



ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

17–23 April 2026



Conversations *with the* **President**

South African companies are leading the investment charge

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

THE success of the sixth South Africa Investment Conference two weeks ago, where we secured a record R890 billion in investment pledges, reflects renewed confidence in our economy.

It was also a milestone in what has been a difficult journey to rebuild our economy in the wake of years of slow growth, a decade of state capture and prolonged periods of load shedding.

Even as we make progress in removing the impediments to investment, the global landscape has become increasingly uncertain and competitive. South Africa is just one of many economies vying for investment at a time when many investors are unsure about the direction of the

world economy.

That we have been able to realise a record value in investment pledges despite this difficult climate is an indication of how far we have come.

It is significant that a substantial share of the investment pledges announced at the 2026 conference were domestic in origin, and encompass a mix of new commitments and capital investments that had already been planned. Each of these investments – whether newly-announced or in the pipeline for some time – is significant, because each required a deliberate choice. Each investment decision is shaped by the credibility and stability of the economic environment and expectations

of return on investment.

The decision by domestic firms to accelerate or reaffirm investment in their own country is a measure of confidence. These investors, who know the country and its conditions best, are signalling to international capital that this is an economy that is stable, on an upward trajectory and ripe for investment.

Another significant feature of the commitments is the diversity of industries into which investments are being made. Most of the investments are going into sectors that we have prioritised for accelerated growth and job creation. These include established industries like mining and beneficiation, agro-processing and tourism. We have also seen

substantial investments in renewable energy, the green economy and the digital economy.

The outcomes of the 2026 Investment Conference have encouraged us to set our sights even higher, to mobilise R3 trillion in investment over the next five years. To do so, we will count on higher levels of domestic investment.

We will also count on the support and involvement of all sectors of society. Last month, I had an opportunity to attend a summit on growth and jobs organised by News24. It brought together a broad range of South Africans and international experts to discuss practical ways to drive far higher levels of employment. It was a show of commitment and determination from across society to grow our economy.

The success of the sixth South Africa Investment Conference is the result of this determination and our sustained investment drive. As government, we are continuing to improve the investment climate through far-reaching structural reforms and transformation.

Investments cannot be realised under conditions of policy uncertainty. The reform and transformation processes will continue apace to resolve longstanding challenges not only in areas such as electricity, water and logistics. We will continue to foster transformation and reforms in various areas that will improve the lives of our people and continue to create a conducive environment for investment.

We will continue to take decisive steps to root out corruption, to prevent extortion at construction



sites and to break the back of the illicit economy.

We will continue to support existing and new industries. The State is playing a catalytic role in domestic investment, financing large scale infrastructure projects as part of our R1 trillion infrastructure build programme over the next three years.

Our investment drive does not start and end with the Investment Conferences. We continue with our outward investment missions in search of new markets and to consolidate existing trade ties. We continue to convene structured business forums on the sidelines of bilateral engagements, including state visits and bi-national commissions. As we have done in the past, we continue to prioritise targeted, one-on-one engagements with investors during international trips.

In the last week, I had a valuable engagement with US com-

panies operating in South Africa at the Annual General Meeting of the local American Chamber of Commerce. Later this week, I will be meeting Spanish companies during a visit to Spain.

As we reflect on the progress made over the last few years, and as we tally up the investment pledges that have been made to date, we must always look ahead. Our economy is starting to pick up pace, more jobs are being created and confidence is improving. Our economy is increasingly better positioned to take advantage of the technological shifts underway in the world. This bodes well for faster growth and greater investment.

Some people have said that our target of R3 trillion in new investment over the next five years is unrealistic. Yet, building on the momentum that has been created, drawing on the efforts of all South Africans, there is no reason why we cannot achieve it.



ANC Announces **New KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Task Team Officials** following NWC Deliberations

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC), led by its Secretary General, Comrade Fikile Mbalula, today met with the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Task Team (PTT), accompanied by NEC members deployed full-time at the National Office, to brief them on the decisions of the National Working Committee (NWC).

The KZN PTT was appointed in February 2025 with a clear mandate to rebuild and strengthen organisational structures within the framework of the ANC National Conference resolutions, the Constitution of the organisation, the ANC Elections Manifesto, and all relevant policies.

Following the conclusion of its

term, the NWC undertook a comprehensive review of the PTT's performance, informed by engagements with both the PTT and all Regional Task Teams (RTTs) across the province. Arising from this process, the NWC has taken decisions on the way forward regarding the reconfiguration of structures in KwaZulu-Natal.

At this stage, the ANC has announced the Officials of the reconstituted Provincial Task Team, with the full composition of the PTT, including Regional Task Teams, to be announced in the coming week. The following are accordingly announced as PTT Officials:

- Mike Mabuyakhula – Provincial Convenor
- Bongji Sithole-Moloi – 1st

Deputy Provincial Convenor

- Siboniso Duma – 2nd Deputy Provincial Convenor
- James Nxumalo – Provincial Coordinator
- Siphesihle Mdaka – Deputy Coordinator
- Nomagugu Simelane – Fund-raiser.

The ANC expresses its profound appreciation to the outgoing team led by Comrade Jeff Radebe for steering the organisation during a difficult period, following a strategic electoral setback that saw the ANC attain approximately 40% support nationally and 17% in KwaZulu-Natal.

Their contribution laid a critical foundation for organisational renewal and rebuilding.



The newly appointed PTT is entrusted with the responsibility of leading the organisation in the province towards the 2026 Local Government Elections. In line with organisational processes, branch, regional and provincial conferences will be convened in 2027, after the Local Government Elections.

The ANC has further reiterated its directive to all provinces to convene Regional General Meetings over the coming weekend. These meetings will receive briefings from NEC deployees on the outcomes of the Special NEC meeting, particularly in relation to the South African Communist Party's decision to contest elections independently.

In addition, the ANC is undertaking a process to realign its organisational structures in line with the new ward demarcations as announced by the Municipal Demarcation Board. Consultations with structures are underway and will culminate in the adoption of organisational guidelines to guide this process. The ANC remains resolute in its commitment to organisational renewal, unity, and disciplined implementation of its strategic mandate as it continues to serve the people of South Africa.

The ANC welcomes the appointment of Roelf Meyer as South Africa's Ambassador to the United States

THE African National Congress (ANC) warmly welcomes the appointment of Mr Roelf Meyer as South Africa's Ambassador to the United States by President Cyril Ramaphosa. This decision reflects a masterstroke strategic deployment of a seasoned negotiator, a patriot, and a committed nation-builder whose contribution to South Africa's democratic transition remains significant.

Mr Meyer's role and commitment to dialogue, reconciliation and to building a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa is widely recognised. Beyond our borders, he has continued this work as a seasoned peace negotiator, contributing to conflict resolution processes in regions including Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Burundi, Kosovo, Bolivia, the Basque re-

gion and the Middle East.

This appointment comes at an important moment in the evolving relationship between South Africa and the United States, one of our key economic trading partners. The bilateral relationship carries both significant opportunities and areas of complexity that require careful and strategic management. It is therefore essential that South Africa maintains a consistent and balanced diplomatic posture that advances our economic interests, strengthens cooperation, and navigates existing contradictions in a manner that safeguards our sovereignty, promotes mutual respect, and ensures shared benefit.

The ANC is confident that he will represent South Africa with distinction and integrity, and we extend our full support to him in this important assignment.





From Indaba to Implementation:

Turning Commitments into Water Security

WHEN we convened the 2025 Water and Sanitation Indaba, we did so because the country demanded urgency, honesty, and action. South Africans were no longer willing to accept a cycle of plans without progress or diagnoses without delivery. The Indaba brought together all spheres of government, water entities, business, labour, civil society and sector partners, not for another conversation, but for a decisive shift in how we approach water and sanitation. It was meant to be a turning point. And it must remain one.

The recent webinar to track progress on implementing the Indaba resolutions marks an important shift in how we govern the sector:

■ By **PEMMY MAJODINA**

from engagement to accountability, and from commitments to measurable outcomes. If the Indaba set the direction, this phase must be about disciplined execution.

The reality we confront is stark. The latest Drop Reports confirm what communities already experience daily. Nearly half of South Africa's water supply systems are failing to meet required standards. Around 64% of wastewater treatment works are in critical condition. Almost half of our treated water is lost before it reaches users. In a water-scarce country, this is not just inefficiency. It is systemic failure.

This is not only about ageing infrastructure or technical gaps. At its core, it is a governance crisis. Infrastructure does not maintain itself. Systems do not operate without skilled people. Revenues do not collect themselves. Where there is weak management, poor planning and limited accountability, even well-funded systems will fail.

That is why water must now be understood not as a routine service delivery function, but as a strategic national priority. Water security is inseparable from economic growth, public health, environmental sustainability and social stability. Without reliable water, we cannot sustain agriculture, expand industry, build human settlements or attract investment. In this sense, water

security is national security.

Municipalities remain at the front-line of delivery. Yet we must confront an uncomfortable truth. Too many municipalities are not fulfilling this mandate. Poor financial management, inadequate maintenance, weak billing systems and, in some cases, misuse of funds have led to declining performance. The consequences are visible: dry taps, polluted rivers and communities living without dignity.

What is most concerning is that we are not dealing with unknown problems. We know what must be done. The challenge is implementation. This is where the resolutions of the 2025 Indaba become critical. The first resolution compels us to rethink delivery models. Assigning responsibility is not the same as ensuring delivery. Where municipalities lack capacity, we must adopt fit-for-purpose models that align responsibility with capability. This includes strengthening the role of water boards and capable entities.

Communities cannot continue to suffer because institutions are unable to deliver. The second resolution addresses financial sustainability. A system that does not collect revenue cannot maintain infrastructure. Without maintenance, reliability declines. Without reliability, service delivery collapses.

We must enforce payment for services, improve billing, ring-fence water revenues and ensure proper use of grants. At the same time, we must unlock investment through blended finance models that combine public funding, development finance and private capital. Water infrastructure must become financially sustainable.

The third resolution focuses on technical capacity. Infrastructure often fails not because it is old, but because it is poorly operated. Too many facilities lack skilled personnel, maintenance plans and operational discipline. Professionalisation is essential. We must deploy qualified engineers and technicians, invest in train-

ing, and ensure that competence becomes the standard across the sector. In water and sanitation, competence determines whether systems function or fail.

The fourth resolution recognises that government cannot act alone. Water security requires partnerships. The private sector can bring investment and innovation. Communities can help protect infrastructure and promote responsible use. Civil society can strengthen oversight and accountability. A sustainable system depends on collective responsibility.

The fifth resolution confronts criminality and corruption. Illegal connections, vandalism, procurement abuse and infrastructure theft are actively undermining the sector. These are not side issues. They are central to system failure. We must respond decisively. Strengthened law enforcement, consequence management and coordinated anti-corruption efforts are essential. There must be consequences for those who





sabotage public services.

The central message is that solutions are known, but implementation is uneven. This is why progress tracking is so important. It enables us to measure performance, identify blockages and intervene where necessary. More importantly, it helps build a culture of accountability that must define the sector going forward.

Encouragingly, there are signs of progress. Some municipalities are reducing water losses through improved maintenance. Others are stabilising systems through partnerships with water boards. New financing approaches are beginning to attract interest. But isolated success is not enough. We must scale what works and address what does not. Responsibility must be shared. Provinces must strengthen oversight. Municipalities must improve governance and operations. Water boards must provide technical support. The private sector must invest. Communities must safeguard infrastructure

and use water responsibly. This is a collective effort.

At its core, the water crisis is not only about infrastructure. It is about dignity, equality and the credibility of our democracy. Access to safe and reliable water is a basic human right. When that right is not realised, it reflects a deeper failure of accountability. However, there is reason for optimism. South Africa has the institutional framework, technical expertise and financial potential to resolve this crisis. What has been missing is consistent execution. That must now change.

The shift from Indaba to implementation demands discipline, accountability and sustained action. It requires us to confront underperformance and make difficult decisions. But it also offers an opportunity to restore confidence, rebuild systems and secure our water future. Together, we must answer a simple but fundamental: Are we fixing the water crisis, or are we merely managing decline?

The people of South Africa do not want more reports. They do not want more explanations. They do not want more Indabas and webinars. They do not want more promises. They want water. Let us remember that freedom is incomplete when taps run dry, when sewage flows in streets, and when communities are denied the basic services that give meaning to democracy.

Let us build a water-secure South Africa for future generations.

When history judges our generation, it must never be said that we saw the crisis, understood the solutions and still failed to act.

Let it be said, instead, that we chose courage over complacency, action over delay, discipline over dysfunction and service over silence.

Pemmy Majodina is a member of the ANC National Executive Committee and Minister of Water and Sanitation.

Advancing Trade, Economic Diplomacy and AfCFTA Implementation through Structured Partnerships

Address by **PARKS TAU**

at the **Progressive Business Forum's (PBF) Economic Diplomacy & AfCFTA Colloquium**

Menlyn, Pretoria

ALLOW me to begin this morning by honouring the life of our hero Chris Hani, who's death spurred the finalising of the negotiated settlement and who's blood nourished the fruits of our liberty.

Thank you to the Progressive Business Forum (PBF) for convening this colloquium at both a challenging and an opportune moment that demands sober reflection and decisive decision-making. The theme you have chosen, namely, "**Advancing trade, economic diplomacy and AfCFTA implementation through structured partnerships**", is undoubtedly a strategic necessity.

The tectonic plates of the global trading and investment environment are shifting and being recalibrated with dire consequences especially for the Global South majority.

These consequences are evident in the rising protectionist measures and delegitimation actions levelled against multilat-



eral institutions. A result are the proliferating trade barriers and a redrawing of supply chains due to, for example, the Iran-Israel imbroglio.

Against this backdrop, South Africa and Africa's choices to deepen integration, through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), is a positive and consequential strategic decision. The significance of the AfCFTA cannot be underestimated since the binding constraints facing African economies are well known. These binding and structural constraints includes, high transport

and logistics costs, a fragmented infrastructure, scarcity of trade finance, non-tariff barriers, uneven productive capacities, and limited complementarities among African countries.

South Africa's G20 Presidency

When South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency, we understood fully the importance of this responsibility for the Global South majority. Guided by the theme of "**solidarity, equality and sustainable development**", we mobilised the G20 Presidency to

advance four priorities, that includes reforming global financial governance so that Africa has a meaningful voice and driving just energy transitions that support industrialisation and reindustrialisation.

The tangible outcomes of and from our G20 Presidency are already evident. For instance, we have managed to secure the consolidation of the African Union's (AU) full membership in the G20 which is an intergovernmental forum to address, amongst others, polycrises like climate change mitigation, international financial stability and sustainable development.

Likewise, we adopted and are now implementing, the Critical Minerals Framework that, for the first time, formally mainstreams local beneficiation. As you aware, local beneficiation is the principle that Africa's minerals should add value here at home and not simply be exported for others to process and profit from.

Within BRICS, South Africa is commended for continuing to shape a progressive agenda towards prioritising developmental finance, trade in local currencies and technology transfer. Such an agenda is a game-changer to develop productive capacity that is essential to drive investment and industrial expansion.

Productive capacity development translates to focusing, in the region and continent, on:

- aligning regulations,
- reduce border bottlenecks,
- invest in corridors and energy,
- integrate regional payment systems,
- build industrial capabilities and
- prepare bankable projects that investors can fund.



The Butterfly Strategy

As you aware, our trade and investment posture is guided and anchored in what we call the Butterfly Strategy. The body of the butterfly is Africa, encapsulated in the AfCFTA, which is the foundation of all our global engagements. The wings represent targeted export initiatives in both established and emerging markets beyond the continent. The strategy is designed to diversify our export geography, increase value-added manufacturing, and leverage trade agreements and diplomatic effort to improve market access and competitiveness.

Importantly, regional and continental integration is not treated as a zero-sum exercise, but as a shared development project. South Africa is viewed as an integrator to help connect markets, value chains, institutions, and investment ecosystems across the region and the continent.

After all, the African market already accounts for 27% of South Africa's total exports, and 67% of those exports are manufactured goods. The continent is our most important market for industry. South Africa, as Africa's most industrialised and diversified economy, is uniquely placed to capture

build the regional value chains that will make African manufacturing globally competitive.

Progress is real and it is measurable. Twenty-five countries have concluded their national domestication processes and gazetted provisional tariff schedules. South Africa launched trade under AfCFTA preferences in January 2024. By December 2025, we had seen exports under AfCFTA preferences reach approximately R2.3 billion, spanning mining equipment, appliances, food products, apparel, plastics and electrical machinery. Our main export destinations within the framework include Ghana, Kenya, Egypt, Rwanda, Cameroon and Algeria.

Services negotiations are underway across five priority sectors: finance, communications, transport, tourism and business services. South Africa is the first country to conclude its domestic ratification processes for both the Protocol on Competition Policy and the Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade.

Furthermore, we are making progress on the Protocol on Digital Trade and have commenced processes for ratification of the

Protocol on Intellectual Property Rights.

These are building blocks of a continental trading system. Of course, the work is not finished, but the architecture is being assembled, and South Africa is at the table for every critical decision.

Geopolitical Tensions and Africa's Strategic Position

The turbulence in global trade is, paradoxically, creating untapped opportunities for Africa. As supply chains restructure, as geopolitical blocs compete for resource security, and as the energy transition generates demand for critical minerals, Africa's strategic value is rising. It is encouraging that the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) projects Africa's real GDP growth stabilising at 4.3% in 2026 and rising to 4.5% in 2027. That is resilience in a difficult environment.

Africa holds 30% of the world's mineral reserves, including platinum, chromium and cobalt — the materials at the heart of the green



and digital economies. The World Bank estimates that African countries currently capture only 40% of the revenue they could be deriving from their natural resources. The AfCFTA, combined with deliberate industrial policy, is the instrument that changes that equation.

Certainly, by building cross-border value chains, supporting local beneficiation and deepening intra-African trade, we transform resource wealth into industrial capacity.

According to the World Bank, full AfCFTA implementation could lift 30 million Africans out of extreme poverty, boost incomes for nearly 68 million more, and increase

Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035. These numbers should give everyone in this room a clear sense of the market that is being created.

The Role of Inclusive Economic Diplomacy

None of this happens without structured partnerships between government and the private sector. Inclusive economic diplomacy is the connective tissue between policy and commerce. It is what turns trade agreements into trade flows, and trade flows into jobs and investment.

For us, inclusive economic diplomacy hinges on finding a common agenda for development as economic freedom, reinforce relevance of multilateralism to address polycrises, and brake down the artificial walls between the East and West plus the Global North minority and Global south majority.

Fortunately, the trade and economic attachés in this room are a critical part of these objectives



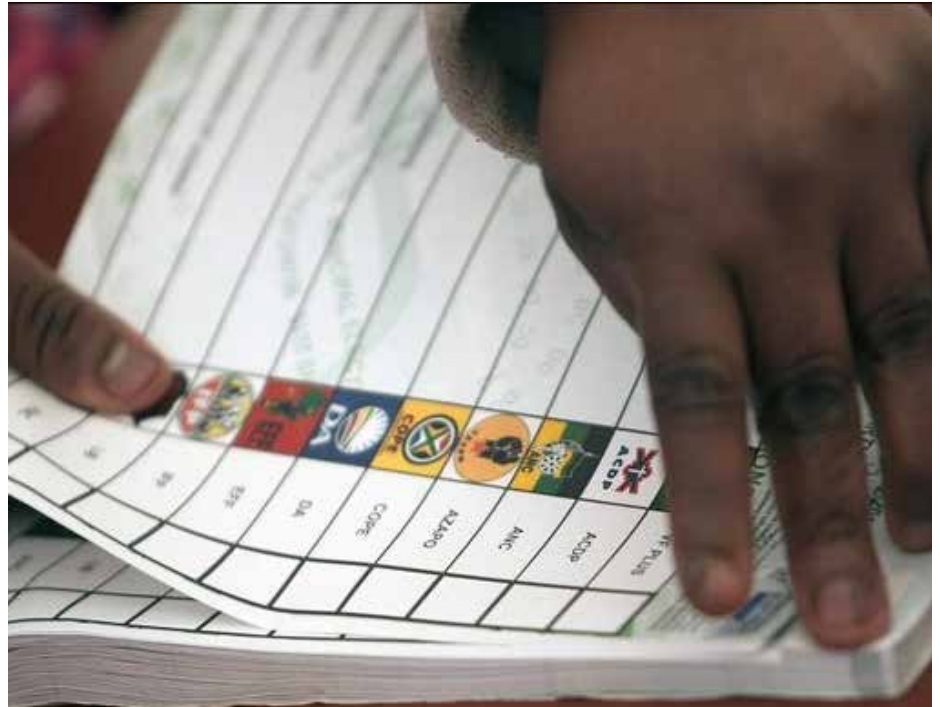
and working together to realise inclusive economic diplomacy. In my estimation, you occupy a privileged position at the intersection of government policy and market intelligence. You know where the barriers are, where the opportunities are, and which relationships need investment. Therefore, we need that intelligence to be activated systematically, not episodically. Cooperation under the AfCFTA must be investment-led and production-driven. Africa's dependence on primary commodity exports leaves us exposed to price volatility set by others. Partnerships that support industrialisation, value addition and technology transfer are the ones that change the terms of trade in Africa's favour.

Conclusion

South Africa is ready to lead. We have the industrial base, the diplomatic reach, the institutional relationships and the policy frameworks to be the anchor of Africa's economic integration agenda. What we need — and what this forum represents — is a private sector that is equally committed, equally strategic and equally prepared to move at pace.

The AfCFTA is the most significant trade reform on this continent in decades. The G20 Presidency demonstrated that South Africa can shape global agendas, not just respond to them. The Butterfly Strategy gives us a framework for turning diplomacy into economic growth. Now we need execution.

Together, through strategic collaboration and sustained commitment, we can build the integrated, industrialised Africa that this continent has long been capable of becoming.



Opening the Doors Wider, Tightening the Standard Higher

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THE ANC has reached an important moment of honesty. For too long, too many South Africans have looked at local government and seen a painful contradiction. They hear the language of renewal, but live the reality of broken roads, filthy public spaces, indifferent ward offices, billing chaos, unsafe streets, collapsing trust, and leaders who appear at election time but disappear when communities suffer.

That contradiction is not only a policy problem. It is also a leadership problem. And leadership is not something we discover after elections. Leadership is something we choose, prepare, and deploy deliberately.

That is why the new direction matters. The ANC has signalled that metro mayoral candidates will be identified and announced by May, and that civil society will be engaged in helping define what kind of leadership our cities require. More importantly, the movement is indicating that it will run an intensive national process to identify and headhunt capable mayoral candidates from across society, including experienced public representatives, professionals, community leaders, veterans of government, and people with proven governance ability, and that the public will be invited to submit names.

This is not a betrayal of the movement. If done properly, it is

a return to its best traditions.

The ANC was never meant to become a closed chamber of insiders recycling each other. It was built as a broad movement of the people, shaped by communities, workers, professionals, organisers, intellectuals, faith leaders, youth, women, activists and patriots from all sectors of society. That breadth is not a cosmetic feature. It is the movement's original strength. It is also the movement's future survival strategy.

But the question is not whether opening the doors wider is correct. The real question is this: can we open the doors wider while tightening the standard higher?

That is the test.

Because the danger is real. If "opening up" becomes a shortcut for parachuting celebrities, connected businesspeople, opportunists, or last minute names with no discipline, no rootedness, and no willingness to serve under organisational accountability, then this process will deepen cynicism instead of renewing trust. But if it becomes a disciplined search for ethical, capable, people-centred leaders who can govern under

ANC values and public accountability, then it may mark the beginning of a serious correction.

We must be brutally honest about what has gone wrong.

Local government has not failed only because of policy. It has failed because of selection, deployment, and the collapse of consequence. Good policy cannot survive bad deployment. The best manifesto cannot rescue an absent councillor. A proud history cannot defend a compromised mayor.

Communities do not experience the ANC through conference resolutions. They experience the ANC in the person who answers the phone, who attends the funeral, who escalates the burst pipe, who fights the billing error, who stops procurement abuse, who convenes the ward, who tells the truth when something cannot be fixed quickly.

That is why the branch and the voting district remain central. They are still the basic organs of mobilisation and legitimacy. But the branch must never become a closed shop that mistakes internal popularity for communi-

ty standing. We have seen too many cases where a person is "strong in the meeting" but weak in the community, loud inside but invisible outside. We have also seen how vested interests distort nominations away from quality and away from genuine support.

So the new direction should be welcomed, but only on one condition: we must open the pool and harden the filter.

The filter: five non-negotiables

First, **ethics**. No one should lead a municipality who cannot withstand scrutiny on finances, conflicts of interest, lifestyle risk, or past conduct. This must be enforced without fear or favour. We are not looking for saints. We are looking for leaders who are not compromised and who are willing to submit themselves to full transparency.

Second, **capability**. A mayor is not a mascot. A mayor is a political executive. The mayor must stabilise administration, drive delivery, oversee budgets and contracts, contain corruption pressure, manage stakeholders, and communicate with calm authority.





If a candidate does not understand systems, cannot read a budget, cannot build and manage a competent team, and cannot enforce consequence, then we are setting them up to fail and the city to suffer.

Third, **rootedness**. South Africans are tired of leaders who arrive from nowhere, perform care, and vanish. People want leaders who know the ground, understand the texture of place, and have a visible relationship with the community beyond election cycles.

Fourth, **legitimacy**. The process must be credible enough that when names are announced, the public can see the logic: why these people, what standard was applied, what process was followed. Legitimacy is not only about the final name. It is about the transparency of the path.

Fifth, **urgency**. If candidates are to be announced by end May, the movement cannot afford drift. Every day wasted is a day handed to our opponents. Delay is not

neutral; delay is a decision to lose ground.

The principle: open the pool, harden the filter, decide with courage

This is where we must learn a hard organising truth: quality is not accidental. Strong candidates do not appear by magic in April and become ready by May. They are recruited early, screened carefully, prepared seriously, and assessed consistently.

That is why the movement must treat this moment like a national project, not a press cycle.

The standard must be clear and public. Not a long document. A simple test that every candidate must pass:

- Ethical standing;
- Capability; and
- Community legitimacy.

If a candidate cannot pass those three tests, we must stop ourselves from rationalising. We must stop making excuses. We must stop promoting people be-

cause they are connected, loud, or useful to a faction.

The movement should also be honest that selection is not only about winning elections. It is about governing. We are choosing the people who will be responsible for water and sanitation systems, electricity distribution, waste management, roads, safety coordination, procurement discipline, and local economic development. We are choosing the people who will be on the front line of public anger and public hope.

So we must choose accordingly.

A practical operating plan for the next month

The ANC now needs a disciplined, visible operating plan that can be understood at every level.

Step 1: Set the standard publicly and invite the country in. Make one clear message: we want servant leaders, not insiders. Invite nominations from branches, alliance structures,

veterans, civic organisations, faith leaders, professional bodies, and ordinary citizens. Make it impossible for people to say they did not know how to participate.

Step 2: Build a real longlist, not a ceremonial one.

Every metro and priority municipality must produce a serious longlist drawn from multiple streams: internal talent, former employees with credible records, professionals and proven administrators, community leaders, and public submissions.

This is where leadership must show seriousness: approach people directly. Recruit them. Persuade them to serve. Do not wait for volunteers only. Great candidates are often recruited, not discovered.

Step 3: Run a fast red flag and green flag sift.

Before deep vetting, remove obvious non-starters: unresolved integrity clouds, procurement conflicts, patterns of intimidation, chronic absenteeism, inability to work collectively, or no evidence of service.

Step 4: Do community intelligence before interviews.

Not gossip. Structured feedback. Ask respected community voices three questions: Can this person lead? Can this person be trusted? Can this person unite? Many people interview well but live badly. Others are not loud but are deeply trusted. A credible process must separate performance from substance.

Step 5: Use one interview method everywhere.

Do not over intellectualise. Ask what matters: What would you do in your first 100 days? How

would you stabilise administration? How would you rebuild public trust? How would you handle corruption pressure? How would you lead under coalition conditions? How would you communicate honestly when delivery is delayed?

Step 6: Decide, communicate, deploy.

Take decisions and stand by them. No endless drift. No leaks. No shadow lobbying. Once candidates are selected, launch each with a public covenant: what they stand for, how they will lead, how they will report back, and what ethical standard they accept.

That covenant turns selection into a political signal.

The bottom line

The ANC does not need a perfect process in a month. But it can still produce a credible one. And right

now, credibility is half the battle.

Communities will not read every rule. They will read the names.

If the names signal seriousness, ethics, competence, humility, and service, the ANC gains political oxygen. If the names signal recycled failure, patronage, or moral compromise, the campaign begins already wounded.

The door has now been opened wider. The task is to ensure that what comes through that door is not more ambition without ethics, but service with backbone.

Open the pool wider. Raise the standard higher.

Filter harder. Decide faster. Stand by the best names.

That is what renewal looks like when it stops being a slogan and becomes a method.



Ideological Commentary on the National Democratic Revolution and the Question of Economic Stewardship

A response to Booii and Tsibani

■ By **RONNY P. MOLOI**

THE ongoing debate raised by Cdes. Mnyamezeli (Nyami) Booii and Fumene George (Furher) Tsibani regarding the trajectory of the revolutionary project in South Africa deserves serious ideological engagement. Their narrative re-opens a long-standing question within the liberation movement: whether the economic direction of the democratic state reflects the historical intentions of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) as developed within the liberation alliance between the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

This debate is not merely academic. It speaks directly to the lived realities of millions of South Africans who, thirty years after the democratic breakthrough of 1994, continue to occupy the lowest rungs of the global and domestic socioeconomic order.

At the heart of the discussion lies the historical doctrine of the “two-stage theory,” which informed the revolutionary strategy of the alliance during the anti-apartheid struggle. Influenced heavily by the theoretical contributions of the SACP and articulated in



documents such as *The Road to South African Freedom*, the liberation movement conceptualised South Africa as a society characterised by “*colonialism of a special type*.” Under this framework, the defeat of apartheid would not automatically resolve the deeper structural contradictions of racial capitalism. Instead, the first stage of the revolution would establish political democracy and dismantle formal racial domination, thereby creating the conditions for a second stage in which deeper economic transformation could unfold.

This theoretical orientation was nurtured during the exile years

under the leadership of Oliver Tambo, whose stewardship of the liberation movement emphasised both unity and ideological clarity. Within this context, the SACP played a profound intellectual and organisational role in shaping the economic thinking of the movement. Many leading strategists of the liberation struggle were simultaneously cadres of both the ANC and the SACP, including figures such as Joe Slovo and Chris Hani. It is therefore understandable that some commentators describe the post-1994 arrangement as one in which the SACP assumed a form of custodianship over the economic direction of the democratic state.

However, historical accuracy requires nuance. The liberation movement did not formally assign permanent economic stewardship to the SACP as a separate governing authority. Rather, the post-apartheid state emerged from a negotiated settlement in which the ANC remained the principal governing force, while alliance partners influenced policy through shared ideological commitments and the deployment of cadres into state institutions. What existed, therefore, was less a constitutional arrangement than an ideological expectation: that the economic direction of the democratic state would remain broadly aligned with the transformative aspirations of the NDR.

The real question today is whether that expectation has been realised.

Three decades into democracy, South Africa finds itself in a complex and troubling economic position. The majority of its citizens remain situated within the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum. Large sections of the population exist either within a precarious working class or within a structurally marginalised surplus population characterised by chronic unemployment. The democratic state succeeded in dismantling apartheid's legal architecture and expanding access to social services, but it has struggled to fundamentally restructure the ownership and productive patterns of the economy inherited from the apartheid era.

This reality places South Africa in a contradictory position. Politically, the country is a constitutional democracy. Economically, however, the underlying structure of accumulation remains largely intact from the pre-1994 order.

Wealth concentration persists, industrial capacity has weakened in key sectors, and unemployment remains among the highest in the world. These conditions create the perception that the National Democratic Revolution has achieved its political objectives but has not yet fully advanced toward its economic phase.

Within this context, the critique raised by Booie and Tsibani – that revolutionary economic stewardship risks degenerating into what they call a “seminar culture without production” – must be understood as an internal ideological challenge rather than an external attack. It reflects frustration among sections of the revolutionary movement who believe that the transformative ambitions of the NDR have slowed or stalled.

Yet such criticism must also recognise the structural constraints

that confronted the democratic government at the dawn of the transition. South Africa entered democracy under immense global and domestic pressures. The negotiated settlement preserved macroeconomic stability and avoided the collapse experienced by many transitional states, but it also limited the immediate scope of radical economic restructuring. Subsequent policy frameworks, including Growth, Employment and Redistribution and later developmental strategies, attempted to balance social transformation with economic stability. Whether those compromises strengthened or weakened the revolutionary project remains a subject of legitimate debate.

The current economic crisis intensifies that debate. Energy instability, sluggish growth, and persistent unemployment expose the structural weaknesses of the





South African economy. These challenges force the liberation movement to revisit the original strategic vision of the NDR and to ask whether the transition has reached a plateau that requires renewed ideological clarity and political courage.

The socio-economic position of the majority of South Africans is central to this reflection. The working class and the poor remain the social foundation of the liberation movement, yet they continue to bear the heaviest burden of economic stagnation. When unemployment expands and industrial capacity declines, it is precisely these constituencies that experience the most severe consequences. In this sense, the discussion about the economic direction of the state is inseparable from the lived experiences of the people whom the revolution was meant to emancipate.

The revolutionary question therefore cannot be reduced to whether the SACP has fulfilled or failed in a supposed custodial role. The

deeper issue is whether the alliance as a whole has maintained sufficient ideological coherence to advance the transformative objectives of the National Democratic Revolution under contemporary global conditions. The challenge is not simply technical or managerial; it is fundamentally political and strategic.

The legacy of leaders such as President Oliver Tambo reminds the movement that revolutionary projects require constant renewal. The NDR was never intended to become a static doctrine. It was conceived as a dynamic process through which political liberation would gradually evolve into deeper socioeconomic transformation. If the present moment appears to reveal stagnation, then the task of the movement is not to abandon the revolutionary framework but to critically reassess its application in a rapidly changing global economy.

South Africa's current crisis therefore represents both a warning and an opportunity. It warns that

political freedom alone cannot sustain social stability without meaningful economic transformation. At the same time, it offers an opportunity for the liberation movement to re-examine the strategic assumptions that guided the transition and to revitalise the transformative impulse that originally animated the National Democratic Revolution.

In this sense, the debate initiated by comrades Booie and Tsibani should not be dismissed as polemical. It should be welcomed as part of the necessary ideological self-reflection of a movement that remains historically committed to the emancipation of its people. The central question before us is not whether the revolution has failed, but whether its second horizon – the transformation of the economic foundations of society – has yet been fully realised.

For the millions of South Africans who continue to struggle on the margins of the economy, that question is not theoretical. It is a matter of historical urgency.

Freedom requires bravery

A tribute to Chris Hani – one of the heroes of our liberation struggle

■ By **SELLO SHAI-MORULE**

COMRADE Chris Hani did not choose to be a soldier, but circumstances drove him to fight. He lived and died with courage.

Today, we walk tall with pride and dignity because of brave souls like him. As he echoed Elmer Davis' words, *"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."* Hani's legacy reminds us that freedom requires bravery.

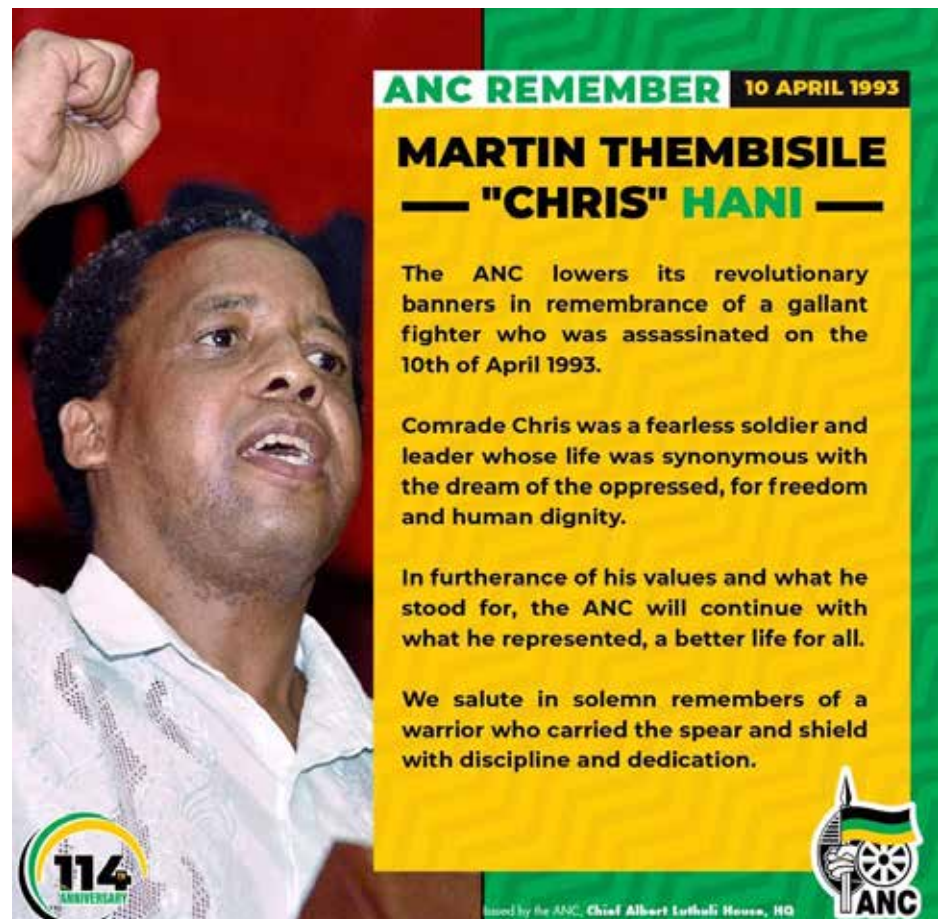
As South Africa approaches 32 years of freedom, I'm choosing to honour Comrade Chris Hani, a fearless fighter in our struggle. Thirty-three years ago, on 10 April 1993, Hani was tragically assassinated at his Dawn Park home in Boksburg by Janusz Waluś, a radical right-wing Polish immigrant. His legacy lives on, inspiring generations to come.

As I reflected on my calendar this morning, I was reminded that three decades ago, Comrade Hani was brutally killed in his own native land by foreign assassins. Cde Chris Hani, a proud member of the ANC NEC member, SACP General Secretary, former MK Chief of Staff and a gallant soldier till to the grave inspired by "Hanism", a synonym to a just, good and normal life, will forever be missed by his people.

I'm remembering Chris Hani not for his impressive combat record or sharp political mind, but for his selfless love for his people and their struggle. As he said, socialism is about providing basics like shelter, water, healthcare, and dignity for all. It's about bridging the urban-rural divide and ensuring decent education. For Hani, socialism meant rolling back the market's tyranny and empowering the many, not just the privi-

leged few. His words still inspire a vision of a just society.

In about 10 days, we'll mark 32 years since South Africa's democratic breakthrough. Yet, this Freedom Day feels bittersweet. April's significance is complex – a month of both joy and sorrow. While it's known for April Fool's, it's also a time to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Their



ANC REMEMBER 10 APRIL 1993



MARTIN THEMBISILE
— "CHRIS" HANI —

The ANC lowers its revolutionary banners in remembrance of a gallant fighter who was assassinated on the 10th of April 1993.

Comrade Chris was a fearless soldier and leader whose life was synonymous with the dream of the oppressed, for freedom and human dignity.

In furtherance of his values and what he stood for, the ANC will continue with what he represented, a better life for all.

We salute in solemn remembers of a warrior who carried the spear and shield with discipline and dedication.

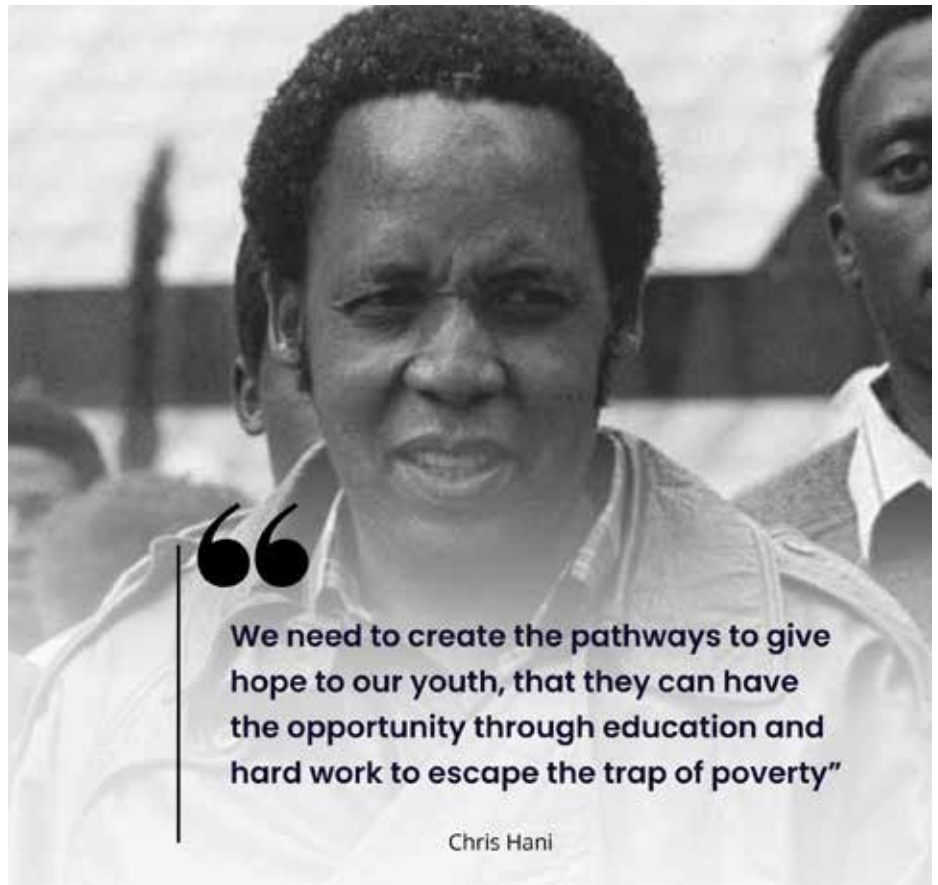
Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Lutulu House, HQ

memory reminds us that freedom isn't free, and we must continue to work towards the nation they envisioned. As we approach April 27, let's honour their legacy and strive for a better South Africa.

Adding to the significance of this month, the Equality Court in Johannesburg ruled in 2019 that displaying the old South African flag in public or private spaces is prohibited, except for artistic, academic, or journalistic expression in the public interest. This landmark ruling, upheld by the Supreme Court of Appeal, was a crucial step towards healing the nation. The dismissal of Afriforum's application to overturn the ban marked a victory for those who fought against the perpetuation of apartheid's painful legacy. This milestone, achieved in April, serves as a reminder of the ongoing pursuit of equality and dignity for all South Africans.

On 21 April 2023, the court ruled that displaying the old South African flag is equivalent to hate speech and harassment. This followed a case brought by the Nelson Mandela Foundation after Afriforum displayed the flag during farm murder protests. The Equality Court initially ruled in 2019 that the flag is hurtful and incites harm, and the Supreme Court of Appeal upheld this decision, dismissing Afriforum's appeal. The judgement marked a significant step towards addressing the painful legacy of apartheid and promoting respect for all South Africans.

Our ancestors are indeed watching over us. Almost 32 years ago, South Africa transitioned to democracy, but it's a bittersweet celebration. April's a month marked by both freedom and loss – the sacrifices of Chris Hani, Oliver



Tambo, Solomon Mahlangu, and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela remind us of the ongoing struggle. If February's about love, March's about human rights, and April's about freedom, then Chris Hani's legacy tells us that true liberation means realizing these values – or continuing to fight for them. His doctrine was clear: total emancipation is the goal, and anything less is unacceptable. As long as the economy is dominated by an unelected, privileged few, the case for socialism will exist” said Chris Hani.

April's significance in South Africa goes beyond the 1994 democratic elections. It's a month marked by pivotal moments, notably the assassination of SACP General Secretary and ANC NEC member, Comrade Chris Hani. The country's history confirms April's reputation as a time of activism, bravery, and the pursuit of freedom. It's a democracy

month, symbolizing the nation's resilience and spirit.

As we honour the life and times of Comrade Chris Hani, President Cyril Ramaphosa's words from 27 April 2023 resonate “... *let's uphold our civic duty to reject theft, looting, and plunder. Let's celebrate our diversity and differences, rather than fuel hatred. We must protect our hard-won gains and build towards a better future*”. I think he was paraphrasing Hanism. It is my conviction that, Hani's legacy inspires us to strive for a society where unity and justice prevail.

In 20 days, we'll celebrate Workers Day. As Chris Hani's ideology {Hanisim} reminds us, true freedom means all workers earn a decent living wage and work safely. We're not free until farm workers, domestic workers, mine workers, and others are treated with dignity. Until the vulnerable,



elderly, women, children, and marginalized are protected, we're not free. Hanism is about living a just and good life, where everyone thrives. Unity of the workers of the world is Hanism's genetic material. The words "*Workers of the world, unite*" is also inscribed on Marx's tombstone. The soul of the slogan is that members of the working classes right the way through the world should combine forces to defeat capitalism and achieve victory in the class conflict.

We are honouring Chris Hani, of a young lion generation who led the charge for freedom in South Africa, driven by principle, not personal gain. His vision of freedom meant jobs, homes, fair wages, land, hope, dignity, and essential services for all. To him, communism meant ending exploitation. Chris Hani's impact is unique – he'd be irreplaceable, even if we tried to replace him

Our response to Chris Hani's assassination has

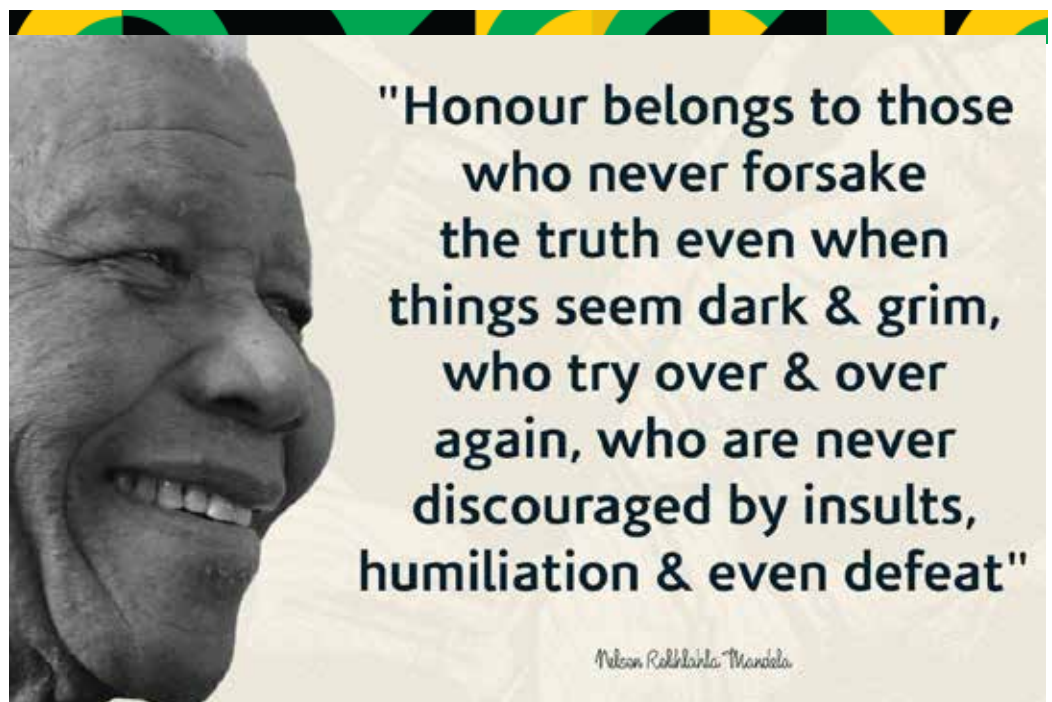
been collective and grassroots, and it must stay that way. As we march towards a democratic society, we need more disciplined, loyal cadres like Hani, who put the country's needs first. General Douglas MacArthur's words ring true: "*No man is entitled to the blessings of freedom unless he be vigilant in its preservation.*"

In his name, the African National Congress, South African Communist Party, Congress of South

African Trade Union and South African National Civic Associations must keep working together to safeguard our freedom.

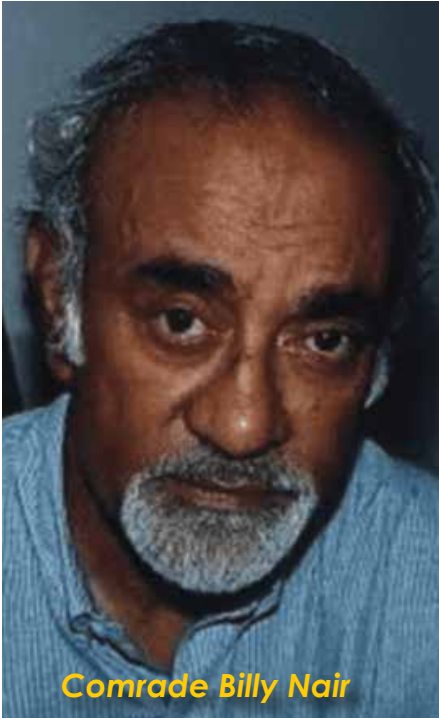
As a developing newborn nation, during this critical time of an economic revolution and a just crusade of deDollarisation under the stewardship of BRICS and other progressive world formations, South Africa and Africa during this epoch of sorry state of geopolitics, needs many more Chris Hanis to take this struggle forward. Both the ANC and SACP of Chris Hani and President Mandela respectively, are South Africa's vehicle to a national democratic society, aligned with COSATU, SANCO and other many progressive forces. We're borrowing this future from our kids – let's make it worth it. Through Hanism, a better tomorrow is possible.

Sello Shai-Morule is an ANC Branch Chairperson of ANC MBW17, Mbombela Sub-Region, Ehlanzeni Region of Mpumalanga Province and social activist. He writes in his personal capacity.



"Honour belongs to those who never forsake the truth even when things seem dark & grim, who try over & over again, who are never discouraged by insults, humiliation & even defeat"

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela



Comrade Billy Nair

Freedom is indivisible

Paper presented by **MAC MAHARAJ** at the
**Launch of the Billy Nair Digital Archive
 at DUT Library**

15 April 2026

ALLOW me to express my appreciation to the DUT (Durban University of Technology) and the Billy Nair Trust for hosting the digitized Billy Nair Archive.

Billy's service in our journey from apartheid to a constitutional democracy is an indispensable part of that fabric. His service in SAC-TU and the trade union movement, the SACP, the NIC, uMkhonto weSizwe, the UDF and the ANC is integral to that narrative.

Your initiative will ensure that scholars have easy access to the Archive.

Billy had a wicked sense of humour. I remember a particular heated argument he and I had during Operation Vula. At some point Billy grabbed his walking stick, put on his wig and cap, and stormed out of the house.

I was due to leave for Joburg early that morning. I wrote an apology and entrusted it with Sipiwe

to give to Billy. Though Billy was not supposed to visit the safe house during the day, he turned up early the next morning. When Nyanda opened the door, Billy stormed past him and went to my bedroom only to find it empty. Billy told Nyanda that he had come to apologise to me. Nyanda then gave him my envelope. Billy read my apology with widening eyes and then curtly announced that he was withdrawing his apology as he wanted it to be known that I had apologised first. Billy and I have yet to resolve who apologised first.

The advent of democracy marked a crucial moment in our people's journey to becoming a South African nation, united in its diversity.

In 1994 Nelson Mandela reminded us in the Long Walk to Freedom that achieving democracy was not the end of our journey.

He wrote that *"We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and*

even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. The true test of our devotion to freedom is just beginning."

Walter Sisulu cautioned that the past can cast a heavy burden on the future. Colonialism and apartheid invoked and encouraged differences based on race, tribe, and ethnicity as a means of preventing the unity of the oppressed. This indoctrination was potentially a time bomb planted in the body politic of a democratic South Africa.

In an essay written in 1976, Sisulu wrote that these anti-human and corrosive notions have been drummed over centuries into our people in a thousand ways; and that *"even inside our organisation and sometimes, regrettable, in individuals holding high positions, vestiges of such thinking survive and bedevil our work. Such ideas are incompatible with*

our goal, and we must never relax our efforts to rid our organisation of them.”

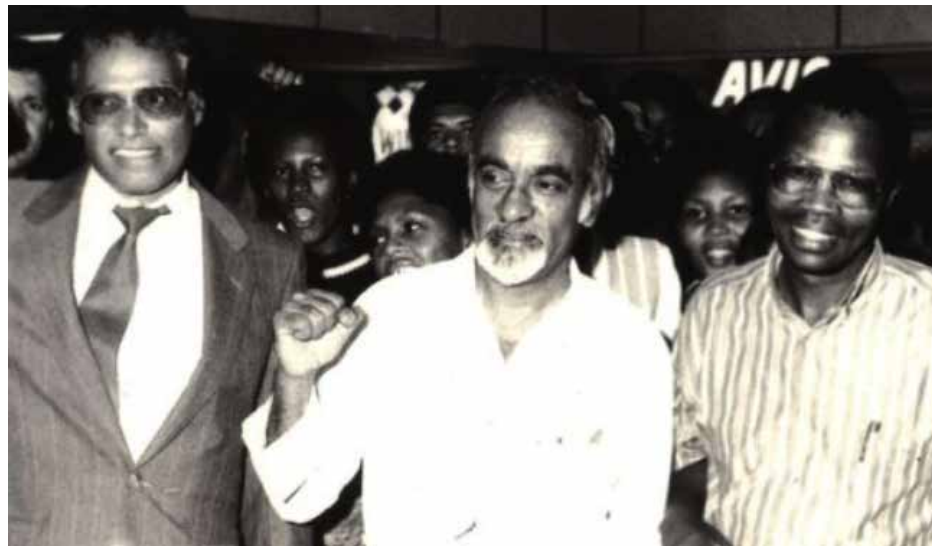
Nowadays there are some people who ought to know better and were intimately involved in the negotiations, who attribute the missteps and inadequacies in improving the plight of the people to the Constitution adopted in 1996.

We must distinguish between well-meaning criticisms that seek to correct our mistakes and improve and deepen our democracy, from criticisms by those who, trapped in power games and the pursuit of selfish ends, strive to undermine our democracy.

The detractors of our Constitutional Democracy elevate the emotional appeal of different cultures, religions, and ethnicity by harking back to pre-colonial times. They seek to rubbish the hard lessons learnt in our liberation struggle, lessons that shaped the vision outlined in the Freedom Charter.

How can we separate the wheat from the chaff in such debates? Walter Sisulu taught us never to mislead the masses. The tests we should be applying is to ask whether the criticisms divide or unite our people; do they entrench or help eradicate racism and patriarchy; do they promote equality or entrench racism and tribalism; do they empower the people and deepen our democracy, or do they open the road to authoritarian rule disguised as democracy?

While the detractors peddle falsehoods, we have to present facts. The starting point of any conversation must be grounded on the pedigree and foundations of the Constitution of 1996.



The opening lines of the **Freedom Charter** proclaim that South Africa belongs to all who live in it and that the people shall govern. Unity and democracy are thus at the heart of the Charter.

The second principle entrenched in the Charter is the idea of equality which transcends class, colour, gender, and religion, and sees the diversity of our cultures as an asset. It is a notion that makes all of us co-owners of the society we are building. It lies at the heart of Mandela's injunction that *“For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”*

The view that freedom is indivisible is the heart of Pan Africanism and is central to understanding how and why our future in the world in which we live, is tied to the future of our continent Africa.

When Oliver Tambo, inaugurated the Constitutional Committee in January 1986, he reminded the members that whatever ideas they came forward with should find their foundation in the Freedom Charter.

A year later, in the 1987 January

8 statement, Tambo announced the ANC's commitment to a multi-party democracy and fundamental human rights.

The **Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa** published in August 1988 proposed that the constitutional framework for post-apartheid SA should embrace a democratic state, a justiciable Bill of Rights, the separation of powers between the legislature, executive and judiciary, a representative and decentralised government, democratic civilian control of security forces, and social and economic transformation.

The Guidelines were rigorously debated both within and beyond the ranks of the ANC, with SA and abroad. In the best traditions of the ANC, vigorous debate did not lead to division. Rather it deepened our understanding of the kind of democratic order that would serve all the people of our country.

The ANC adhered strictly to the view that a Constitution for post-apartheid South Africa must be written by a body elected by the people on the basis of one person one vote. This was realised

when the Constitutional Assembly consisting of 490 elected members met over two years to draft and adopt the **Constitution of 1996**.

The Guidelines influenced the Interim Constitution and ultimately more than 80% of its proposals influenced the final Constitution.

Any claim that our Constitution was a foreign imposition, or that it violates the principles of democracy, falsifies history and demeans our capacity to think for ourselves. It rubbishes the valiant struggles waged by the people and tarnishes the memory of Chief Luthuli, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela. It has its origins in colonialism that sought to rob us of our esteem and self-respect.

Our Constitution was a home-grown document, arising from struggle. Read about its origins in Andre Odendaal's Dear Comrade President if you have any doubts.

In a memo written in March/April 1989, Mandela said that negotiations would have to address two central issues: *"firstly, the demand for majority rule in a unitary state; secondly, the concern of white South Africa over this demand, as well as the insistence of whites on structural guarantees that majority rule will not mean domination of the white minority by blacks."*

He added that *"The most crucial task which will face the government, and the ANC will be to reconcile these two positions."* He reminded the regime that *"majority rule and internal peace are like two sides of a coin, and white South Africa simply has to accept that there will never be peace*

and stability in this country until the principle (of majority rule) is fully applied."

The Tambo **January 8 statement** of 1987, the **ANC Constitutional Guidelines** of August 1988, and the **Mandela memo** of early 1989 were crucial building blocks in charting a way forward.

But not all the pieces were in place. How were we to ensure that the transition from apartheid would be a democracy? How were we to ensure that the road map for this transition would mobilise overwhelming support within SA and throughout the world?

O'Malley writes that Tambo *"had to plan for the seizure of power as well as for a protracted armed struggle, ways of balancing the four pillars of struggle, strangling the regime through economic isolation, and a negotiated settlement. Each course of action had to be pursued. The various pursuits were interrelated: Mac's Vula and Mbeki's Mells Park talks complemented each other. Tambo orchestrated both, and he knew too ... that Mandela was in contact with the SA government."*

Tambo set out to develop a position paper that would unite the

democratic forces within SA and the international community. He canvassed the leaders of the Frontline States. He solicited the views of Cosatu, the SA Council of Churches, and the Mass Democratic Movement. And despite the intense surveillance Mandela was subjected to in prison, Tambo managed to secretly consult Mandela on the matter.

The outcome was a document he finalised on 8 August 1989 with a view that it would be presented to the OAU Special Committee on Southern Africa due to meet later that month in Harare. Tambo's idea recorded in his Vula communications, was that although it was drafted by the ANC, it would become public as a position of the OAU Committee which would then promote it as an OAU position, and the OAU would then present it internationally so that it would culminate as a position of the United Nations. He was determined to ensure that apartheid South Africa would be out-maneuvred and stand completely isolated, even from those Western governments that had been its allies.

On 8 August 1989, after finalising the what is known as the **Harare Declaration**, Tambo suffered a





debilitating stroke. But his perspective triumphed.

The Harare Declaration, with some minor amendments, was adopted by the OAU, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations.

The Harare Declaration advanced the perspective that negotiations could bring about democracy in South Africa; and that this was possible if a set of nine principles anchored a new constitutional order for South Africa. The Declaration outlined actions that the apartheid regime should undertake to create the necessary climate for negotiations to take place.

Mandela's view that the central issue was how reconcile the principle of the demand for majority rule in a unitary state and the

concern of the white community was met head-on.

What appeared to be irreconcilable was resolved on the basis that (a) South Africa would be governed by a mandatory multi-party coalition for a maximum of five years and all other elements of what is known as the sunset clauses were circumscribed as part of this maximum of five years, (b) that the electoral system would be based on proportional representation, (c) that a set of 34 principles outlined in the Interim Constitution would be binding on the final constitution to be written by an elected Constitutional Assembly, and (d) that a justiciable Bill of Rights would be an integral part of the Interim as well as the final constitution.

A democratic South Africa grounded on equality and individual human rights combined with so-

cio-economic rights would be the binding agents that would enable us to wean our society of the fears and concerns spawned by centuries of race rule based on racial discrimination. The Tambo-Mandela strategic perspective was realised in our constitutional democracy in which the Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

The *Interim Constitution* required that the final constitution conform to the 34 principles outlined in it. This approach was in accord with that of the Harare Declaration. But it raised an important issue: how and who would ensure that the final constitution adhered to these principles?

Under apartheid, South Africa's system based on the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty meant that Parliament could pass any law and no court could invalidate it.

Parliamentary sovereignty allowed the apartheid regime to pass laws that denied fundamental human rights to the majority of the population. We had first-hand experience of how easily the apartheid regime was able to manipulate parliamentary sovereignty.

In 1951 the regime decided to remove the Coloured population from voters roll and parliament passed the Separate Representation of Voters Act. When the Supreme Court of apartheid South Africa ruled that the law was invalid because the constitution required a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of both houses to change the franchise, the regime simply enlarged the Senate to secure the required two-thirds majority.

Other instances where the rights of the oppressed were violated included the Population Registration Act 1950 in terms of which officials were given powers to determine a person's race; forced removals under the Group Areas Act which enabled, among others, the destruction of Sophiatown and District Six; Detention without Trial and other security laws; and of course the notorious pass laws that stripped the African population of their rights.

All these laws were possible because parliament was supreme and neither the courts nor any other institution had the power to invalidate legislation, no matter that the legislation violated fundamental human rights.

The idea that there should be some mechanism that would check the abuse we had witnessed under the system of parliamentary sovereignty surfaced at an *In-House Seminar* held by the ANC in Lusaka during March 1988.

A paper on the legal system and the judiciary pointed out that the most difficult question in constitutional law was whether the highest law-making authority in the land could be made subject to law. The presentation proposed that South Africa should consider creating a separate Constitutional Court to serve as an impartial authority to ensure that provisions of the Bill of Rights were not violated.

The foundations of our constitutional democracy lay in the experience we had of the ease with which parliamentary supremacy was used to violate the fundamental human rights of the citizens.

We opted for a constitutional de-

mocracy in which the Constitution is the supreme law of the land, human rights would be enforceable, citizens could challenge laws that violated rights, and no future government would be able to rule in the arbitrary way that apartheid had done.

In the current debates about economic transformation, it is incorrect to allege that the Bill of Rights ignored issues relating to the economy. The Constitutional Assembly was mindful that the principle of equality must permeate both social and economic rights. Issues of housing, health, food and water, social security, children's basic needs, education, environment protection and certain land reform rights feature explicitly in the Bill of Rights, with the proviso that they are subject to progressive realisation limited by available resources. Our Constitutional Court in the *State vs Grootboom* ruled on 4 October 2000 that these socio-economic rights are justiciable.

Our concerns with regard to extent and pace of achieving social and economic transformation are misplaced when they are attributed to shortcomings in the Constitution. We should never be afraid to look at ourselves in the mirror. However, let us make sure it is



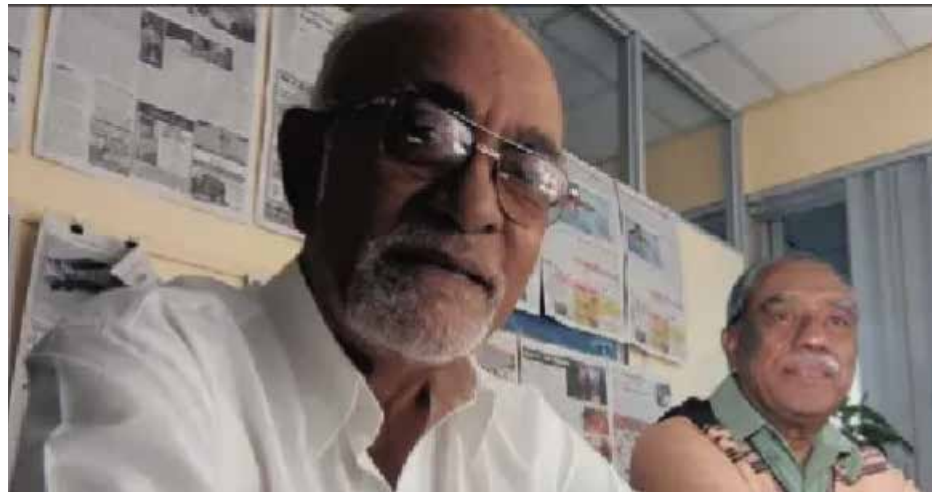
not a distorting mirror that alters the appearance of whatever is reflected in it, instead of showing a true, accurate image.

The need for a **Constitutional Court** gained sharper focus when the Constitutional Principles in the Interim Constitution were being developed. We could not countenance that the courts established under apartheid should be the guardians of the Bill of Rights. Accordingly, the Constitutional Court was established after the 1994 elections and Nelson Mandela, President of the Republic, appointed its first eleven judges.

The 1994 elections mandated the elected members of parliament to draft the final constitution. The 400 members of the national assembly and the 90 members of the senate, sitting jointly made up the Constitutional Assembly.

The Assembly chose an inclusive approach to constitution-making. While the representatives of the elected political parties constituted the CA, the Assembly opted also to canvass the views of political parties that were not represented, as well as individual citizens. It invited submissions from the public. It reached out to and solicited the views through an intensive media campaign. All meetings of the CA and its structures were open to the public.

The **Constitution of 1996** was adopted on **8 May 1996** with 86% voting in favour of it. But on 6 September 1996 the Constitutional Court found that it did not comply with the principles in eight aspects. President Mandela unhesitatingly accepted the ruling of the Court that same day. The Assembly then produced a revised text that was certified by



the Constitutional Court.

The Constitution was signed into law by President Mandela at Sharpeville, the scene of the 1960 massacre, on 10 December 1996, the anniversary of the International Human Rights Day.

In this way South Africa equipped itself with a Constitution mandated by the people and unparalleled in history for its credibility and legitimacy.

At the first meeting between the regime and the ANC held at Groote Schuur on 2 May 1990 the regime's foreign minister recalled that Mandela took the initiative and sketched an outline of the history of the struggle waged by the ANC and also covered the hardships the Afrikaner had endured – the Anglo-Boer War and concentration camps, and their subsequent humiliation, oppression and poverty.

Pik Botha records that Mandela then remarked that *"it had been a puzzle to him ... why the Afrikaner, who had endured so much trauma, misery and humiliation, had never reached out to his black compatriots, who had to bear the yoke of poverty and been deprived of education."* Botha and his colleagues were

unable to give Mandela a reasoned explanation.

We recount this incident because the lessons of history, derived from our own experiences and that of struggles around the world, are embodied in the perspective of the ANC that freedom for the oppressed majority must mean freedom for all. The perspective of the Freedom Charter is firmly embedded in the idea that freedom is indivisible. That is why in our Constitution majority rule is anchored in the rights enumerated in the **Bill of Rights**.

Every year we observe the month of March as Human Rights month as way of deepening our understanding of the centrality of human rights in our Constitution. Let us use today's event in remembering Billy Nair, who was among the founders of our Constitutional Democracy, to commit ourselves to the rights enshrined in our Constitution and remind ourselves that the task of making those rights the lived experience of all is still very much work in progress.

We do so with the understanding that freedom is indivisible and that our Constitutional Democracy is a staging post on our path to freedom.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

18–24 April 2026

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

18 April 1905 Composer Enoch Sontonga passed on



Enoch Sontonga, the composer of *Nkosi Sikile'iAfrica* died a young 32. When he composed this African classic, that became part of South Africa and other national anthems, Sontonga was only 24 years old. Enoch Sontonga was born in Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape, attended Loveday College and taught at the Methodist Mission School. He performed *Nkosi Sikile'iAfrica* in his choir, which toured the country. Samuel Mqhayi later added several verses to the hymn.

18 April 1964 Neville Alexander and others guilty of sabotage

Dr. Neville Alexander and four others were found guilty of sabotage and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. The judge found that the accused participated in

the activities of the National Liberation Front (NLF), an offshoot of the Yu Chi Chan Club (YCCC), whose aims was to advance the revolution through violence. In 1974, Alexander was released from Robben Island, but banned and placed under house arrest for five years.

18 April 1994 Photographer killed in violence ahead of 1994 elections



On the eve of the first democratic elections, photographer Ken Oosterbroek covered the political violence in townships of the now Gauteng province and KZN. Oosterbroek got into photography whilst doing his SADF military service in Angola, and won a number of Photographer of the Year awards, working at The Star newspaper. He was shot on duty in Thokoza. A judicial inquest could not uncover the truth and it was later found he was killed by the then National Peacekeeping Force.

19 April 1906 Bambatha Rebellion



In one of the last stance in centuries of wars of resistance against colonial occupation of South Africa, the Bambatha Rebellion took place near Greytown in KwaZulu-Natal, prompted by the introduction of a new £1 poll tax on top of existing hut and dog taxes. Mining companies needed cheap labour, but most African people lived off the land as farmers, tenants on White farms or in reserves created by the colonial government. The tax was instituted to force Blacks from rural areas to the cities to fulfil the labour needs of mines. In 1906 Chief Bambatha and his people refused to pay the tax, and led an uprising against white rule. After the killing of two policemen, martial law was declared and soldiers sent in. Huts of suspected rebels were burned, their

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

possessions taken and a violent rebellion started. Over 7,000 British troops were called out to suppress the Zulu uprising and 4 000 rebels lost their lives in the battle. The number of Zulu males working on the Witwatersrand mines increased to 60% and by 1909, 80% of all males in Zululand were migrant labourers working away from home.

19 April 1960 Formation of SWAPO



The South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) is formed in Windhoek, to fight against apartheid occupation. After a long liberation struggle led by SWAPO, often fighting and campaigning together with the ANC and other Southern African liberation movements, Namibia gained independence on 21 March 1990. Sam Nujoma was elected president of SWAPO on this day, and became the first President of a free Namibia.

19 April 1986 Another death in detention

Johannes Mashego (26) died in police custody in Parys (Free State). His relatives reported extensive bruising and swollen face upon identifying the victim's body. The police claimed that he died during interrogation.

19 April 2001 Big Pharma drops lawsuit against cheaper Aids drugs

After a prolonged battle to produce and buy cheaper, generic AIDs drugs, global pharmaceutical companies which banded together, dropped a lawsuit against South Africa, ending an international battle over patent rights and profit. This allowed the country to get millions of people onto anti-retroviral treatment.

20 April 1959 Cheryl Carolus born



Cheryl Carolus was born on this day in Silvertown on the Cape Flats. A SASO activist from the 1970s, she went on to play a leading role in the United Women's Organisation and the UDF during the 1980s. After the unbanning in 1990, she formed part of the ANC's negotiations team and was elected as the ANC Deputy Secretary General in 1994, the first woman to serve as an ANC official. After completing her term in 1997, she served as High Commissioner in the UK, headed SA Tourism and went into business, co-founding wholly women-owned company Peotania.

20 April 1999 Judge declares HIV status

One of South Africa's first Con-

stitutional Court Judges, Edwin Cameron made public that he had been living with HIV for twelve years. Judge Cameron was inspired by Gugu Dlamini, a woman who was killed after disclosing on a local radio show that she had HIV.

20 April 2006 Mam Epainette Mbeki honoured



Mam Epainette Mbeki, at the age of 90 received the **Order of the Baobab** in Gold for her work as community worker, anti-apartheid activist and business woman in Iduty, Eastern Cape. A teacher, she was recruited to join the Communist Party of South African in 1938 by Bettie du Toit, the second black woman to become a CPSA member after Josie Palmer. Mam Epainette volunteered for the Child Welfare Organisation in Durban, helped to organise a rent boycott, worked as an agent for Inkululeko (the CPSA's newspaper), and ran the Party's night school, before moving back to the Eastern Cape after getting married.

20 April 2018 Missing Persons Task Team to investigate apartheid disappearances

The Missing Persons Task's

Team (MPTT) emerged as a recommendation after the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1996 in its Final Report. The TRC was committed to correcting the injustices of apartheid; one way was through locating the graves of those who went missing between March 1, 1960 and May 10, 1994. Due to the large number of people who were still missing (estimated around 477), at the end of the TRC, the MPTT was entrusted with this task. As part of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the MPTT was established in 2005, and was responsible for locating the graves of the deceased under apartheid, exhuming their remains, and identifying the remains for reburial to take place. They have uncovered the remains of 138 missing persons as of 20 April 2018, but this number increases every month. The task team worked alongside the Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (EAAF) better known as the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team which was established in 1984 and who examined 9000 cases of disappeared persons in Argentina.

21 April 1937 Artist Benjamin Macala born



Benjamin Mzimkulu (Ben) Maca-

la was born in Bloemfontein. As a young boy he tended cattle on a farm in the Free State and drew on rocks with stones. He was largely self-taught, although he studied for a few months under Cecil Skotnes at Jubilee Art Centre in 1964. He was also guided by Ephraim Ngatane in the mid 1960s, and was a pupil of Bill Ainslie for a short time. He held thirteen exhibitions from 1967-1985 in South Africa, Europe and the US. Macala's chosen technique was pastel on paper, and his work has come to be recognised by this medium. He has used other media from time to time. His subject matter of Picasso-like portraits with huge black eyes is easily identifiable in almost all his works. Macala was also a practicing Sangoma. He died in 1997.

21 April 1952 Sisulu, Dadoo and others arrested

On a country-wide tour to organise and mobilise for the Defiance campaign, Walter Sisulu, Dr. Y.M. Dadoo, A.M. Dadoo and Y.A. Cachalia were detained at Idutywa in the Transkei, because they entered the area without the necessary permission.

21 April 1982 Labour Bulletin editor released from prison



Merle Favis, editor of the Labour Bulletin, who was arrested with about 16 other trade union leaders, labour experts and student leaders, was released from detention without being charged.

21 April 2005 Former ANC Gauteng Secretary Bavumile Vilakazi passed on



The former African National Congress (ANC) Gauteng provincial secretary and South African High Commissioner to Uganda, Bavumile Vilakazi, died of a heart attack in Kampala. Vilakazi was the first mayor of the Ekurhuleni Metro on the East Rand before he was posted to Uganda. He was tried in the United Democratic Front (UDF) 1985 Delmas treason trial.

22 April 1834 Island colonized by British

The small Atlantic Ocean island of St Helena, which used to be part of South Africa, became a British colony. It hosted prisoners such as Napoleon in 1815, Dinizulu, son of the Zulu King Cetshwayo in 1802, and 6 000 Boer prisoners from 1900-1902.

22 April 1960 Over 1500 people detained under state of emergency

Following mass protests throughout South Africa after the Sharpeville massacre on 21 March 1960, a state of emergency was declared and over 1500 people detained without trial on the day of its declaration. It is estimated by the time the emergency was lifted in August of that year, over 23 000 people were detained.

22 April 1990 Mandela in Umtata



Following his release from prison after 27 years, Nelson Mandela visits his family home at Qunu, and addresses a rally of 50 000 people in Umtata, with General Bantu Holomisa, then leader of Transkei.

23 April 1908 Bram Fischer born



Abraham (Bram) Fischer, lawyer and champion against apartheid, was born in Bloemfontein, Orange Free State on 23 April 1908. This man, from staunch Afrikaans descent (he was the eldest son of Percy Ulrich Fischer, Judge President of the Orange Free State, and a grandson of Abraham Fischer, prime minister of the Orange River Colony), became a

member of the Communist Party of South African (CPSA), openly participating in its activities. His anti-apartheid stance led him to be a member of the Congress of Democrats and to form part of the defense team for the leaders of the movement during the Treason Trial of 1956 to 1961. He also defended the accused during the Rivonia Trial in 1964.

23 April 1959 Unity Dow born



Motswana lawyer, human rights activist, writer and member of Botswana's parliament, Unity Dow was born in Mochudi. Raised in a rural village, with her parents investing in their children's education, she earned a law degree, opened Botswana's first all-woman law firm, and was the first woman to be appointed as a judge to Botswana's High Court in 1997.

23 April 1960 First Steers restaurant opens in Benoni

First of the iconic Steers restaurants opened on this day in Benoni, under the name Burger Ranch. Owner and restaurateur George Halamandaris visited the US and sought to replicate the American fast-food restaurant concept in South Africa.

23 April 1991 Apartheid Minister lifts restriction on number of black students at white universities

Apartheid Minister of National Education Louis Pienaar announced that the government would abolish restrictions on the number of Black students who might be accepted by White universities.

23 April 1993 Eritrea referendum starts

On this day in 1993, after a long history of foreign rule and decades of war, the East African country of Eritrea, started three days of voting in a referendum on independence from Ethiopia. The result was over 99% in favour of independence, after a war that lasted for decades.

23 April 1998 Mossel Bay floods

Mossel Bay and surroundings were flooded as 238 mm of rain falls within 24 hours. In June 2011 the town is again flooded when 250mm of rain fell within one day, causing severe damage to infrastructure. The coastal town was included in a 2010 study by the Department of Environmental and Development Planning on Sea Level rise and Flood Risk assessment, and declared one of the disaster-prone areas.

24 April 1901 Great Comet of 1901

'Great comets' are so named if they are visible with the naked eye. On 24 April 1901 a comet that became known as 'The Great Comet of 1901' or 'Viscara' was visible to the naked eye over most of South Africa. The comet was yellowish in colour and re-

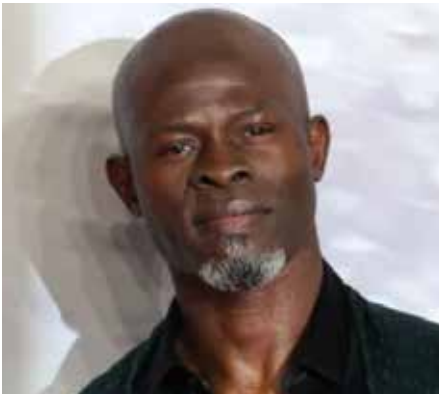
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

mained visible for the next month (until 25 May). The comet was first spotted by astronomers at the Royal Observatory in Cape of Good Hope, and a certain Mr. Innes was the first person to observe the comet using a 10-inch guiding telescope.

24 April 1954 British start Operation Anvil against Mau Mau

In order to quell the anti-colonial Mau Mau movement of Kenya, the British started this operation, a mass forced removal of over 50,000 people from Nairobi, many of whom were detained, to cut off support by the local population to the movement. The operation was based on a similar operation of forced removals of Palestinians that the British conducted in Tel Aviv.

24 April 1964 Actor Djimon Hounsou born



The actor and model, who rose to fame for his role as Cinqué, the leader of the slave revolt in the 1997 movie *Amistad*, was born on this day in Cotonou, Benin. Hounsou began his career starting in music videos, but went on to act in *Gladiator* (2000), *Black Diamond* (2006), *Never Back Down* (2008), *The Legend of Tarzan* (2016) and *Shazam, Fury of the Gods* (2023) and in a number of other Marvel movies.

24 April 1966 World Festival of Black Arts

The first of its kind was held in Dakar, Senegal on this day, a historic gathering of African and Diaspora artists, musicians and writers, including historian Cheik Anta Diop, dancers Arthur Mitchell and Alvin Ailey; musicians Duke Ellington and Marion Williams; singers Julie Akofa Akoussah and Bella Bellow and writers Aimé Césaire, Langston Hughes and Wole Soyinka.

24 April 1976 Benjamin Tyamzashe received Fort Hare Honorary degree



Benjamin John Peter Tyamzashe, Xhosa composer and musician, received an honorary M.A. Degree from the University of Fort Hare in recognition of the major contribution he had made to Xhosa music. In the 1988 Old Mutual-Telkom National Choir Festival, Tyamzashe was again honoured posthumously for his immense contribution to the field of music.

24 April 1977 Zola 7 born

Bonginkosi Dlamini, popularly known as *Zola 7*, is a South African kwaito musician, actor, writ-



er, TV presenter and poet. Dlamini began his career as an actor, achieving national recognition in *Yizo Yizo 2* (2002), *Drum* (2004) and the hit Academy Awards winning film *Tsotsi* (2005) which he wrote the musical score.

24 April 1984 Second Poverty study published

The second Carnegie Report on Poverty in South Africa was published (the first focused on 'poor whites'). The report gave account of the structural poverty because of apartheid colonialism amongst the majority black population. The report revealed levels of poverty as "devastating and extensive", especially in former homeland areas. "In Ciskei, the study found elderly people living in darkened hovels, sitting on ragged, filthy beds and with no food on their shelves. Malnutrition was common. In the Orange Free State province 800 residents of a Black township were forced to share 12 open-pit toilets, which led to an outbreak of infectious diseases."

24 April 1987 Barclays Bank SA changed its name to First National Bank

After protests against Barclays Bank's involvement in South Africa and its apartheid government,

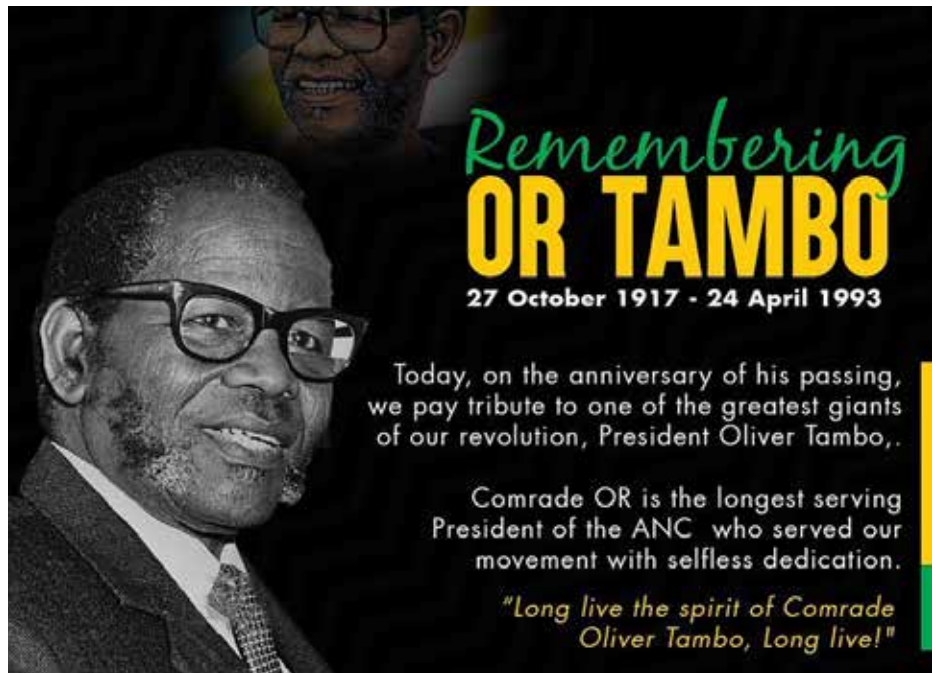
Barclays Bank (SA) announced its new name – First National Bank of Southern Africa (FNB) – a wholly South African owned and controlled entity. Sir Timothy Bevan, chairman of Barclays, admitted that while the decision to pull out of the South African market was a commercial one, the pressure exerted against the bank by anti-apartheid protesters had a detrimental effect on the bank's business in other areas. Student campaigns against Barclays Bank, initiated in the 1960s, were carried on year after year, especially at the beginning of every academic year, to persuade students not to open accounts with the bank.

24 April 1991 UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara established

The mission, also known as MINURSO was established to provide security for the referendum by the people of Western Sahara on self-determination. Western Sahara is the last remaining colony in the continent, occupied by the Kingdom of Morocco.

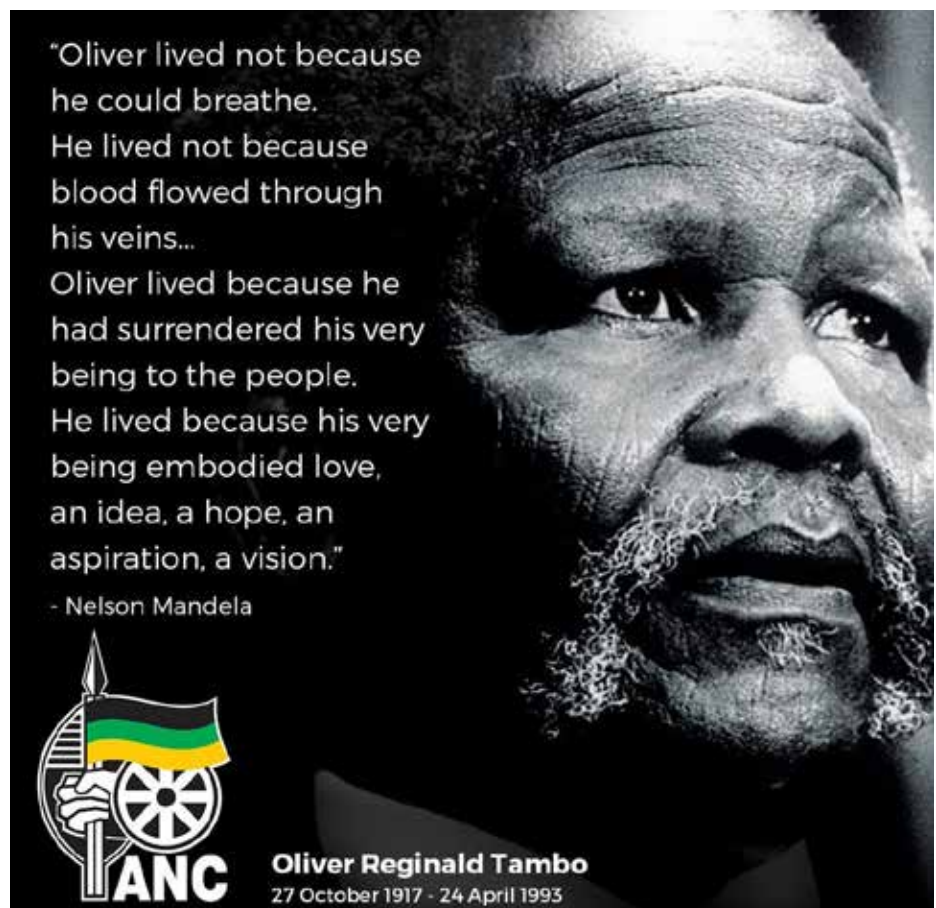
24 April 1993 ANC President OR Tambo passed on

Oliver Reginald Kaizana Tambo, ANC President from 1967 until 1991 passed away after a life-long service and commitment to freedom of South Africa and Africa. Cde OR, as he was affectionately known was born in Bizana, Eastern Cape in 1917, went on to study BSc at Fort Hare University in 1941, but was expelled for his political activities before he completed his degree, and went on to become a teacher of mathematics. He was a founder of the ANC Youth League formed in 1944,



becoming its first secretary and was elected onto the NEC of the ANC in 1948. OR played a critical role in the mass defiance campaigns of the 1950s, was elected as ANC deputy president in 1958 and after the Sharpeville massa-

cre he was tasked to establish the ANC's exiled wing, a role he played with distinction and dedication until the unbanning of the ANC in 1990. The ANC's Political School launched on 12 April 2019 is named in his honour.



INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

18–24 April 2026

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



18 April

International Day of Monuments and Sites

International Day for Monuments and Sites, also known as World Heritage Day is annually observed across the globe on April 18 to create global awareness and honour the richness of archaeological, architectural and historic properties that connect us to our past. The day also reminds us to implement measures to protect them so that future generations can also witness them and embrace the rich heritage. In South Africa, after 1994, we have tried to ensure that the history of the majority, including



the history of the liberation struggle, is commemorated, but over the last while we've seen an increasing decay of these important heritage sites or monuments. The 2026 theme for International Day of Monuments and Sites is ***Emergency Response for Living Heritage in contexts of Conflicts and Disasters***. This year's theme highlights the need to strengthen emergency response as part of the disaster risk management cycle in order to build resilience, safeguard living heritage and the communities that sustain it.

19 April

World Hemophilia Day

Hemophilia is a very rare disease where a person's blood does not clot due to the absence of the necessary blood-clotting proteins. They therefore bleed for a long time and this can become uncontrollable if it's a large injury. It is particularly a concern if the bleeding happens internally, because it can damage organs and become life-threatening. The disease is a genetic disease and is treatable.

20 April

World Chinese Language Day

The United Nations has 6 official languages – Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Since 2010, each of them had their own days when the UN and its affiliates would promote multiculturalism and cross cultural understanding by showcasing the rich history and literary culture of each language. Chinese Language Day is celebrated on 20 April each year, in honour of Cangjie, an ancient legend credited for inventing Chinese script. Mandarin and Cantonese are spoken Chinese dialects, with over 1 billion Chinese speakers in the world. It is one of the oldest written languages in the world with around 49,000 characters in the alphabet. To read a newspaper, you only need to know 2-3000!

21 April

World Creativity and Innovation Day



Creativity and innovation, at both the individual and group levels, have become the true wealth of nations in the 21st century, according to the findings of the special edition of the Creative Economy Report *“Widening local development pathways”*. The day celebrates the importance of the Creative industries – which includes audiovisual products, design, new media, performing arts, publishing and visual arts – and its role in job creation and development. According to UNESCO, the sector accounts for close to 29.5 million jobs worldwide.

22 April

Mother Earth Day

International Mother Earth Day is celebrated to remind each of us that the Earth and its ecosystems provide us with life and sustenance. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about environmental protection and sustainability, recognising the need to protect Earth’s ecosystems to ensure hu-



man livelihoods and combat climate change. International Mother Earth Day is a global observance that promotes environmental protection and highlights the interconnectedness of all living things. It serves as a time to address challenges like climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. The theme for Earth Day 2026 is *Our Power, Our Planet*, reflecting current global economic, environmental, and civic conditions.

22 April

International Girls in ICT Day

Across the world, according to the ITU, although *“girls across the world tend to outperform boys in reading and writing skills, they continue to be under-represented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)...International Girls in ICT Day, we build awareness about the gender digital divide, support technology education and skills training, and encourage more girls and young women to actively pursue careers in STEM.”* According to UN Women *“With technology playing a role in all kinds of careers, from art and history to law, primary teaching and graphic design, learning tech skills at a young age will set girls up for economic independence. And, the ICT sector needs more girls and women.”*

23 April

World Book and Copyright Day

The day focusses on the importance of books and reading, with celebrations across the world on the magical power of books – a link between the past and the future, a bridge between generations and across cultures. On this occasion, UNESCO and the International organisations representing the three major sectors of the book industry – publishers, booksellers and libraries. It is an asymbolic date in world literature. It is the date on which several prominent authors, William Shakespeare, Miguel Cervantes and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega all died.