility where the country will be painted black, green and gold. Through this process, the Movement will have the comfort that it is carrying the majority of the people with it and leaving no-one behind. The smaller fora opens ways for back and forth engagement. In this way, the Movement has the ben-

efit of appreciating feedback from the masses.

Converging at one point is good for optics but cross-overs to various municipalities could allow more people to be involved in the celebration at lesser costs. This could also assist with the exodus of celebrations following the national celebration, saving time and to a large extent concentrating resources to a one day event. Beyond this celebration, every one of us will then focus their energies on the revolutionary tasks outlined by the President on behalf of the NEC.

What I am saying here is that the modern world is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate and the ANC is not immune to this. As the traditional notion of stability is being replaced by an ongoing need for adaptability and resilience, the movement has to be agile and fit for purpose. This requires a holistic approach that focuses on culture, structure, and processes. This will enable the movement to adapt quickly to new challenges, leverage opportunities, and maintain a competitive edge.

As part of the ongoing renewal project, the movement will need to adopt core agile principles, foster a mindset of continuous improvement, and design flexible organizational structures and processes. The outcomes of the 2024 general elections, as difficult as it was, have presented a unique opportunity for the ANC to adapt and evolve as it navigates the constant threat of the shifting sands and treacherous currents. A fit-for-purpose organization in this context means being obsessed with delivering value from all fronts. All efforts should be aligned with solving problems of our people efficiently and effectively. I wish to congratulate the NEC for a hands on approach to challenges faced by outlet people in North West. The pre-birthday celebration is as well curated and well delivered. Kudos to the leadership of the party of the Revolution.

Learning from other liberation movements, the ANC cannot bid the winds and waves to cease, but can navigate treacherous currents proactively rather than just reacting to shifts as they occur. The Nicaraguan Revolution,



or Sandinista Revolution (1978-1990), is a good example where the party of the revolution, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) lost power to a US-backed coalition. FSNL was in power for only eleven years after the overthrow of the brutal Somoza dictatorship in 1979, marking the first time a socialist movement gaining power through armed struggle and relinquishing it through democratic elections. The reduction of the majority of FSNL to 41% in 1990 was a devastating blow that could only be turned around in 2007 when the FSNL leader, Daniel Ortega returned to power.

The FSNL and the ANC share several historical and contemporary parallels in their political development, particularly regarding their revolutionary origins and subsequent reduction of their electoral support. Interestingly, the FSNL decline of its electoral support took place during a changing geopolitical landscape defined by the end of the Cold War in 1990. This draws parallels to the 2024 general elections where the party of the revolution in South Africa faced a decline in its electoral support to just over 40%. This decline took place during a changing geopolitical environment characterised by transition from a unipolar world dominated by the US to a multipolar system that has defined the world since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

A defining feature of this transition is the rising tensions between the US and China, a resurgence of Russia, unyielding conflicts in the Middle-East, Eastern Europe, some parts of African continent and instability in Americas that has been exacerbated by the US military aggression against



the people of Venezuela. On one hand, these challenges are playing themselves out in an environment marked by uncertainty, neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism and the rise of non-traditional challenges like cyber warfare and climate change. On the other hand they occur in an environment marked by the new reality of a fractured global trade and compromised global supply chain ecosystem.

These challenges have led to the consolidation and reorganisation of alliances (like the expansion of BRICS), increased “geo-economics,” and a focus on resilient supply chains and calls for protection of national sovereignty and the system of multilateralism. As we celebrate the 114 years of the party of the revolution, we should be alert to the current geopolitical crisis as it poses significant economic risks (sanctions, trade disruptions, investor flight) and political challenges (domestic division, foreign policy pressure, and potential isolation) that directly impact South Africa’s national development and the unity of the forces of the left.

There is a need for the Party of the Revolution to manage complexities of the current geopo-

litical climate as we tackle persistent domestic challenges that include high unemployment, poverty, and inequality.

In the context of the global challenges, we need to pause and remember that a free and democratic South Africa is a product of global solidarity and human compassion. This included relentless debates at the UN and its declaration of apartheid as crime against humanity through multiple resolutions that include UNGA Resolution 2202 in 1966. This resolution was the first of its kind to label apartheid as such and was followed by a legally binding resolution in 1973 otherwise known as the 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. This Convention defined apartheid and mandated its suppression, making it a formal international crime against humanity. It established apartheid as a violation of international law, a serious threat to peace, and a crime against humanity, codified by inhuman acts resulting from racial segregation policies.

Apartheid South Africa was thus isolated by international community from participating in various

international forums and events that included competing in international sports competitions. The isolation included boycotts, sanctions, and the anti-apartheid movements that built immense pressure for change, making its transition to democracy a collective achievement; today, South Africa continues to champion solidarity, promoting inclusive global development and advocating for the Global South's interests on world stages like the G20, emphasizing cooperation, equality, and shared responsibility for challenges like poverty and climate change.

The people of the world supported the struggle against apartheid in various forms that included hosting our people who had to flee the country, training of the personnel of the liberation movement etc. Some were even prepared to pay the supreme price of life understanding that the price of freedom and justice was worth more than life itself. Our freedom is built on the blood of many of people home and abroad.

This should be a reason why we celebrate 114 years of struggle we should pay homage to our Comrades whose contribution to humanity transcended borders and geographies. The military ag-

gression of the US against Venezuela is like a movie we have seen before. This type of aggression is similar to the aggression by the apartheid junta against its neighbours. It is a stark reminder of among others the historic battle of Cuito Cuanavale (1987-1988) which included series of engagements between the Cuban-backed People's Armed Forces of Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) on one side, and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) with help of the South African Defence Force (SADF) on the other side.

During the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1998 President Nelson Mandela spoke of the battle as, 'a turning point for the liberation of our continent'. To this end, the 2,070 names of Cuban soldiers who fell in Angola between 1975 and 1988, are inscribed along with the names of South Africans who died during our liberation struggle. This year as we commemorate the 38th Anniversary of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, let us remember that our freedom was never free.

114 years the party of the revolution must of necessity remind us of the Maseru Massacre where our people were murdered in the

hands of the SADF in December 1982 and many of our people who died elsewhere in the continent such as in Zimbabwe, Lubatse etc. We must also be mindful of our people who died here at home and laid a firm foundation for our freedom. Lest we forget that brave women and men laid their lives for freedom to reign. It is for this reason that the statement of the ANC NEC on the military aggression of the US against Venezuela it is not only timely but progressive and necessary.

The 114 years of struggle also represent international mobilisation as was considered one of the pillars of the NDR. Through this pillar, the ANC mobilised support and received solidarity from many nations and movements, including other African countries, the former German Democratic Republic, Cuba, and various anti-apartheid movements globally. This shared history deeply embedded the principle of solidarity with other oppressed groups in its identity and foreign policy outlook. The ANC has consistently supported the Palestinian people in their struggle for self-determination and advocated for the independence of Western Sahara, taking a firm stance in international forums, including bringing a case of genocide against Israel at



the International Court of Justice.

The celebration of 114 years of struggle includes shared history with people of Cuba and Venezuela. Throughout its history, the ANC has opposed imperialist aggression and unilateralism by Western powers, particularly the US. During a Town Hall event in the USA in June 1990 Nelson Mandela made a strong statement accusing the United States of “*unspeakable atrocities*” in the world, specifically referencing the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as an example of American arrogance and a demonstration of power rather than a necessary military action.

In a resurfaced video of the address of Nelson Mandela, he questioned Washington’s moral authority and argued that the US “*don’t care for human beings,*” asserting the bombings were a warning to the Soviet Union rather than solely a means to end World War II. Mandela’s broader criticisms of US foreign policy often centred on the principle of national sovereignty and the role of the United Nations. He was particularly vocal during the lead-up to the Iraq War in the early 2000s.

President Thabo Mbeki during his tenure at the helm of the ANC

and the country has made several statements regarding U.S. foreign policy and actions, which he generally views characterised as aggression, imperialism and a violation of human rights when they included unilateral interventions against other millions. His stance reflected consistent critique of the US acting outside of multilateral frameworks like the UN.

He argued that the U.S. often bypassed these principles, and maintained that other nations must stand up for the sovereign rights of countries facing external pressure, such as in the case of Venezuela, or risk their own safety. Comrade Thabo Mbeki has criticized U.S. military actions, such as the 2003 invasion of Iraq as acts of aggression that undermine global peace efforts.

During his tenure as the President of both the ANC and the country, President Jacob Zuma consistently advocated for global conflict resolution rooted in inclusive dialogue and the pursuit of a just and peaceful world order based in international law. He explicitly condemned acts of aggression and violations on international law irrespective of the motive. Throughout their tenure they maintained a strong posi-

tion on the importance of national sovereignty and adherence to the UN Charter.

Under the stewardship of President Cyril Ramaphosa, in keeping with this tradition, the South African government and the ANC have condemned the US after a large-scale military strike in Venezuela and the capture of its leader, Nicholas Maduro. From the posture of the first President of a democratic South Africa, President Nelson Mandela to the current President, President Cyril Ramaphosa, one can safely conclude that the ANC has always steered foreign policy in favour of peaceful resolution of conflicts. It has consistently opposed unilateral military interventions by powerful nations against other countries, emphasising that the end does not justify the means irrespective of the motive.

The ANC has always put emphasis on dialogue and diplomacy, and has put premium on working within global bodies like the UN for peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

Charlotte Lobe writes in her capacity as a member of the ANC in Ward 20, Fezile Dabi Branch, Mangaung, Free State Province.

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

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela



Beyond the Game of Numbers

■ By **XHANTI TEKI**

“ATHINI AMANANI PHOPHO (“WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS)?”

– *The late Mluleki George to Cde Fikile Mbalula at the Mangaung Elective Conference*

THE ANC celebrated 114 years of existence on the 8th of January. This milestone anniversary is a historical account of determined efforts of the organisation’s ultimate triumph over forces of oppression. The African National Congress, a liberation movement which has over a century, traversed through ebbs and flows, victories and setbacks, has always understood the importance of leadership, rightly or wrongly.

The evolution and continued existence of the ANC is dependent on its leadership framework which has been largely determined by the ability to rally numbers. Renewal of a mandate which is directly linked to succession, an important principle in safeguarding democracy in the ANC. Since 1912, the ANC has relied heavily on elective conferences for the pursuit of its strategic objectives. Elective conferences by their very nature have as a norm been about which localities, regions and provinces garnering substantive numbers in support of their preferred candidate(s) or front runners, a practice which has proven to be quite the proverbial Achilles heel for smaller provinces.

Undabamlonyeni (the talk of the town) is that the people’s move-



ment is facing an existential crisis, a true account of the state of affairs. In form, content and manifestation, an existential crisis does not give leeway to sugar-coat things, it necessitates that we outline things as they are, a spade should be a spade not a shining tool in the garden. The state of affairs inundates the leadership of the ANC to deviate from the norms and standards of succession in pursuit of qualitative over quantitative considerations. It has become the norm more than an exception that provinces with a larger delegation adjust the sails to steer the direction of the ship, while, in contrast, provinces with smaller delegations are disadvantaged to sponsor names

merely because the “numbers are not numbering”.

The ANC has always demonstrated a strong ability to maintain its leadership architecture even during the dark days of apartheid. The evolution of the leadership framework in the ANC has historical context, characterized by a proud history of triumph and resilience over adversity and counter-revolution.

In all its elective conferences, the ANC has consistently elected leaders it viewed befitting at each stage of the struggle notwithstanding the fact that the evolution of this glorious movement hasn’t been without failures

and resounding successes in as far as it relates to leadership. As a result, the ANC navigated different epochal transitions with diminished difficulty.

In the formative years, the founders of the ANC, which included John Langalibalele Dube, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Josiah Tshangana Gumede, Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje, Dr Walter Rubusana and many others, were advocates for African unity at a time when divisions were prevalent following centuries of wars and rivalries, precipitated by colonial escalation. This was at a time when the exclusion and disenfranchisement of Africans had been further deepened, following the unity forged by the signatories of the 1902 Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, culminating in the formation of the union of South Africa in 1910 with scant rights given to the black majority. Upon Pixley ka Seme's return to South Africa after 11 years of studying abroad, he declared that the 'dark races of this subcontinent' had to face their historic divisions:

"The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the X(h)osa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tongas, between the Basutos and every other native must be buried and forgotten; it has shed among us sufficient blood! We are one people. Those divisions, those jealousies are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today."

The first President of the ANC, John Langalibalele Dube's apparent acceptance of segregation in a petition against the Land Act of 1913 presented to Prime Minister Louis Botha cost him his position. In 1917 he was replaced as leader by Sefako Mapogo Makgatho, a teacher, journalist, lay preacher



from Limpopo and founding president of the Transvaal African Teachers Association.

The ANC with its elitist approach was not grounded at the time resulting in ineffectual protests against a number of racist laws. The failures of leadership to establish the ANC as a people's organisation meant that a radical President was needed. Josiah Tshangana Gumede was elected in 1927, replacing its third President, Rev. Zacharias Richard Mahabane. President Gumede's close proximity to the SACP, however, led to the ANC under his leadership not gaining traction.

The move to mass mobilisation and defiance in the 1940's was as a result of the dormant nature of the organisation which heavily relied on deputations and petitions. This epoch ushered vibrancy in the ANC especially after the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944. The framework of leadership was defiant of all repressive laws and characterized by protests emanating from the ANC's adopted Programme of Action. The ANC to a great extent consolidated the masses on the ground and its posture was the inclusion of ordinary people

to join the struggle. Under the Presidency of Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma, the ANC stepped up its resistance politics with a more radical approach. It shunned the politics of petitions, opting for a programme of action that was characterised by mass protests. The move to militancy and mass mobilization is on its own an illustration that the evolution of the ANC is in sync with our ever-changing realities.

Mass protests and widespread peaceful defiance was met with brute force and violent, deadly clampdowns by the Apartheid regime, which led to the liberation movement resorting to armed struggle and going underground to intensify efforts of defeating the regime. The formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), a military wing of the ANC required a different leadership to spearhead *umzabalo*. Different in approach, posture and outlook precisely because the time and space mitigated it to be different as compared to the dormant approaches of the 1930's.

On 16 December 1961 the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, was formed with President Mandela as its first commander-in-chief. Some ANC leaders

such as Chief Albert Luthuli, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960, remained committed to nonviolence, however this stance was not in sync with the imperatives of the organisation at the time.

The Negotiation and Transitional period which ultimately led the ANC taking over the reigns of governance in the Republic in the post democratic breakthrough constitutional dispensation required a differently wired crop of leadership that champions the National Democratic Revolution, our theory for social change whose goal is to transform South Africa into a National Democratic Society by eradicating all manifestations of apartheid, colonial and patriarchal power relations and is non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous.

Provincial dynamics and adherence to accepted norms and standards of succession pose a very serious threat to the very survival of the ANC. Standards which have brought the people's organisation to where it is now.

KUTHWANI XA KUNJE?

It is glaringly obvious that the renewal process should have characteristics of extraordinary measures given the magnitude and compounded nature of the current situation; the existential crisis.

Every epoch necessitates that correct tools of analysis be applied devoid of established and ardent factional lines or alignments to cliques and cabals. Different approaches were pursued in different epochal intersections because there was a need for transformational approaches in response to the contemporary



developments brought about by the dialectical nature of growth.

Each epoch must have its own answers that are responsive to the current situation beyond numbers and strongmen politics. At the crux of repositioning the ANC, our glorious movement, is the urgent need to deliberately deviate with a sense of urgency from all forms of lobbying centred around numbers but rather a microscopic look at the kind of leadership collective that should lead.

A faction can win an internal lobbying process in the ANC but we run the risk of such an outcome alienating the very motive forces of the National Democratic Revolution and possibly not aligning to the needs dictated by the material conditions arising from the realities faced by the movement as a leader of society. The ANC has lost its foot

in being a leader of society, our electoral performance bears reference. Internal factional victory, compounded by mutating factionalism, would further diminish our support externally, a quick recipe for extinction and irrelevance, a no brainer. The faction will keep the crown but the throne will belong to the masses whose revolutionary interests we have abandoned.

It is imperative that we go back to basics, akin to the 1969 consultative conference held in Morogoro, Tanzania, where the movement took stock of where it stood, its leaders either incarcerated or banned. This is the conference that synthesised the inaugural Strategy and Tactics, a blueprint for the attainment of the 1st phase of the NDR, culminating into the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

The leadership question should be informed primarily by the direction of the ANC. This should be the bedrock upon which any discussion on identification of capable individuals should be based. The power of persuasion should be pertinently pursued to determine what kind of leadership is best equipped to lead regardless of numbers, provincial preferences or factions, or where the candidates hail from.

The fundamental truth facing the ANC is that we are already in crisis mode, and that extra-ordinary circumstances require extra-ordinary measures. Quality over quantity should be prioritised, the Northern Cape for instance is a small province with nurtured, cultivated and seasoned leaders who are products of sustained unity.

We dare not fail in this endeavour.

Saul on his road to Damascus in the Book of Acts underwent a fundamental change and transformation. The ANC needs a Damascene moment for survival.

Khanti Teki is a member of the ANC Thozamile Ntoni Branch, Ward 1, Umsobomvu Sub Region. He writes in his personal capacity.

The pitfalls awaiting SA in 2026

What could possibly go wrong as we march towards the local government elections?

■ By **YACOOB ABBA OMAR**

THERE is usually a straight line that connects the ANC's national general council (NGC) to its January 8 statement, to its national executive committee lekgotla, to the cabinet bosberaad, to the president's opening of parliament session and the finance minister's budget speech.

What could possibly go wrong in South Africa as we march towards the 2026 or 2027 local government elections? For one, the global geopolitical context is worryingly fragile, especially given the image South Africa has retained as a leader of progressive and enlightened policy and thinking.

Anecdotal evidence is showing migrants from Europe and North America coming to South Africa are retreating from the rising tide of right-wing parties and the possibility of the reintroduction of military conscription in their countries of origin.

While these fair-minded visitors regard us as being the poster nation for diversity, equity and inclusion policies, there is no doubt we will be attracting the wrong attention from the forces these people are escaping from. This is going to require all South Africans to unite around defending



the sovereignty of our country.

You would think that should be a "duh" thing to say. However, the manner in which some elements from South Africa have been genuflecting at the feet of the forces has moved at least one erudite analyst sufficiently to call on opposition parties to stop being gat-kruipers.

The challenges faced on the domestic front were signalled by ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa in his speech marking the 114th anniversary of the party's for-

mation, where he declared 2026 **"the year of decisive action to fix local government and transform the economy"**.

The speech brought into sharp relief the outcomes of the 2025 NGC, which were refreshingly specific. The daily indignities of potholes, broken traffic lights, irregular refuse collection, water outages and electricity load reduction erode public trust more effectively than any external or internal opposition campaign.

The December NGC documents



acknowledged this brutal reality: poor service delivery in ANC-governed municipalities has “*demoralised and alienated*” citizens, particularly the working class and poor who depend on public services. It could well account for the public’s alienation from democratic processes, leading to ever lower voter participation.

Ramaphosa’s insistence that implementation needs to be prioritised is trotted out at every occasion possible, with ministers and officials repeating, chorus-like, “*implement, implement, implement*”.

It is true implementation has been improving steadily with the laser-like focus on delivery introduced with Operation Vulindlela. Launched in 2020 as a joint initiative of the presidency and National Treasury to implement high-impact structural reforms that address long-standing constraints on economic growth, it has succeeded in drawing ever-widening circles of the business sector and the state.

This could lead to South Africa following the path prescribed by 17th-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes in *The Leviathan*, with the fabled sea monster a metaphor for a powerful government that has absolute sovereignty, wielding absolute power over its subjects. This would appeal to the increasing numbers here and around the world who are being seduced by the prospect of improved service delivery through illiberalism, authoritarianism and even military rule.

However, implementation requires some preconditions to be met, most importantly political will, intent and capacity. These ingredients can help make South Africa a democratic, developmental state as described by the late Malawian economist Thandika Mkandawire.

Speaking at the inaugural Mapungubwe Annual Lecture in 2012, he advised that the South African state should aim to be developmental by facilitating and

promoting economic growth and structural transformation, democratic by deriving its legitimacy through popular participation and the electoral process, and socially inclusive by pursuing policies that ensure equitable entitlements for citizens, ensuring inclusion in societal affairs.

This connection was captured by Cosatu president Zingiswa Losi at last week’s ANC celebrations: “*The people of this country did not struggle for freedom without dignity, the people of this country did not vote for democracy without jobs.*”

To safeguard ourselves against external interference we will need to have an effective democracy, which in delivering a better life for all inspires the public to defend the realm.

Yacoob Abba Omar is Director of Operations at the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection.

Orania Extends Exclusion to Poor Whites

■ By **DR. ZAMANI SAUL**

A few days before Christmas I took my ailing mom for a short walk in my small hometown, Petrusville, in the Northern Cape. As we passed a grocery store, we witnessed a confrontation at the store entrance between four white families and a group of known black locals. The scene was ugly as the black group had in their possession an empty wheelchair, while a middle-aged disabled white man lay on the ground.

Curious about the situation, I approached both groups to understand what was happening.

The black group, animated and enraged, asserted that these whites had been expelled from Orania due to their social status, they were poor. They claimed that when these white

families lived in Orania, they considered themselves superior to black people. They further informed me that these “poor whites” are now residing in an informal settlement in Uitsig, a neighborhood in Petrusville.

The group was adamant in their belief that these whites should return to Orania. One of the white guys acknowledged that they were indeed “armgate” (Afrikaans for poor bums) from Orania who could no longer afford staying

there. After a struggle to convince them all that what should bind us together is our common humanity, not racial, tribal or ethnic affiliation, they returned the wheelchair and allowed the white families to make their festive purchases. As we departed the scene, my mom mentioned that earlier in the year, a white couple from Orania, who are beneficiaries of government

social grants, had approached her about renting her old house, a request she declined because the house was being used by the grandchildren.

These encounters highlight the complexities of race and its intersection with the socio-economic situation in the country, exposing the unsustainable nature and

'WHITES ONLY' VILLAGE ORANIA

Orania sits in the Karoo region of the Northern Cape province, 871km from Cape Town





indeed the folly of ill-conceived projects like Orania, which rely on exclusion to assert a false sense of racial purity and superiority. The alleged eviction of poor whites in Orania starkly illustrates its troubled history. It suggests a second wave of evictions subtly taking place in Orania: the first wave was the unlawful and inhumane evictions of black residents in 1991/92 following the purchase of the farm from the apartheid government's Department of Water Affairs, and now the second wave is an immoral class-based displacement and eviction of armgatte, which are poor whites.

Having grown up in Petrusville, I have witnessed firsthand the repercussions of exclusionary approaches perpetuated in Orania. To provide context, it is essential to offer readers a brief geographical and historical exposition of my hometown Petrusville, located about 40 kilometres from Orania. Our neighboring towns include Keurkieskloof, Phillipstown, Hopetown, and Luckhoff. In the late 1980s, during my high school years, we often played weekend soccer games in Orania, which then contained around 100 black households and boasted two soccer teams: Orania Swallows and Orania Chiefs. I can fondly remember that after those thrilling soccer games, we would be hosted for a feast of porridge (pap), potatoes and cabbage with porcupine or warthog meat. At that time, Orania was a farm owned by the then Department of Water Affairs, acquired through land expropriation.

In 1964, the South African government expropriated the farm Vluytjeskraal (now known as Orania) to establish a town for government workers involved in

the construction of the Orange River Development Scheme. There is no evidence or historical account indicating that compensation was paid for this expropriation or for many other parcels of land expropriated in relation to the scheme.

As part of the Orange River Development Scheme, Orania was developed into a farm town complete with housing, schools, and other amenities, all under state control. However, when government priorities shifted, Orania fell into neglect and became one of the many failed projects of the apartheid regime. Between 1979 and 1982, the government repeatedly attempted, though unsuccessfully, to close the town. During this period, many white residents left, resulting in Orania being almost entirely occupied by black families.

In 1991, Orania was sold to private individuals with the aim of creating an exclusive white enclave based on the egregious and immoral idea of a Volkstad. The late Professor Carel Boshoff and his associates purchased the farm town, encompassing 483 hectares for R1.3 million. This sale precipitated the mass eviction of about 100 black families who had been living there. Most of those evicted relocated to my hometown, particularly to an area known as Skitskraal (Transitcamp), while others moved to the neighboring towns of Keurkieskloof, Hopetown and Luckhoff.

This wave of unlawful evictions in Orania and the surrounding farms impacted on the small receiving towns. In response to the fear accompanied by the 1990 unbanning of political parties, there were mass evictions of farm workers on the surrounding

farms. The Petrusville Civic Organisation led by Mr. Bonakele Phuzi, where I was the Deputy Secretary, organized various marches to the police station, with one of the key grievances being a demand for an end to farm evictions, particularly in Orania.

The scale of evictions drew the attention of civil society organisations, including the Kagiso Trust, which deployed a social researcher to monitor the situation in Petrusville. In 1992, the Petrusville Civic Organization received funding from Kagiso Trust to establish an Advice Office with a specific focus on halting farm evictions. Alongside two other comrades, I was appointed as a Paralegal and underwent formal training specialising in eviction law.

Unfortunately, our intervention came too late to effectively halt the evictions in Orania, which were rapid and overwhelming for those black families – truly a blitzkrieg. The funding we received from Kagiso Trust enabled us to visit the families who had been evicted, documenting their experiences.

All the evicted families left their relatively habitable houses and relocated to informal settlements and shanties in nearby towns, with the majority settling in Petrusville. As an Advice Office, we aimed to litigate for these evictees, but our efforts were thwarted when the office was closed in 1993 due to the discontinuation of funding by the Kagiso Trust.

Orania is an aberration of a democratic country based on the principles of human dignity, equality and freedom. The narrative used to justify the continued existence

of Orania ignores the historical context of apartheid and the on-going impact of systemic racism in South Africa. Excluding black people from Orania perpetuates racial segregation and inequality.

Right-wing Afrikaner nationalists argue that Orania is a safe haven for their community, to preserve their culture and traditions. This is a pretext for the reincarnation of apartheid to perpetuate white supremacy. White supremacy in South Africa is an addiction, like heroin, leading to racial polarisation and exclusion. We are a human rights-based country and South Africans have a right to stay wherever they want to in the country, and any move for cultural preservation that undermines this inalienable right of South Africans is frankly, perverse.

Orania was established as a shareblock company. It restricts residency based on racial criteria, maintaining a homogenous community that perpetuates an exclusionary legacy. Orania (mis) uses Section 235 of the Constitution that allows cultural communities the right to self-determination. The application of this section in Orania contradicts the broad transformative aims of the Constitution by excluding other racial groups. This exclusion highlights the tension between cultural identity and the imperative for inclusivity in a democratic society, revealing the limitations and contradictions inherent in the current approach of the Orania model to the race question in the country.

This exclusionary legacy in Orania now involves targeting poor whites whose precarious socio-economic position threatens the economic security of the town. The same racial group in



Orania is divided by class with a clear gap between the working class and the more affluent managerial class.

This class divide manifests spatially, socially and economically. This class divide is exacerbated by the fact that Orania is an attraction to many poor Afrikaners from across South Africa who go to the town seeking work. I understand that these poor whites are the major drivers of Orania's recent population growth and stay in a residential area called Kleingeluk (small happiness), which lies about 1.5 kilometers from the main town called Grootdorp. Kleingeluk is the poorer side of Orania and those living there are referred to as "armgate". This is just a representation of the class stratification and hierarchy of Orania that begins to haunt the town, resulting in eviction of the "armgate" to Petrusville informal settlements. This marks the second wave of evictions.

Orania celebrates the grotesque aspects of apartheid colonialism, even prominently displaying the apartheid flag. Apartheid was the

pinnacle of colonial aggression, oppression and dispossession. The town celebrates the architects of this inhumane system, featuring a collection of busts of Afrikaner leaders on Monument Hill, including the Hendrik Verwoerd Museum, dedicated to the prime architect of apartheid who deemed black people as subhuman. Just a few months back, Orania unveiled a bronze replica of the statue of Paul Kruger, originally from Pretoria, which further cements the commitment of the town to honouring colonial and apartheid-era figures.

Kruger's domestic policies were steeped in rigid racial hierarchies and driven by white supremacy. This bold expression of white supremacy in a predominantly black country like South Africa is unsustainable and will inevitably backfire, ultimately shaming its architects. Those behind apartheid were under the delusion that they were creating an invincible system. However, history teaches us that there is no amount of injustice that can unendingly prevail over the collective agency of the people. Apartheid crumbled

under this collective agency.

I foresee similar outcomes for Orania, as this apartheid prototype can never withstand the tides of justice and equality. The call by President Cyril Ramaphosa on Reconciliation Day emphasised the importance of unity among South Africans, highlighting the fact that the strength of South Africa is derived from its diversity. He called on every South African to embrace this diversity rather than exclusion based on perceptions of racial superiority, which only serves to weaken our collective identity as one nation. The focus should be on constructing an egalitarian society that affirms the previously disadvantaged and rejects discrimination in all its forms and manifestations.

White South Africans, as direct beneficiaries of the evil apartheid system, have a crucial role in promoting unity and respect across all racial groups. Whites must move away from the victim mentality, which triggers exclusionary practices to perpetuate racial divisions. Instead, we must work together towards a more equitable South Africa where mutual respect and our rich diversity lead to a stronger nation. Building positive relations and understanding among all communities will foster the spirit of nationhood that is necessary for progress.

Through a collective embrace of our shared humanity and a recognition of our unique contributions to the current state of the country, we can advance towards a united and prosperous future for everyone.

Dr. Zamani Saul, is the Provincial Chairperson of the ANC in the Northern Cape.



POLITICS OF ALIENATION

Why we should reject calls for the independence of the Cape

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

FROM the colonial Cape of Good Hope to the Cape of Storms of the perennial changing seasons where animosity and racial stratification pollute the spirit of unity, eviscerate non-racialism, diversity and unity as foundational pillars of our democratic Constitution, the Western Cape became a focal point on two fronts, battered by the storms of racial stratification.

These developments nearly evaded the political radar, escaped societal scrutiny, commandeered and usurped political power veiled as a right guaranteed by the Constitution of the land, frowned upon by the courts as custodians of the constitution and mainstays of democracy

where the secessionist and Cape Independence suffered a massive constitutional blow when the court dismissed its case for the independence of the Western Cape. And the courts ruled in favour of the Cape Minstrels in the exercise of their rights and practice of their customs.

President Cyril Ramaphosa provided leadership, defended the Constitution, the unity and sovereignty of the democratic state against racists who define themselves outside of the mainstream by advocating the establishment of a homeland exclusive to white racists. The call for the referendum for the independence of the Western Cape was out rightly rejected, not politically, but in line



with the dictates of constitution and the sacred principles of unity and sovereignty. A country within a country is untenable, and at worst, disastrous as it gives rise to polarisation as opposed to national unity and common citizenship as the basic tenets of the apex law.

The Sudan and South Sudan secessionism is a case in point, and so is Somaliland which has exposed itself to neo-colonialism, divide and rule by Israel, including the prospects of war is instructive. The President's mastery of rejecting the referendum was a rehearsal of his leadership in the wake of the falsehoods of the white genocide and persecution of minorities by the racist AfriForum and Solidaritet which have plunged the country into a diplomatic storm, with serious economic ramifications. The G20 Summit, and the camaraderie spirit of South Africans, the rejection of persecution claims by white South Africans exposed the lies peddled by these fringe right-wing parties.

On its website the Cape Independence which is at the centre of a referendum for independence defines itself as an advocacy group established to coordinate and support people and organisations working towards Cape independence and committed to democratically, lawfully and peacefully obtaining independence for the collective peoples of the Western Cape. Its vision is to create the Cape of Good Hope, an independent non-racial first-world sovereign state on Africa's Southern tip. According to the Cape Independence, the Cape of Good Hope will provide a better life for all who live there, regardless of their race, religion, or culture; a catalytic beacon of

excellence and hope in southern Africa.

The Cape Independence claims, *"The ANC government is leading us into an economic and social disaster. The Western Cape has rejected their agenda yet our democratic voice is rendered redundant by a system where government is not chosen by us, but despite us."*

It continues. *"Our best hope is creating our own first world nation of Africa's southern tip-The Cape of Good Hope."* This is an insult to those who fought for freedom in our land our solemn conviction that South Africa belongs to those who live it as advocated by the constitution, which is the supreme law of the law.

Sadly, it does not define the collective peoples of the Western Cape. Lest we forget. The Cape of Good Hope was founded on colonialism of the Voyage of Discovery of Jan van Riebeck and the Dutch as if the Cape was pristine, barren, with no indigenous people, legitimate descendants and heirs. This is the land of the Khoi and the San, built on slavery, racial stratification where Krotoa and many women were sex slaves, satisfying the sinful lust of the master.

The notion of the first world nation of the Cape of Good Hope is nostalgic to a racist and colonial past where blacks worked for the master without wages, economic and labour rights, the same way where there was forced labour in the creation of the Cape of Good Hope, an illusionary utopian state founded on land dispossession. In the 2025 poll the Cape Independence claims that 43% of the voters are in favour of secession. This cannot be true.

What is the population of the Western Cape, what are its features and racial demographics? According to the 2022 Census, the Western Cape's population breakdown by race showed Coloureds as the largest group (around 42-43%), followed by Black Africans (around 39%), Whites (about 16%), and Indians/Asians (around 1%).

The 2024 National General and Provincial Elections outcome refute these findings. The previous provincial election was won by the DA with a reduced majority of 55.45%, down from 59.38% in the 2014 election. The ANC secured 28.64 down from 32.89%. The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) significantly grew from 2.11% to 4.04%, with the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) growing to 2.66%. Other parties are the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) and Al Jama-ah. Where does the 43% come from? This is arithmetic balderdash and a deliberate distortion of facts masquerading as the truth and a case for independence. Numbers don't lie and so are facts stubborn.

In building the Cape of Good Hope, blacks and coloureds were relegated to the margins of the economy, confined to slums in a system of segregation and racial spatial development under the Group Areas Act. In this theatre the Cape Independence is not acting alone. History has in its annals the Democratic Alliance (DA) under the leadership of Helen Zille declaring that Xhosas are migrants who have no place in the Western Cape and should go to the Eastern Cape.

This was an insult and a direct offence against the constitution for South Africa belongs to all those who live it, running short of say-

ing that Xhosas account for the economic decline of Western Cape economy, the budget constraints, development, amenities, job and education and other opportunities. This was utter, overt and shameless vitriol.

In furtherance of the objectives of the Cape Independence and policies of segregation and separate development, the DA has once again nailed its blue colours to the mast. The DA is involved in a racial battle with Cape Minstrels, known as the Klopse in celebrating *Die Tweede Nuwe Jaar* (The Second New Year). The DA abused its power, litigated against the poor, their culture and their rich heritage.

Die Tweede Nuwe Jaar has historical origins of invaluable cultural and linguistic significance. These are fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution. This is a cultural practice and custom that has been preserved for many centuries. And the DA wants to erase it from history.

History has no blank pages and the DA rewriting it. In 1967, the carnival was banned from its home at the Green Point stadium. In 1968 there were no Minstrels parading in the Cape Town CBD. By its recent actions the DA is repeating the events of 1967/8.

Transportation to attend rehearsals became an additional challenge and expense for the different competing minstrel groups. The economic situation prevails today. During the 1970s, the traffic by laws were used to place additional challenges on the minstrel festival organizers. In 1977, all Minstrel marches were forbidden in any part of Cape Town.

After many struggles and chal-

lenges against the system akin to the Group Areas Act of racial segregation the event returned to its original route from District Six to the Green Point stadium. This was not a favour but a product of relentless struggles. Today, the DA wants to restrict the people's movement and culture to where it deems they belong, the gutter, far away from what it deems to be the first civilised world of the Cape Independence, the Cape of Good Hope.

Both combined, acting in common furtherance of racial polarisation, the DA and the Cape Independence will be defeated by the people. And were defeated by the President acting on behalf of the people and the courts acting on behalf of the powerless and voiceless. Culture, citizenship and languages are not privileges entrusted by provincial pieces of legislation but constitutionally enshrined rights.

As we unite to reject the Cape of Good Hope there is difficulty and impossibility in locating its map in the Western Cape, the colour

and customs of its citizens, and criteria for citizenship. We made a mistake with Orania as self-determination can be achieved without secession and racial segregation. The minority cannot redraw the country's map, or reinvent the odious Group Areas Act.

The time has come for the people to see what the DA represents, including its anti-transformation agenda on many laws designed to redress the vestiges of apartheid. The DA's putrid actions offend against the constitution and tramples upon the proud heritage of the coloured community, the legitimate community of the Western Cape, and citizens of South Africa. And so is the Cape Independence.

South Africa is a non-racial, unitary democratic state with people of diverse cultures co-existing as equal citizens, and a constitution predicated on common citizenship and common bond of humanity, inclusivity and shared prosperity and belongs to those who live in it.





Emulate Moshoeshoe

“Today, the voice of Moshoeshoe is calling on us to unite. The enemy is busy trying to set African against African, and black people against one another. It continuously seeks to impart racial and tribal connotations to the many conflicts that are a direct result of the apartheid system. The Pretoria regime not only hopes to slow down our struggle but also to demonstrate that we are different peoples who cannot live together in peace. The racists want to prove that we have to be separated into different racial and tribal compartments, controlled and presided over by the white minority regime.

“We have to defeat these enemy schemes, resist all provocations and unite in the common struggle to liberate our country from racist rule. As Moshoeshoe foresaw, our strength lies in our unity. We must guard that unity like the apple of our eye.”

Oliver Reginald Tambo
(8 January 1986)

Facebook user **Ngcamphalala Mcolisi** posted

“Accountability is everything”

THERE is one elder I usually spend time with. He is a former bodyguard of the longest serving president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo. Actually Tambo passed away while he held him.

I digress.

He says when the ANC used to be headquartered at Shell House in Johannesburg before Luthuli house, there used to be a place behind Shell house. It sold food that Tambo enjoyed. The food costed R9.90. He says one day Tambo sent him for the food. When he arrived there, he paid with R10 note, took the food and left. He presented the food to Tambo and headed for the door.

While he was about to close the door, Tambo called him and asked about the 10 cents change. He says he was shocked that the entire leader, a man of Tambo’s stature could be bothered by 10 cents. He says he simply went out and talked to Tambo’s PA and asked for the 10 cents which she gave him.

Now, Tambo was listening in his office and when he handed him the 10 cents, Tambo was agitated. He said, “*You took 30 minutes to go get me the food and now it takes you just 3 minutes to get the change from the shop. I can tell you asked for it outside.*” He then took off his glasses, and stared deeply into his eyes, as if scanning his soul and said, “*Go to that shop and ask for my change. It’s*

10 cents but it’s mine. I want it.”

Defeated, he went to the shop and asked for the 10 cents. The lady at the till stared at him in shock. He just picked one random 10 cent coin from the many which were apparently abandoned by customers on top of the counter. He brought it back to President Tambo, who took it with a smile and then gave him a lecture that lasted 30 minutes – all because of 10 cents.

The lecture was about **morals, honesty, respect and accountability**. He says Tambo said, “*Today, it might be 10 cents that you don’t see the need to account for, next time it will be more and more, particularly as we might be a ruling party in the not so distant future.*” He continued, “**Accountability is everything. You must always account for each and every cent that you spent on behalf of others and respect them – no matter the amount of money they gave you. Be morally upright.**”

He reckons, it is this lecture that has carried him through such that having served the public for decades, he has not stolen even a cent. He will be retiring soon, with a clean record, a clean conscience and most importantly having respected the people of South Africa. These are benefits of mingling with elders who relay history to build us to be better as we live our lives and interact with the rest of society.

When Bourgeois Myths Masquerade as Common Sense

■ By **TEBOGO PHADU**

WHAT often presents itself as “*plain speaking*” or “*common sense*” is, in fact, one of the oldest ideological manoeuvres in **bourgeois political economy**: blaming the poor for their poverty and the unemployed for their unemployment.

Historically, bourgeois political apologists have always worked to obscure the real causes of mass poverty. Rather than confront exploitation, dispossession, and the violent reorganisation of society in the interests of capital, they shift attention to individual behaviour. Poverty is explained as laziness; unemployment as passivity; inequality as the outcome of poor choices. In this way, a system built on domination and exclusion is recast as neutral, even fair.

But history does not support this fiction.

People did not become poor because they failed to show initiative. They were made poor. They were forcibly separated from their land, their livestock, their tools, their communal economies, and their ways of producing material wealth and sustaining life. This separation was not accidental. It was imposed through colonial conquest, racialised capitalism, taxation, enclosure, migrant labour systems, and state violence. Only once people had been



stripped of independent means of livelihood were they compelled to sell their labour power in order to survive.

Unemployment, therefore, is not a moral condition. It is a structural feature of capitalism, and in South Africa a specifically CST capitalism. Capital requires a surplus population of unemployed and underemployed (or precarious) workers to discipline wages, weaken labour, and protect profitability. Mass unemployment is not evidence of individual failure; it is evidence of how the system functions.

It is against this background that the recent remarks by Comrade Gwede Mantashe must be understood. When unemployment is understood as a problem of insuf-

ficient effort – when the state is said to have “given a fishing rod” and individuals are told they must simply catch fish – the implication is clear: those without work have no one to blame but themselves.

This is not a progressive argument. It is a classical bourgeois myth, recycled in contemporary language.

In a country with world-record levels of unemployment, particularly among the youth, such language performs a precise ideological function. It diverts attention away from monopoly capital, deindustrialisation, capital flight, financialisation, and the failure to restructure ownership and production. Instead of asking why the economy systematically excludes millions from productive

work, responsibility is displaced onto the unemployed themselves – who are instructed to queue better, search harder, and expect less.

The language of a so-called “*parcel society*” is especially revealing. It articulates legitimate demands for work, income, and social protection as dependency. Yet the working class is not asking for charity. It is demanding its right to work and to live in dignity in a society where wealth is socially produced but privately appropriated. This right cannot be left entirely to the fluctuations and exclusions of the capitalist labour market. Access to work cannot depend solely on whether capital finds it profitable to employ labour. A democratic society committed to socio-economic transformation must guarantee work through conscious public policy, social ownership, public employment, and cooperative forms of production.

This is not a new or radical demand. It is a foundational democratic commitment, clearly articulated in the **Freedom Charter**,

which affirms that “*there shall be work and security*” and that all shall have the right to earn a living. To reduce this historic demand to a matter of individual hustle is to abandon the Charter’s meaning and intent.

Marxism has never rejected effort or initiative. What it rejects is the fiction that effort alone determines outcomes in a capitalist system that structurally limits access to work. Skills without jobs, education without an industrial strategy, and entrepreneurship without access to capital are not solutions. They are alibis – ways of appearing to address the crisis while leaving its foundations intact.

What bourgeois political economy always hides is the violence that produced the present. Capitalism in South Africa did not gently offer opportunities that people failed to seize. It destroyed existing livelihoods and then failed to provide stable employment in return. To now tell the descendants of the dispossessed that their unemployment is a personal failure is to invert history and erase

exploitation.

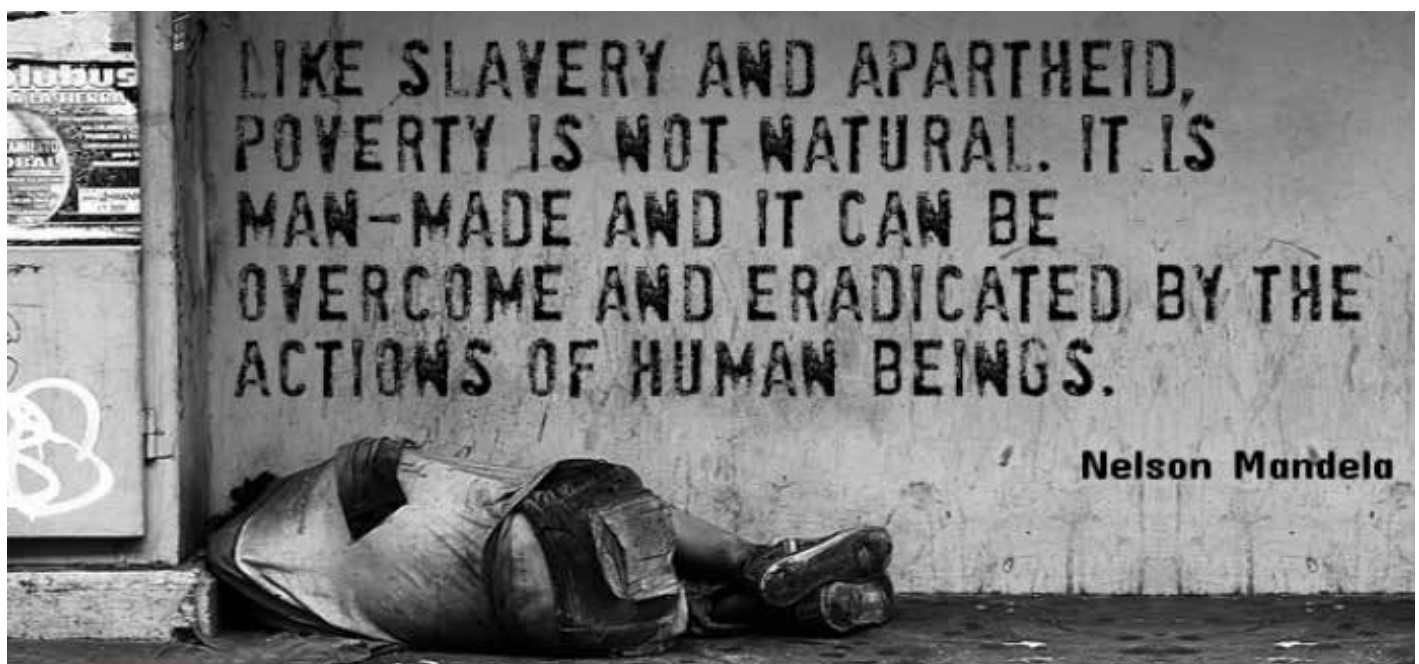
This matters politically. At a time when millions of working-class people are withdrawing from electoral participation, such language does not inspire initiative. It confirms alienation. It signals that structural crisis will be met with moral lectures rather than transformation.

A Marxist political economy position is clear:

Unemployment is not a moral failure. It is the outcome of a system that does not require the labour of the many in order to enrich the few.

The task of a progressive movement is not to discipline the unemployed into self-blame, but to confront the class structure that produces mass unemployment – and to reorganise ownership, production, and work around social need.

When bourgeois myths masquerade as common sense, the result is not clarity. It is ideological retreat.



Government delivers Major Water Infrastructure to Secure Supply for Rustenburg and Thabazimbi

■ By **CORNELIUS MONAMA**

THE Ministry of Water and Sanitation recently handed over critical upgraded water infrastructure that will significantly improve water security for the residents of Rustenburg Local Municipality under Bojanala District Municipality in the North West, as well as Thabazimbi Local Municipality in Limpopo.

The commissioning included the upgraded Vaalkop Water Treatment Works Raw Water Pumpstation and the associated Bulk Water Pipeline, both of which are designed to respond to growing water demand and ensure long-term water security in the two provinces.

The Vaalkop Water Treatment Works Raw Water Pumpstation upgrade, implemented by Magalies Water from February 2023 and completed in November 2025, will ensure sustainable water supply for Moses Kotane and Rustenburg Local Municipalities in the North West, as well as Thabazimbi Local Municipality in Limpopo.

The Pumpstation directly abstracts water from Vaalkop Dam and has been upgraded from a capacity of 240 megalitres per day (ML/day) to 360 ML/day. It has been equipped with ten



pump sets designed to efficiently supply raw water to the water treatment works, strengthening operational reliability, improving water management and reducing water losses.

The Ministry also commissioned the upgraded Bulk Water Supply Scheme, which was initiated in response to increasing water demand from the rural communities of Bethanie, Modikoe and Berseba within Rustenburg Local Municipality.

Implemented by Magalies Water in partnership with Glencore Rhovan PSV Mine, the project involved the construction and installation of a 23.4-kilometre bulk potable water pipeline, compris-

ing 560mm and 400mm diameter pipes with associated valves. The pipeline runs from the Kortbegrip Reservoir to the Bethanie and Modikoe Reservoirs.

The new pipeline replaces the ageing asbestos fibre-cement pipeline that had reached the end of its operational life and was prone to frequent bursts. The upgraded infrastructure increases bulk water supply capacity to meet the current demand of 7.05 ML/day and future demand projected at 12.60 ML/day.

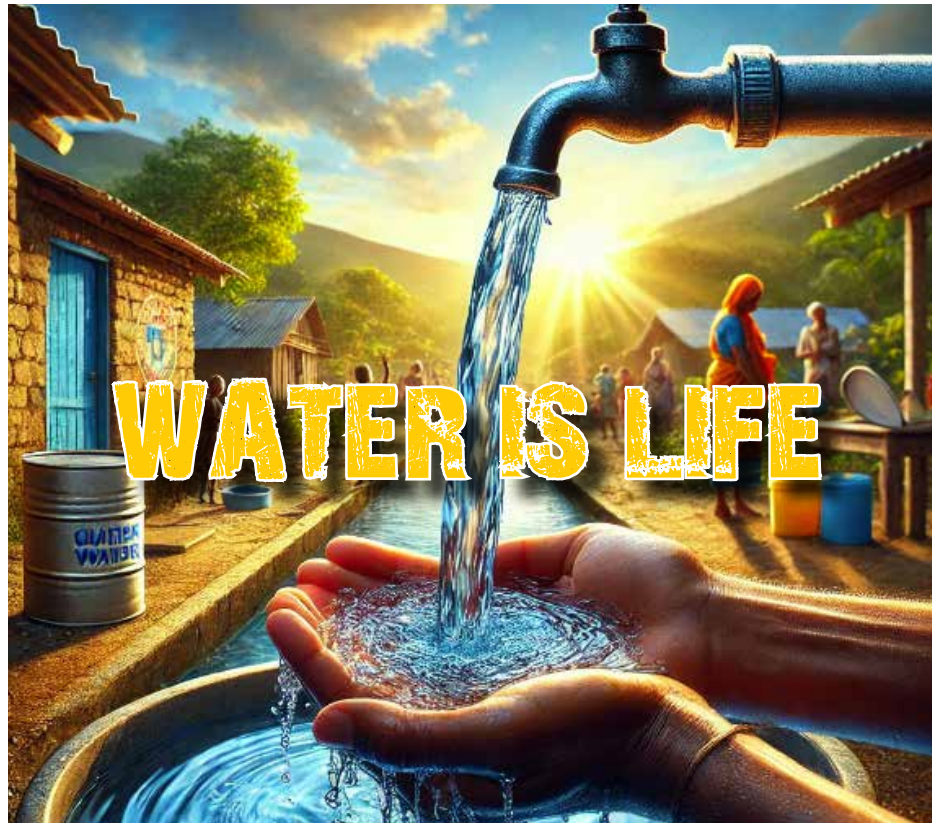
Importantly, the project will also enable additional water volumes to supply Makolokwe Village, where access to water remains critically low. Currently, the village relies on boreholes that are insufficient to meet the growing needs of the community.

The second phase of the project, the bulk pipeline between Bethanie and Makolokwe Village, is scheduled to commence in March 2026 and will include the construction of a booster pumpstation at the Bethanie Reservoir. Upon full completion, the project will provide a reliable water supply to a combined population of approximately 144,133 residents, including households, schools, clinics, businesses and community institutions.

Minister Majodina commended the public-private partnership between Rustenburg Local Municipality and Glencore Rhovan PSV Mine, noting its positive contribution to accelerating service delivery in Bethanie and Modikoe villages.

“Today’s handover represents progress, but more importantly, it represents partnership. When government, communities and stakeholders work together, we can overcome scarcity, defeat criminality and deliver sustainable services.

“The benefits of this investment are clear and far-reaching. For households, it means a more reliable water supply and greater resilience during peak demand periods. For local businesses, industries and emerging enterprises, it provides the certainty needed to operate efficiently, expand production and create jobs. For municipalities, it strengthens the backbone of service delivery and long-term development planning,” said Minister Majodina.



The Minister also called on communities to protect the newly commissioned infrastructure and keep it safe from vandalism and sabotage. She strongly condemned individuals and syndicates who deliberately damage water infrastructure to sustain il-

legal water trading activities.

“These projects must be protected, and I want to speak clearly and firmly today: water infrastructure is not a playground for criminals. The vandalism of pipelines, theft of equipment and manipulation of water systems by so-called water mafias is a direct attack on the dignity and well-being of our people. It deprives families of water, disrupts livelihoods and undermines development.

“This government will not tolerate water mafias. Those who vandalise, steal or illegally profit from water infrastructure are stealing from children, the elderly and the most vulnerable. Law enforcement agencies are working closely with the Department, municipalities and water boards, and we will pursue arrests, prosecutions and harsh consequences for anyone who undermines service delivery,” Minister Majodina concluded.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

17–23 January 2026

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

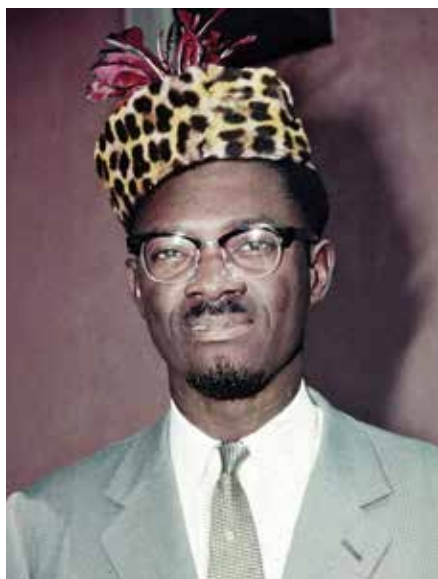
17 January 1905

Johannesburg Meteorological Observatory opens

The Observatory was founded as the Transvaal Meteorological Department, initially meant to be used to watch weather patterns. Astronomer Dr Robert Innes was its first director. It was officially opened in 1905 and the first telescope was installed in 1906. The Observatory sits on a hill in a Johannesburg suburb of the same name. Today it belongs to the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) and the Observatory is open to teachers, learners and members of the public in general. The centre also organizes night tours.

17 January 1961

Patrice Lumumba Assassinated



The first Prime Minister of the Congo Republic, Patrice Lumumba was assassinated a few months after Congo gained formal independence from Belgium. The killing of Lumumba remained a secret for years. Lumumba was forcibly restrained on the flight to Elisabethville on 17 January 1961. On arrival, he and his associates were brutally beaten and tortured by Katangan forces and Belgian officers. Later that night, Lumumba was driven to an isolated spot where three firing squads had been assembled. Lumumba was executed on 17 January 1961. The Belgians and counterparts later wished to get rid of the bodies, and did so by digging up and dismembering the corpses, then dissolving them in sulfuric acid while the bones were ground and scattered. In later years it came to light that the assassination was sanctioned by the Belgian government and US president Eisenhower, and was funded and advised by Brussels and Washington.

17 January 1964

Opposition demands Verwoerd resigns from Broederbond

Leader of the Opposition, Sir de Villiers Graaff, demands a judicial inquiry into the activities of the Broederbond, and demands the resignation of the Prime Minister from this society. Dr. Verwoerd refused to resign.

17 January 1988

Editor Percy Qoboza passed on



Well-known South African anti-apartheid journalist and former editor of *The World* newspaper and the *Sowetan*, *City Press*, Percy Qoboza, died on his fiftieth birthday. Qoboza rose to fame during the 1976 uprisings, when he fearlessly covered the events in the township and country. Percy Tseliso Peter Qoboza was born on 17 January 1938 in Sophiatown, Johannesburg, and went on to study theology in Lesotho, and started working at *The World* newspaper. He received the national Order of Ikhamanga in Silver.

17 January 1997

General Meiring implicated at TRC

In a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) revelation, General Georg Meiring was implicated with more than sixty officers and soldiers in 'dirty

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tricks' including state-sponsored murder. Nobel Peace Laurette President F.W. de Klerk refused to investigate charges against General Meiring and two other generals, despite the Steyn commission of enquiry.

18 January 2020

Peter "Terror" Mathebula passed on



On 18 January 2020, Peter "Terror" Mathebula South Africa's first black world champion boxer died. Mathebula was born on 3 July 1952 in Gauteng. A fly-weight division boxer, Mathebula made his professional boxing debut on 10 July 1971 against Sydwell Mhlongo in Rabasotho Hall, Tembisa. On 13 December 1980, Mathebula became South Africa's first black world champion when he dethroned South Korea's Tae-Shik Kim in Los Angeles, California. Throughout his career, Mathebula won 36 matches, inflicting 17 KOs on his opponents, and lost 9 matches, suffering 5 KOs. Mathebula retired from boxing in 1983.

19 January 1940

Black Sash President Mary Burton Born

Mary Burton was born on 19 January 1940 in Buenos Aires,



Argentina. She moved to South Africa in 1961, and witnessing the injustices of Apartheid, became a member of the Black Sash in 1965, and its President from 1986 to 1990. She served as one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners. After the TRC completed its work, Burton started a Register of Reconciliation for people who could not be heard by the TRC to share their experiences and continue to campaign for reconciliation. She also served on the Council of the University of Cape Town.

19 January 1999

Devastating storm hits Mount Ayliff

On this day, at least 22 people were killed and 4000 left homeless, when several tornadoes causing severe storms hit Mount Ayliff and the Kokstad area in the Eastern Cape. 10 children were among those who died and 95% of homes were destroyed. It was the most destructive tornado, classified F4, recorded in South African history. The Mount Ayliff extreme weather event was one of several tornadoes record during the summer of 1998/1999, with heavy tornadoes also recorded in November 1998 in Harismith, KZN and in December 1998 in Umtata, Eastern Cape. These events had been studied by De Coning and Adam for the

Weather Forecasting Research Programme, South African Weather Bureau.

20 January 1939

Record-high temperature recorded in Goodhouse, Northern Cape

On this day in history, the second highest temperature ever recorded in the shade was noted at Goodhouse, located on the Orange river in the Nama Khoi municipality in the Northern Cape. The temperature reached 47 degrees Celsius, the second highest temperature of this nature recorded up to the year 2000. The other record temperature was recorded on 3 November 1918 in Dumbrody, Eastern Cape, with a recorded high of 50 degrees Celsius.

21 January 1962

Verwoerd announces 'self-rule' for Transkei

Dr Verwoerd announced his plan for the creation of the first Bantustan, Transkei, which would have its own parliament, cabinet, separate citizenship and separate control over agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, foreign affairs and so forth. The Bantustan policy laid the basis for the disenfranchisement, forced removals and dispossession of millions of South Africans.

21 January 1987

Kwamakhutha massacre



On 21 January 1987 several men armed with AK47 assault rifles killed 13 people, including 7 children, in a house in Kwamakhutha, KwaZulu Natal. The attack was aimed at Victor Ntuli, the 21-year-old founder, treasurer and area organiser of the Kwamakhutha Youth League (KYL), a UDF affiliate. Between 1976 to 1996, political violence in KwaZulu-Natal led to over 11 700 deaths and the displacement of up to half a million people.

22 January 1837 Piet Retief completes Groot Trek Manifesto

Piet Retief, Afrikaner leader completed the manifesto that set out the reasons why the Voortrekkers were leaving the Cape Colony, published in English in the Graham's Town Journal on 2 February 1937. The Great Trek expanded colonialization into the South African hinterland, with wars of dispossession fought against various kingdoms and settlements of the time, eventually leading to the establishment of the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and Oranje Vrystaad, which merged into the Union of South Africa in 1910. The Great Trek forms an important part of Afrikaner identity and folklore.

22 January 1874 Josephine Wood, Library of the Blind founder born

Josephine Ethel (Josie) Wood was born in Grahamstown, and trained as a teacher. After teaching for a number of years, she started work with the blind in 1919, and initially established a small library for the community in her home, selling her art works to raise funds for the venture. The library grew and officially opened in 1946 as the South African Li-

brary for the Blind in Grahamstown. Woods was also co-founder of the National Council for the Blind in 1929, which today is also affiliated to the African Union of the Blind (AFUB) and the World Blind Union.

22 January 1984 UDF launches million signature campaign



On 22 January 1984, amidst the Apartheid government's constitutional reform plans, the United Democratic Front (UDF) embarked on an ambitious campaign to collect one million signatures from the public, declaring opposition against the Apartheid government and its constitutional reforms, and as a show of support for the UDF.

22 January 2001 South African History Online goes Live

The South African History Online non-profit organisation's website began operations on 22 January 2001. CEO Omar Badsha founded the organisation as a Section

21 non-profit and launched its website two years later. Since then SAHO has popularised history in South Africa, becoming the largest independent history education and research institute in the country.

22 January 1936 Painter Jan Volschenk passed on

Jan Volschenk (b 1853), a prominent South African painter, died at the age of 83, in Riversdale in the Cape Province, where he was born. Volschenk was a self-taught landscape painter, whose works were mostly done in oil, and very occasionally in water colour. He also produced some wood engravings.

22 January 1976 Broederbond Treurnicht to head Bantu Administration and Education

A government reshuffle, including the appointment of 3 new ministers and 2 deputy ministers was announced on the eve of the opening of the 1976 Parliamentary session. The most significant change was the appointment of Dr. Andries Treurnicht, the conservative former chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, as Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Bantu Education.

22 January 1983 Relaunch of the Transvaal Indian Congress as Molvi Saloojee passed on

The TIC was re-launched in Johannesburg after the repression of the 1960s and bannings, imprisonment and exile of many of its leaders following the repression of the 1960s. The TIC also expressed support for the for-

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mation of the United Democratic Front and opposition to the racist Tricameral Parliament. On this day, cde Molvi Saloojee, the last president of the TIC and resident of Fietas died.

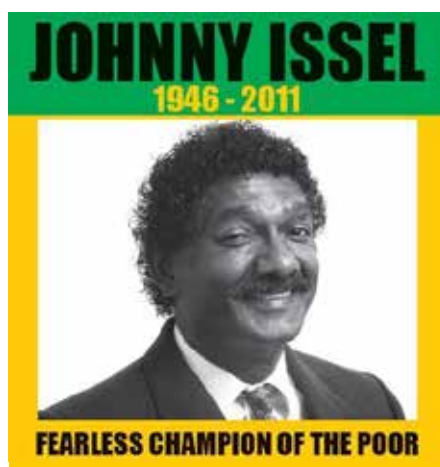
23 January 1961 UNSG Hammerskjold submits report after visit to South Africa



After a fact-finding mission to South Africa in early January 1961 after the Sharpeville massacre and the Herero Massacre in then protectorate South West Africa, UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld reported to the UN on the Implementation of the UN Security Council resolution of 1 April 1960. His report indicated that after the mission and discussions with the Prime Minister of South Africa, "so far no mutually acceptable arrangement" for racial policies have been found in South Africa. A more detailed research paper on this visit and its aftermath by Saunders can be read on the ACCORD website: <https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/hammarskjolds-visit-to-south-africa/>

23 January 2011 UDF and ANC activist Johnny Issel passed on

John James Issel was born on 14 August 1946 in the wine growing



area in Worcester and worked in a farm at a young age, cleaning grapes for the export market. During his matric, he became actively involved in the East Rand anti-apartheid Labour party, contesting for the Coloured Representative Council. Issel was a founder of United Democratic Front and a member of Umkhonto we Sizwe. He worked closely with trade union movements and student organizations, and made an immense contribution and sacrificed in the liberation struggle of South Africa to fight against apartheid. Issel passed away on 23 January 2011 from renal failure.

23 January 2018 Hugh Masekela, father of SA jazz passed on

On 23 January 2018, Hugh Masekela passed away peacefully at his home in Johannesburg, surrounded by his family, after a battle with prostate cancer. Masekela was born in KwaGuqa Township in Emalahleni, Mpumalanga Province. He started to sing and play the piano at a young age. At the age of 14 after seeing a film of a 'young man with a horn', he began to play the trumpet. His first trumpet was from Archbishop Trevor Huddleston at St Peter's Secondary School, joining Alfred Herbert's African Jazz Revue. He later received a

trumpet as a gift from the great Louis Armstrong. Masekela as a teenager played with jazz artists such as Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim), Jonas Gwangwa, Kippie Moeketsi and Makhaya Ntshoko; and in later life recording with icons like Miriam Makeba, Dorothy Masuka, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Hedzoleh Soundz, Francis Fuster and Dudu Pukwana. Masekela went into exile after the Sharpeville Massacre, first in the UK and then to study in the USA at the Manhattan School of Music studying classical trumpet between 1960 and 1964. Masekela went on to an illustrious career that spanned over six decades, during which he recorded over 50 albums, composed and performed in musicals and on stage and spoke out against apartheid and other social ills. Masekela and Abdullah Ibrahim performed together in 2016 at Emperors Palace in Johannesburg, for the first time in 60 years, reuniting the Jazz Epistles in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of 16 June 1976.



INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

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

20 January

Penguin Awareness Day

Penguins are a group of aquatic flightless birds from the order of Sphenisciformes of the family Spheniscidae. They are fun and interesting animals that are unique in many different ways. There are currently over 18 different known species and some have been around the planet for well over 65 million years. They're a beloved animal thanks to many popular depictions in movies and children's stories, but they're also fascinating birds. However, penguin numbers around the world are dwindling at an alarming rate. They are a barometer of the effects of human activity on the North and South Poles, according to scientists from institutions around the world.



I believe that here in South Africa, with all our diversities of colour and race; we will show the world a new pattern for democracy.

There is a challenge for us to set a new example for all. Let us not side step this task.

- Chief Albert Luthuli -