



ANC TODAY

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Conversations *with the* President



We must defend and build democracy across the world

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

AS we prepare for **Freedom Day** on **27 April**, we reflect on our journey to deepen democracy and advance human rights for all.

Thirty years after we adopted our new Constitution, South African society remains grounded in a culture of human rights, the rule of law and the expression of people's will through regular elections.

What we have built and continue to build in this country is distinct. This places a responsibility on South Africa as an active member of the international community to advance our constitutional values beyond our

borders.

This is why I was proud to represent democratic South Africa at the 4th meeting of the *'In Defence of Democracy'* initiative in Barcelona, Spain this past weekend.

The initiative was launched by Brazil and Spain in 2024 to confront the threat posed to democratic institutions by extremism, polarisation, disinformation and other forms of intolerance. This initiative, which brings together countries from across the world, has become especially critical at this time.

In many places, democracy is under threat. The principles of

solidarity, cooperation and friendship are being challenged by the resurgence of narrow nationalism, prejudice and intolerance. Conflicts and wars rage across the globe. Some of these are linked to battles over resources, while others have their origins in colonial-era divisions shaped by violent conquest.

At the gathering in Barcelona, I said that we cannot allow ourselves to be bullied into silence when the dignity and human rights of others are being trampled on.

We made a call for the United Nations to reassert itself in global affairs. For democratic values to thrive, all institutions of

global governance need to be reformed so that all the countries and peoples of the world are represented. It has become clear that bodies like the UN Security Council are powerless to intervene in conflicts and prevent genocide.

The gulf of inequality within and among nations is a serious challenge to democracy. The laws, rules and institutions that support democracy must ensure that people's lives are improved. All people must have an equal opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect them.

That is why we called on leaders to support the establishment of an International Panel on Inequality, which will evaluate alternative policies for addressing inequality to inform governments, policy makers and the international community.

The establishment of the panel was one of the recommendations of the groundbreaking

global inequality report produced by a committee of independent experts that South Africa commissioned during its G20 Presidency.

The *'In Defence of Democracy'* initiative is aligned with our foreign policy and we are committed to supporting its work.

The erosion of democracy in other parts of the world affects South Africa too. Our economy and society feel the effects of conflicts beyond borders, intensified geopolitical tensions and the weaponisation of trade, foreign direct investment and aid.

The erosion of democracy has contributed to mistrust of the very values of equality, human rights and freedoms that characterise progressive societies. This mistrust is evident even in our own country.

As we mark Freedom Day next week, let us recommit ourselves to defend and strengthen our

democracy.

We must continue to work together to overcome the challenges of poverty, inequality and underdevelopment, which undermine our democratic gains. We must not go the way of societies that have lost faith in democracy and that are increasingly anchored in the rule of the strong and the erosion of human rights.

Our experience with building a united nation from a deeply fractured past means that we must cherish our democracy and be part of the struggle to defend democratic values across the globe.

The defence of democracy is gathering momentum. It is gaining more and more support as leaders, governments, social movements and citizens realise what is at stake – and, like us, demonstrate that they are prepared to do something about it.





MEDIA STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE **SPECIAL NEC DECISION REGARDING THE SACP RESOLUTION TO CONTEST ELECTIONS**

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress convened a Special National Executive Committee, on the 10th of April 2026, at a decisive moment in the life of our movement and our country, bringing together leadership to reflect not only on organisational matters, but to reaffirm the historic mission of the ANC as the leader of society and the primary agent of transformation. This moment demands not only political clarity, but organisational discipline and a firm commitment to implementation, as the movement continues to navigate a complex domestic and global environment while remaining anchored in its historic responsibility to advance the interests of the people of South Africa.

Guided by the mandate of the 5th National General Council, the NEC deliberated with unity and strategic focus, reaching considered positions on key organisational and political matters, including developments within the Alliance. In this regard, the NEC reaffirmed that the Constitution of the ANC remains the supreme organisational instrument governing the rights, duties and conduct of all members, and that its provisions must be applied consistently, fairly and without exception.

The NEC's deliberations took place against the backdrop of a historic relationship between the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP), forged over

decades of struggle and rooted in a shared commitment to the National Democratic Revolution. This alliance has delivered significant gains for the people of South Africa, including the expansion of basic services, social protection, democratic rights and economic inclusion. At the same time, the movement has acknowledged persistent challenges, inequality, unemployment, governance weaknesses and declining public confidence, which have contributed to the electoral setback of 2024.

It is within this context that the NEC considered the implications of the SACP's resolution to contest elections independently, a position adopted at its 2022 National Congress and reaffirmed

in 2024. The ANC has, over an extended period, engaged the SACP and other Alliance partners in an effort to preserve unity and avoid fragmentation of progressive forces. However, these engagements did not yield consensus, and the SACP has proceeded with preparations to contest elections, including participation in by-elections.

The NEC noted with concern that this development risks fragmenting the motive forces of the revolution, weakening the Alliance, and undermining the broader transformation agenda at a time when the democratic movement faces both internal weaknesses and coordinated external pressures.

Experience from recent by-elections confirms that independent contestation introduces direct political competition with the ANC, creating confusion among supporters and divisions within communities.

The Special NEC Decision

At the centre of its deliberations, the Special NEC took a firm and unambiguous decision to provide organisational clarity, discipline and strategic direction ahead

of the 2026 Local Government Elections.

The NEC reaffirmed that the ANC Constitution explicitly recognises dual membership within the Alliance, including membership of the SACP, and that members who hold such affiliation enjoy full rights and are subject to the same duties as all ANC members. This principle must be upheld without discrimination or selective application, as unity, discipline and organisational cohesion remain central to the strength of the movement.

At the same time, the NEC reaffirmed that the ANC Constitution is explicit in regulating conduct during elections, providing that no member may stand for election, campaign or canvass in opposition to a candidate endorsed by the ANC. This provision applies without exception and constitutes a binding organisational rule that ensures coherence and discipline in the electoral arena.

In line with this constitutional framework, the NEC has reaffirmed that all members of the ANC are obligated to campaign for the ANC and its candidates in all elections. This obligation is

binding on all members, including those who hold dual membership with the SACP.

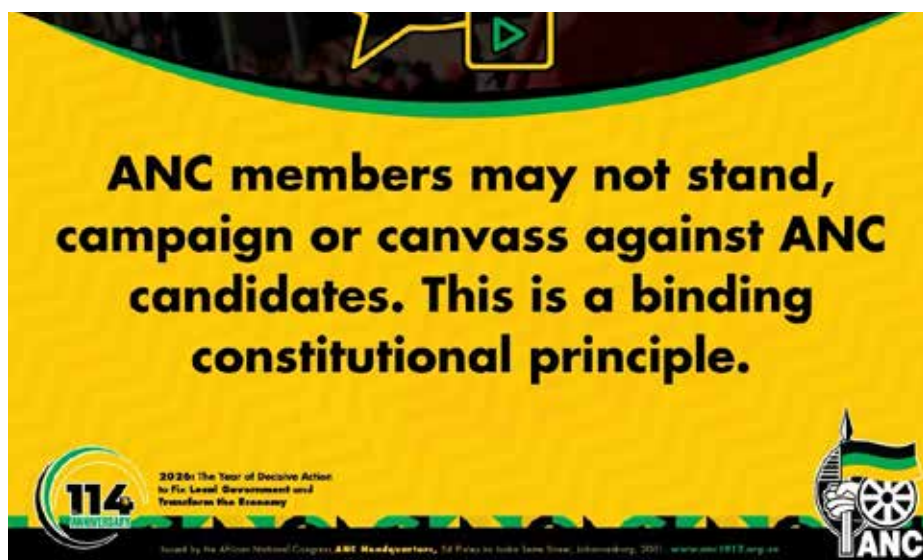
The NEC therefore clarified that the decision by the SACP to contest elections independently carries clear organisational consequences. These include that the SACP will not participate in ANC election structures, processes, campaign activities or candidate lists, and that all ANC members are required to act in full compliance with the Constitution.

To ensure clarity, consistency and discipline across the movement, the NEC has directed that:

- All ANC members, including those serving in leadership structures and public office, must declare whether they will campaign for the ANC or any other political formation.
- Failure to do so will be interpreted as a commitment to campaign for the ANC in accordance with the Oath of Membership.
- Any conduct that undermines the ANC's electoral campaign will attract immediate organisational action to safeguard the integrity and cohesion of the movement.
- The Secretary General has been mandated to communicate this position as a directive to all structures and members of the organisation, ensuring full organisational alignment as the ANC prepares for the upcoming electoral cycle.

Political Context and Strategic Imperative

The NEC located this decision within the broader strategic terrain facing the movement. The fragmentation of progressive forces, combined with the proliferation of political parties and



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intensified anti-transformation narratives, poses a real risk of further weakening the democratic movement below its current electoral base.

The 2026 Local Government Elections are therefore a critical moment to defend and consolidate the gains of democracy, rebuild public confidence, and reassert the leadership of the ANC among the people. The movement calls on all its members to remain focused on improving service delivery, accelerating economic transformation, engaging communities directly, and mobilising voters across the country.

Commitment to the Alliance

Despite the current challenges, the ANC reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Revolutionary Alliance as the most effective vehicle to advance the interests of the South African people and the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution.

The African National Congress emphasises that the Alliance is a product of a shared history of struggle forged in the trenches and crucible of revolution consolidated through decades of joint programmatic engagement in pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution. It is an alliance shaped by a common revolutionary programme, grounded in a shared outlook informed by Marxist-Leninist tools of analysis of race, class, and gender.

This Revolution has been sustained by generations of leaders from President Gumede, Dr Xuma, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, Chief Albert Luthuli, Moses Kotane, Oliver Tambo, Moses Mabhida, to Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo,



Ruth First, Chris Hani, Thabo Mbeki and Charles Nqakula, who understood that the unity of the motive forces of the revolution is indispensable to the advance towards a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

The ANC remains in alliance with the SACP, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), each an independent organisation with its own constitution, membership and programmes. This Alliance is founded on a common commitment to the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution to resolve the interrelated contradictions of national oppression, class exploitation and gender inequality and the strategic imperative to unite the broadest possible cross-section of South Africans, particularly the motive forces, behind a programme of radical socio-economic transformation and the

building of a National Democratic Society.

The Alliance is experiencing a difficult moment, but its renewal and reconfiguration remain central to the long-term project of building a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

Conclusion

The Special NEC decision marks a moment of organisational clarity, unity of purpose and strategic discipline. The ANC will approach the 2026 Local Government Elections focused, united and determined to defend, consolidate and advance the gains of freedom.

All ANC members are called upon to remain disciplined, rooted among the people, and committed to ensuring that the movement continues to serve as the primary agent of transformation and a trusted vehicle for a better life for all.

MEDIA STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ON **ACCELERATED SERVICE DELIVERY INTERVENTIONS ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA**

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

 On the 15th of September 2025, the African National Congress convened a historic **Councillors Roll-Call** in Soweto, bringing together 4,929 ward and proportional representation councillors to reflect on the state of local government and recommit to the constitutional mandate of delivering services to our people. It was at this Roll-Call that the ANC adopted an accelerated six-pillar Local Government Action Plan (LGAP) to respond decisively to the concerns raised by communities and the findings of oversight institutions.

Today, we present an update covering the period from 15 September 2025 to 19 April 2026. This report reflects the first six-month scorecard review of the implementation of the Local Gov-

ernment Action Plan. It provides a structured account of progress made, interventions undertaken, and systems established to improve the functioning of municipalities across the country.

This six-month review consolidates inputs from multiple levels of the organisation and government. It incorporates reports from provincial and municipal interventions, engagements with metropolitan municipalities, findings from councillor performance reviews, and insights from the ongoing work of the NEC Local Government Intervention Team. It is further informed by broader government processes aimed at reforming and strengthening the local government system.

Importantly, this is not a report of

intentions. It is an account of implementation. It reflects the work that has been undertaken on the ground, the interventions that are being driven to stabilise municipalities, and the systems that have been put in place to ensure accountability and measurable progress.

Eight Cabinet-prioritised municipalities have been placed under structured turnaround programmes, each supported by Municipal Service Improvement Plans with clear targets, timelines and monitoring systems. These interventions have already stabilised governance in six of these municipalities, restoring administrative functionality and refocusing operations on core services such as water, electricity, roads and sanitation.



At the time of the last submission from Eskom, municipal debt to Eskom at approximately R110 billion. At the same time, 71 municipalities are participating in the Municipal Debt Relief (MDR) programme. However, only 11 municipalities are currently compliant, representing just 1.5% of the total exposure. In parallel, 13 of the most significant defaulters are being addressed through PAJA processes, while 7 municipalities have submitted council resolutions as part of the required governance steps.

Some municipalities that have qualified for potential write-offs have been inconsistent in meeting programme conditions and may therefore not realise the full benefit of the relief over the three-year period. While the programme is well-intentioned, only a limited number of municipalities are likely to realise its full benefit, as this depends on sustained discipline, proper ring-fencing of revenue, and the consistent payment of current accounts.

Metropolitan municipalities are the engine of the national economy. Our eight metros house 62% of the population and generate over two-thirds of the national GDP. Yet, they face severe operational challenges. Recent assessments show metro water losses averaging 34.6% and electricity losses at 20.9%, both significantly outside acceptable benchmark ranges.

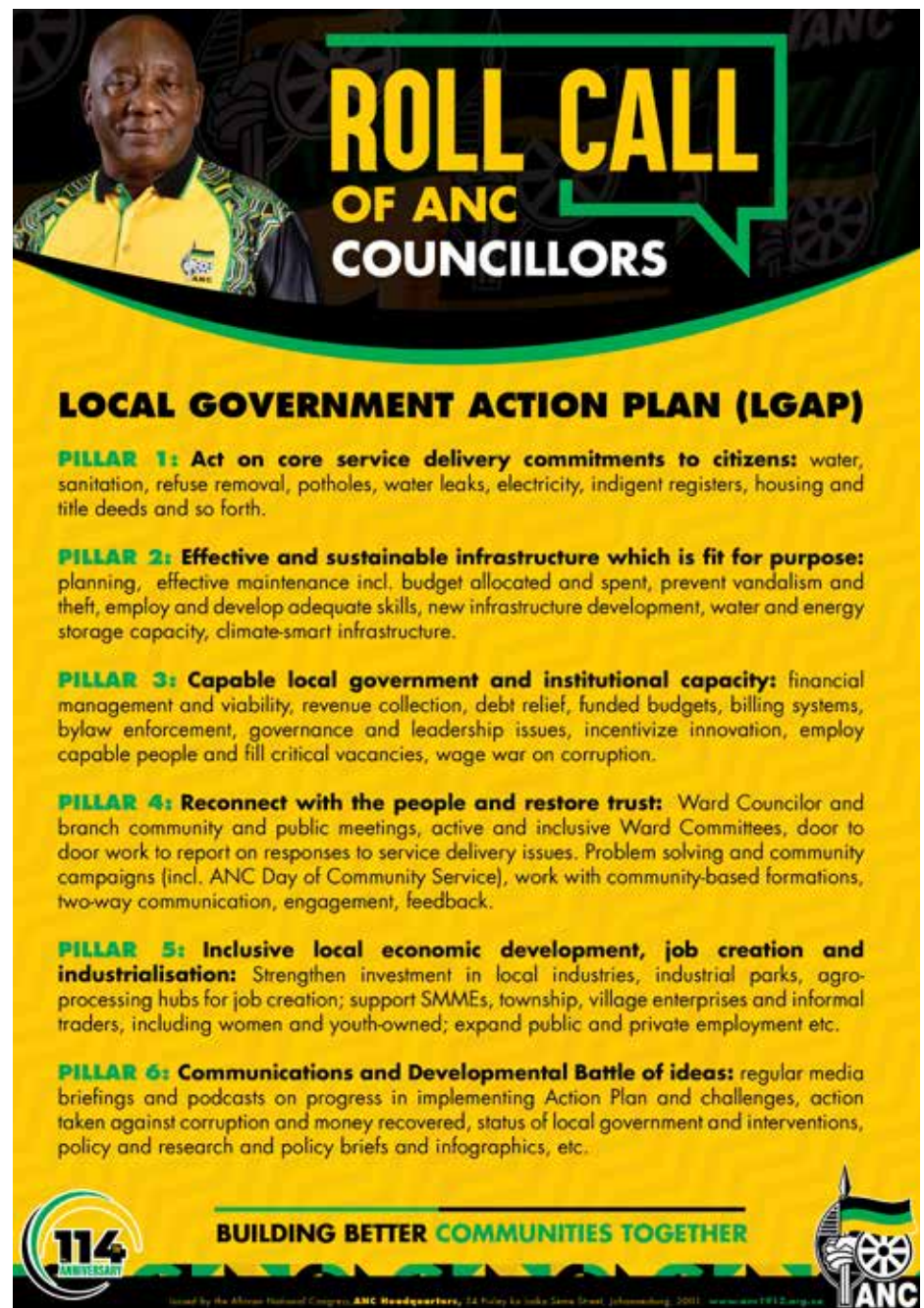
To arrest this, government is implementing the Metro Trading Services Reform (MTSR), linked to a R54 billion reform framework over six years. All metros are bound to eight minimum commitments due by the hard deadline of 30 June 2026. Future grant transfers are tied to compliance

with those commitments. The message is clear: public money must support reform, performance, and accountability.

This work has been reinforced through the establishment of Service Delivery War Rooms across all nine provinces, supported by a National Rapid Response capability that has resolved more than 320 high-priority service delivery incidents. These interventions have enabled the state to respond with urgency and co-

ordination, ensuring that crises are addressed in real time and that service delivery is stabilised where it is most at risk. The intervention in Knysna, where a potential Day Zero scenario was averted through the deployment of 122 emergency water collection points, stands as a clear demonstration of what coordinated state action can achieve.

In the area of core service delivery, every ANC-led municipality is implementing ward-level



ROLL CALL OF ANC COUNCILLORS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN (LGAP)

PILLAR 1: Act on core service delivery commitments to citizens: water, sanitation, refuse removal, potholes, water leaks, electricity, indigent registers, housing and title deeds and so forth.

PILLAR 2: Effective and sustainable infrastructure which is fit for purpose: planning, effective maintenance incl. budget allocated and spent, prevent vandalism and theft, employ and develop adequate skills, new infrastructure development, water and energy storage capacity, climate-smart infrastructure.

PILLAR 3: Capable local government and institutional capacity: financial management and viability, revenue collection, debt relief, funded budgets, billing systems, bylaw enforcement, governance and leadership issues, incentivize innovation, employ capable people and fill critical vacancies, wage war on corruption.

PILLAR 4: Reconnect with the people and restore trust: Ward Councilor and branch community and public meetings, active and inclusive Ward Committees, door to door work to report on responses to service delivery issues. Problem solving and community campaigns (incl. ANC Day of Community Service), work with community-based formations, two-way communication, engagement, feedback.

PILLAR 5: Inclusive local economic development, job creation and industrialisation: Strengthen investment in local industries, industrial parks, agro-processing hubs for job creation; support SMMEs, township, village enterprises and informal traders, including women and youth-owned; expand public and private employment etc.

PILLAR 6: Communications and Developmental Battle of ideas: regular media briefings and podcasts on progress in implementing Action Plan and challenges, action taken against corruption and money recovered, status of local government and interventions, policy and research and policy briefs and infographics, etc.

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BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

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turnaround plans with defined minimum response standards, ensuring that the delivery of water, sanitation, electricity, roads, refuse removal and housing is structured, measurable and accountable.

In municipalities such as Enoch Mgijima, all ward committees are now fully operational, supported by structured oversight systems, while the installation of 15,000 smart meters has generated a R36 million revenue improvement in a single month and enabled full utilisation of infrastructure grants.

In Mamusa, infrastructure grant expenditure has improved significantly, with major water projects nearing completion, while similar interventions are underway in municipalities across the country, including Knysna, Dr JS Moroka, Msunduzi and the City of Johannesburg.

In electricity, the implementation of the Load Reduction Elimination Programme represents one of the most significant interventions in recent years, with load reduction already eliminated in the Northern Cape and Western Cape and progressively reduced across all remaining provinces.

Over 140 feeders have been restored, supported by the installation of more than 380,000 smart meters, including 190,000 in load reduction areas, enabling targeted enforcement and protecting compliant households from blanket interruptions. Microgrid solutions have been introduced in areas such as Evaton and Madimbo, while structured engagements with communities across multiple provinces have resulted in the halting of load reduction in affected areas, demonstrating



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN
ROADS, TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS OUTCOMES

31 passenger rail corridors have been restored and 68 stations upgraded supporting 450,000 daily commuter trips.

2024: The Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy

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the effectiveness of combining technical solutions with direct community engagement.

In transport and infrastructure, progress has been driven through coordinated investment and implementation across all spheres of government. SANRAL has rehabilitated approximately 3,200 kilometres of national roads, provinces have upgraded 5,800 kilometres of provincial roads, and municipalities have improved more than 12,000 kilometres of local roads, restoring connectivity and enabling economic activity.

Passenger rail recovery has seen the restoration of 31 corridors and the upgrading of 68 stations, increasing daily commuter capacity by approximately 450,000 trips, while Transnet has stabilised freight operations, achiev-

ing an 8% increase in volumes, supporting industrial activity and export performance.

In water and sanitation, interventions have been intensified through direct operational support by the Department of Water and Sanitation, which has deployed technical teams to municipalities experiencing severe service delivery challenges. These interventions are focused on restoring functionality in wastewater treatment works, repairing pump stations, reducing leakages and strengthening bulk supply systems, while improving operational capacity within municipalities.

The President has established The Presidential Water Task Team to address the critical water challenges and make interventions to ensure collaborative governance and oversee

infrastructure repairs. During the recent water crisis in Johannesburg, coordinated intervention by national government stabilised the system through a combination of leak repairs, pressure management and improved operational coordination, preventing collapse and restoring supply reliability. In Matjhabeng, the completion of 22 water and sanitation infrastructure projects has improved system performance and reliability, while in Knysna, groundwater integration and wastewater improvements have strengthened resilience and reduced environmental risks.

Nationally, more than 420 boreholes have been drilled or refurbished, 67 water treatment works upgraded, and over 1,200 kilometres of reticulation networks repaired, improving water access for approximately 2.8 mil-

lion households. In infrastructure financing and delivery, national government has committed R54 billion over three years to repair water and electricity infrastructure in major metros, while 13 major water infrastructure projects are under active implementation, including the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and the uMkhomazi Water Project.

The establishment of the Emfuleni Water and Sanitation Special Purpose Vehicle represents a new institutional model for delivery, linking infrastructure investment with governance reform and operational control, and is already driving progress in the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure.

Municipal finance has been stabilised through the implementation of Eskom debt relief amounting to R55.3 billion for 71 municipal-

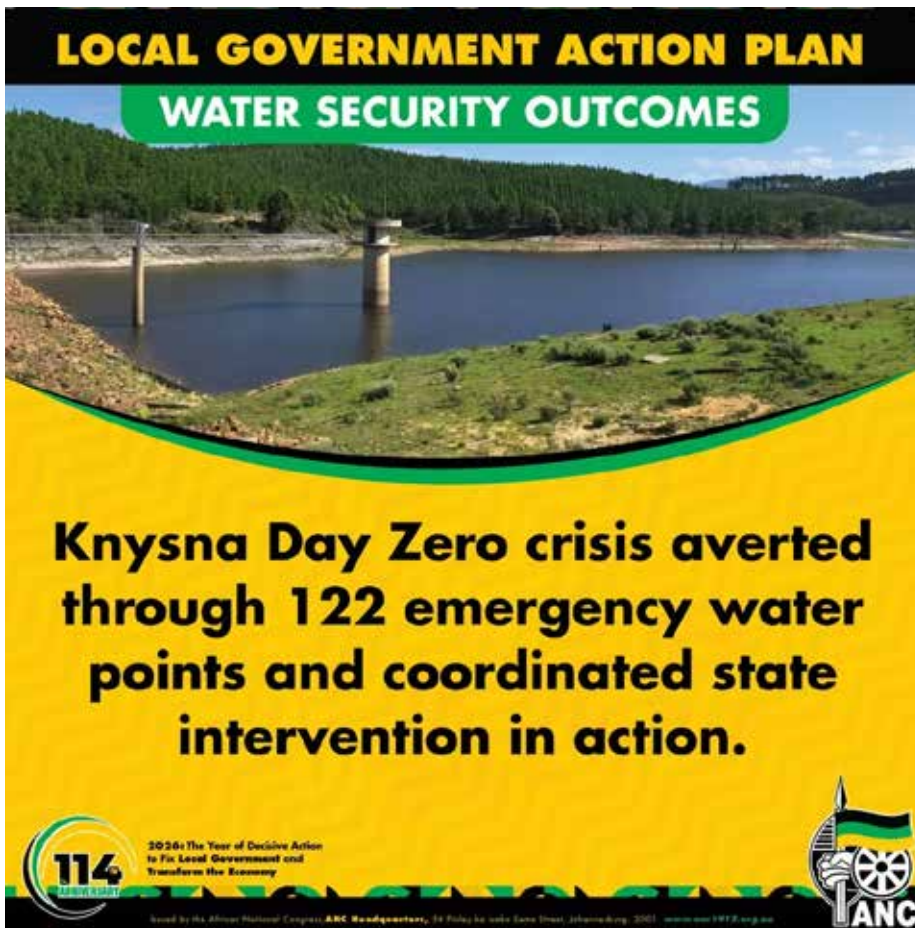
ities, with successive tranches already delivered, restoring financial viability and enabling re-investment into service delivery and infrastructure.

The African National Congress notes the ongoing and constructive interventions undertaken to address the financial and operational challenges facing municipalities in relation to electricity distribution, particularly the growing debt owed to Eskom. Central to this intervention is the Distribution Agency Agreement (DAA), a strategic partnership between the Ministry of Electricity and Energy and Eskom, designed to stabilise municipal electricity systems while restoring revenue collection and service delivery.

Through the DAA, Eskom is empowered to install smart meters, formalise previously illegal or unregistered connections, enhance revenue collection, operate and maintain electricity infrastructure, and crucially, transfer skills through the training and development of municipal employees to ensure long-term sustainability.

The programme is already being implemented in municipalities such as Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality, Emfuleni Local Municipality, and Merafong City Local Municipality, where early signs point to improved operational efficiency, enhanced revenue streams, and more reliable electricity services. Engagements with additional municipalities are ongoing, reflecting a broader commitment to restoring stability, strengthening local government capacity, and ensuring that communities receive consistent and quality basic services.

Governance interventions have resulted in over 180 compliance



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN
WATER SECURITY OUTCOMES

Knysna Day Zero crisis averted through 122 emergency water points and coordinated state intervention in action.

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actions, including Section 139 interventions and administrative stabilisation, while improved audit outcomes in municipalities such as Mbombela, Mamusa and Bela-Bela demonstrate the impact of capable and accountable leadership.

Institutional reform is being advanced through the finalisation of the White Paper on Local Government 2026 and the implementation of a professionalisation framework, supported by the filling of critical vacancies and training programmes that are strengthening capacity within municipalities and ensuring that improvements are sustained over time.

The reconnection of the state with the people remains central to the work of the ANC, with structured community engagement programmes ensuring that service delivery challenges are addressed directly and that accountability is reinforced. More than 4,500 ward committee meetings have been convened, supported by a national Councillor Performance Review covering over 3,000 councillors, ensuring that public representatives are held accountable for delivery and performance.

Local economic development has been repositioned as a central driver of transformation, with the National LED Summit adopting a binding framework for re-engineering local economies, unlocking more than R18 billion in pipeline investments and supporting over 6,500 small enterprises, strengthening township, rural and industrial economies and advancing inclusive growth.

Communication and accountability have been strengthened through the establishment of the



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN
GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL RECOVERY

8 Municipalities are under turnaround plans, with 6 already stabilised and refocused on service delivery.

2026: The Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy

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ANC Service Delivery and Corruption Hotline, supported by weekly monitoring systems that track and resolve community-reported issues, ensuring that the state remains responsive and accountable to the people.

As part of social compacting and ensuring our traditional leadership play a critical role in leading and the development of our people at the local level, reforms are made are being made to strengthen their participation through engagement within their organised formations.

The progress achieved over this period is real, measurable and grounded in the lived experience of communities, reflecting a state that is increasingly focused on implementation, coordination and outcomes. At the same time, we are clear that the work ahead

requires sustained effort to accelerate delivery, deepen impact and ensure consistency across all municipalities.

The African National Congress remains resolute in its commitment to building a capable, developmental state that delivers services, restores dignity and advances a better life for all, recognising that the unity of the Alliance, the effectiveness of the state and the lived experience of the people are fundamentally interconnected.

Through disciplined governance, coordinated intervention and measurable delivery, the ANC continues to act on its responsibility to the people of South Africa, ensuring that progress is not only achieved, but sustained, deepened and experienced in every community across the country.

United in solidarity

Speech by **SNUKI ZIKALALA, ANC Veterans League President**

at the **Hands off Cuba protest – on the 65th anniversary of the Bay of Pigs**

17 April 2026

IT is a measure of how far we have come, but also how far we still need to go to defeat imperialism, that we stand here today to yet once more call for Hands Off Cuba in the face of intensifying threats by the United States.

In 1961, the valiant Cubans defeated the Americans at the Bay of Pigs. During the wars of African liberation, it was the Cubans who played a decisive role in supporting us, which led to freedom in Algeria, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Namibia, and, of course, South Africa.

It was the Cubans who fought side by side with the MPLA, SWAPO and the MK that defeated the apartheid forces at Cuito Cannavale, paving the way for Namibian and then South African liberation. As even the South African apartheid forces acknowledged, the Cuban military intervention was a *“blinding and deafening strike, from an enemy that is strong and clever”*.

The Cubans did more than support our armed struggle. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of June 16th, we should also acknowledge the role that they played in educating thousands of young South Africans – especially from the June 16th generation.



By 1988, 16 000 students were educated on the Isle of Youth, as the school dedicated to educating students from Africa became known.

When Mandela was released from jail, the first country he visited was Cuba. This was out of an acknowledgement that, without the intervention of the Cubans in Southern Africa, our liberation would have been delayed – as would have been his time in jail!

Fidel Castro said the struggle for liberation in Africa against so-called white invincibility, colonialism and imperialism is *“the most*

beautiful cause of mankind”. But Cuban support for our liberation was also strategic, as fighting the US in the developing world weakened US influence on the African continent.

Robust internationalism was part of Cuba’s strategy for survival. That’s why we need to return that solidarity. As Che Guevara said in 1965: *“A victory by any country over imperialism is our victory, just as any country’s defeat is a defeat of all of us”*.

The Cuban revolution is under threat, and the Cuban people are suffering, experiencing complete



blackouts, a lack of critical medicines and a lack of sufficient food or transport for food to get to people's tables.

And it is not only the Cubans who are suffering. The Trump regime has put undue pressure on Caribbean and Latin American countries to send thousands of Cuban doctors' home, jeopardising health care to the most vulnerable of their citizens.

This is because Cuba, in an innovative way, has built a global medical network of more than 50 000 professionals who deliver health care and generate significant foreign revenue to sustain its economy under the US embargo.

And the prospects for Cuba, as well as other countries that have resisted the machinations of Donald Trump, turn their countries into coastal resorts for his hotels, casinos and golf courses to be frequented by drug lords, warlords and Jeffrey Epstein types is real. Is this not what the Board of Peace wants to do in Gaza?

We must act in solidarity with

the Cuban people, together with others who are facing the brunt of intensified imperialism and the needs of the venal Military Industrial Complex.

They, like the people of Palestine, are demonstrating the same steadfastness and perseverance, '*sumuud*', that the Palestinian people have been displaying. We must salute their bravery. And salute the organisations of civil society around the world that have rallied to support the Cuban

people and broken the blockade, including through flotillas.

The demonstration at the US embassy shows that unity in solidarity is possible. We, as the Veterans League of the ANC, stand united with all other progressive forces in the fight against imperialism and in support of the right of people worldwide to self-determination and sovereignty. We also support the fundraising efforts for vital foodstuffs, medicine and solar panels.



Oliver Tambo:

The Quiet Architect of Liberation and the Moses of a Nation in Exile

■ By **ANDILE LUNGISA**

PRESIDENT Oliver Reginald Tambo stands in the moral imagination of South Africa like a figure carved from both scripture and reason, at once prophetic and precise, a man who moved through history with the quiet authority of conviction rather than the noise of spectacle. To liken him to Moses is not mere rhetorical flourish, it is to recognize in him a leader who did not simply

resist oppression, but who carried a people through the long wilderness of exile, sustaining hope when the promised land seemed impossibly distant.

Like Moses, President Tambo's greatness was not in dramatic conquest but in endurance, an austere, disciplined fidelity to a vision larger than himself. He led not from the immediacy of the homeland, but from the disloca-

tion of exile, where the struggle risked becoming abstract, where distance could dull urgency. Yet under his stewardship, the African National Congress did not dissipate into nostalgia or factionalism. It matured into a formidable moral and political force, its cause translated into a language the world could not ignore. President Tambo understood, perhaps more deeply than many of his contemporaries, that liberation in the twentieth century required not only courage but legitimacy, an appeal to universal principles that could bind disparate nations into solidarity.

His intellectual formation was as rare as it was generative. As a trained lawyer, he possessed the discipline of argument and the instinct for justice. As a theologian, he carried within him a metaphysical commitment to the dignity of all human beings. As a mathematician, he cultivated a mind attuned to structure, proportion, and the elegant complexity of systems. These were not discrete identities but interwoven strands that shaped his method.

Where others might have seen only the crude binaries of oppressor and oppressed, President Tambo perceived the layered intricacies of the human condition and consequently human society,





the interplay of power, fear, ideology, and history. He resisted the seduction of simplification. His politics were not built on slogans but on synthesis.

This intellectual temperament gave him little patience for emotionalism untethered from strategy. He understood that indignation, however justified, was not a sufficient instrument of liberation. It had to be disciplined, translated into institutions, alliances, and long-term planning. His leadership style reflected this – measured, deliberate, and

often understated. Yet beneath this restraint laid an unyielding moral core, shaped profoundly by his Christian faith. For President Tambo, the struggle against apartheid was not merely political, it was ethical in the deepest sense, a confrontation with a system that denied the *imago Dei*, the inherent worth placed in every human being. His belief in dignity was not selective, it extended even to those who upheld the system he opposed. This refusal to dehumanize his adversaries would later prove foundational to the possibility of reconciliation.

Perhaps nowhere was his strategic acumen more rigorously tested than in navigating the geopolitical realities of the Cold War. The Soviet Union emerged as the principal source of material, financial, and military support for the ANC and its armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, particularly from the 1960s onward when the movement was forced into exile. This support included military training, logistical assistance, and diplomatic backing within international forums. President Tambo thus operated within a global matrix in which alignment, or the perception of alignment, with the Eastern Bloc was both a practical necessity and a political liability. It is within this context that one may reasonably argue that he held an implicit sympathy for certain aspects of the socialist and communist systems that sustained the liberation movement in its most vulnerable years.

Yet Tambo's political imagination resisted reduction to Cold War binaries. While he maintained close relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist states, he was equally attentive to preserving the ANC's broad ideological character as a national liberation



movement in other words it was a united front. This distinction was not merely semantic, it was strategic. In Western capitals, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, the ANC was frequently depicted as a proxy of Soviet expansionism. President Tambo understood that such perceptions, if left unchallenged, would constrain the movement's ability to mobilize global support.

Accordingly, he undertook a sustained diplomatic effort to reframe the struggle against apartheid in terms that transcended ideological divisions. Engaging with a wide spectrum of political actors, including those within conservative establishments, he emphasized that apartheid constituted a fundamental violation of human rights and democratic principles rather than an extension of Cold War rivalry. His engagement with the United States during the Reagan era is particularly illustrative. Despite the administration's initial policy of "*constructive engagement*" with the apartheid regime, President Tambo and his colleagues worked assiduously to influence public opinion, congressional leaders, and civil society, thereby contributing to the eventual shift toward sanctions and increased pressure on Pretoria.

Through persistent diplomacy, careful messaging, and the cultivation of relationships across political divides, President Tambo and his colleagues managed to shift the discourse. They engaged not only with liberal and progressive activists but also with policymakers and opinion-makers within conservative circles, emphasizing that apartheid was not merely a domestic policy of a sovereign state but a moral aberration that destabilized the global order. The eventual imposition of



sanctions by the United States, despite initial resistance from the Reagan administration, was not a sudden moral awakening but the culmination of sustained pressure, much of it orchestrated under President Tambo's guidance. He understood that power yields not only to protest but to persuasion, not only to outrage but to argument.

In this, President Tambo revealed himself as an heir to the finest traditions of the Enlightenment, even as he remained deeply rooted in his African identity. He embodied the Enlightenment's faith in reason, its commitment to universal human rights, and its belief in the capacity of dialogue to transform political realities. Yet he did not adopt these values as a form of mimicry or assimilation. Rather, he inhabited them, reinterpreted them through the lived experience of colonial dispossession and racial oppression. He demonstrated that the ideals of liberty, equality, and dignity were not the exclusive inheritance of Europe but belonged to humanity as a whole.

His Africanness was not diminished by this inheritance; it was enriched. He stood as a bridge between intellectual traditions, showing that one could be fully African and fully engaged with

the philosophical currents that shaped the modern world. In him, the Enlightenment found not a disciple but a renewal, a reminder that its highest aspirations are realized not in abstraction but in the concrete struggles of oppressed peoples.

And so, President Oliver Tambo remains a figure of profound paradox and unity – a revolutionary who distrusted rhetoric, a theologian who embraced reason, a mathematician who navigated the immeasurable terrain of human suffering and hope.

Like Moses, he did not live to see the full realization of the freedom he helped to secure. But he carried his people to the threshold, sustained by a vision that transcended the contingencies of his time.

In the end, his legacy is not only in the institutions he helped to build or the victories he helped to secure. It is in the example he set that insists that leadership, at its highest, is an act of moral and visionary imagination disciplined by intellect. That justice requires both passion and patience. And that even in the darkest wilderness, it is possible to walk with quiet certainty toward a horizon shaped by dignity, reason, and the enduring possibility of human freedom.

Remembering O.R. Tambo, a Colossus Who Never Enjoyed Freedom

■ By **SELLO SHAI-MORULE**

AS we mark thirty-two years since the dawn of freedom in South Africa, it is starkly clear that total liberation remains an elusive dream for many of our people. It is my conviction that the National Democratic Society will be realized safely and with speed only through the collective efforts of the ANC, the SACP, COSATU, SANCO, and other progressive formations. This line draws on the alliance tradition because the NDR – National Democratic Revolution is not a solo project. Safely speaks to avoid counter-revolution, coups, and collapse. Together we need to address with urgency hunger, unemployment. This can't wait 30 more years.

Thinking about the SACP's decision to contest state power directly on its own ballot, a resolution which was taken at its 5th Special National Congress held in Boksburg in December 2024, I was at once reminded of the African proverb: *"If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together."* For the sake of our historic relationship, sealed in blood since 1921, I believed and wished that the SACP could rethink and review this drastic decision. In that moment I found myself singing alone: **"U-Tambo angalila, uma esibona sinje; U-Tambo angalila, uma esibona sinje."** Loosely translated: Tambo would cry, if he



sees us like this.

President Oliver Reginald Kaizana Tambo, a colossus of our liberation struggle, was born on 27 October 1917 and passed away on 24 April 1993, exactly a year before our freedom. A revolutionary of a rare breed, anti-apartheid politician and activist, he led the African National Congress as its President from 1967 to 1991. Though he did not live to witness the dawn of freedom, but his life's work made it possible. It was thirty-two years ago when Africa and the world joined the people of South Africa to shout in unison and declare: *"Free at Last."* The dream came true, a South African Dawn, Free at last, the words rose like smoke from the braziers of Sharpeville, the hostels of Boipatong, and from the cells of Robben Island where

the sea kept our secrets. Many of our seniors their hands still knew the shape of a passbook, their backs remembered the sjambok but fortunately we their offsprings walked to school without asking *"May I?"* of any man.

Our voices did not whisper, Free at last and yet the air was crowded. It was a moment full of joy and pain. A day we could hear Steve Biko breathing in a cell, Solomon Mahlangu singing on the gallows and Chris Hani's steps stop in the driveway at Dawn Park. People of Soweto, Alexandra, Giyani, Mahikeng, Mbombela, Ulundi, Kimberly, Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Nkantolo in Bizana could hear O.R. Tambo, our longest walker exhaling in Lusaka, a year too early to see the ballot they gave his life to print. These gallant fighters, they never tasted

this morning. They paid for it with exile, with gallows, with poison, with funerals banned and graves unmarked. So, this freedom is not empty. It is full of them. At last, we won, the CODESA tables have gone quiet, the ballot boxes have gone home but Madiba's cell key still hangs heavy in our conscience.

Freedom limps, it carries Khayelitsha on one hip and Sandton on the other. It wakes at 3am to ask if the Constitution still covers the child in Nkandla and the gogo in Mmamethlake village. We are Free at last, not because the past is gone, but because the future is no longer banned. Because Liliesleaf is now a museum, not a raid. Because June 16 is a school bell, not a gunshot. So, we stand, between the blue of sky and the green of land we can finally own, and we let the old fear slide off our shoulders like the rain off Madiba's statue at Union Buildings. We are Free At last for O.R., Chris, for those beloved who sleep in unmarked graves from Cradock to Vlakplaas. Now we must make it worthy of the dead who bought it for a living. Despite strides made, the promise of true freedom and equality still seems far off for many.

President Tambo never lived to enjoy the freedom he fought for. He was expelled from Fort Hare University in 1940 for a student strike, he co-founded the ANC Youth League with Mandela and Sisulu in 1944. He served as its first National Secretary and joined the NEC in 1948. On 21 March 1960, the ANC sent him into exile to lead the international campaign against apartheid. He left home, family, the country and never returned for 30 years. From exile he built an army of diplomats and seasoned cadres.

He attracted the best of a generation – amongst them Comrade Thabo Mbeki – to wage a noble crusade for our liberation.

He came home on 13 December 1990 after 30 years in exile, when the ANC was unbanned. That freedom was never given on a silver platter; it was won in struggle. A stroke in 1989 made it difficult for him to carry the movement's full weight. So, at the ANC's 48th National Conference in 1991, he handed the reins to President Nelson Mandela and became the ANC's first National Chairperson.

President Tambo died at the age of 75. His death came 14 days after Comrade Chris Hani's assassination and exactly one year before the 1994 general elections in

which President Nelson Mandela became first President of Democratic South Africa. As we celebrate "Freedom and the Rule of Law: Thirty Years of Democratic Citizenship" we remember President Tambo. During this "2026: The Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy", let us continue to remember O.R. Tambo and the many others who have left us. In their honour, let us vote with our feet for the ANC in the upcoming local government elections.

Sello Shai-Morule is an ANC Branch Chairperson of WARD 17 Branch in Mbombela Sub-Region, Ehlanzeni Region in Mpumalanga Province and a social activist. He writes in his personal capacity.

Remembering

President Oliver Reginald Tambo

"Oliver lived not because he could breathe.

He lived not because blood flowed through his veins...

Oliver lived because he had surrendered his very being to the people.

He lived because his very being embodied love, an idea, a hope, an aspiration, a vision."

- Nelson Mandela



Oliver Reginald Tambo
27 October 1917 - 24 April 1993



ANC vs SACP:

Applying Historical and Dialectical Methods to Resolve the Current Political Crisis

■ By **CHINA DODOVU**

THE turbulent relationship between the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), marked by the SACP's decision to contest the 2026 local government elections independently has not only caused a major rift in the long-standing Tripartite Alliance but also, it has profound negative implications for the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and for the future trajectory of South Africa.

The political contradictions between the two organisations are not new as their genesis started

as far back as 1927. Throughout history, the ANC, founded in 1912, and the SACP, formed 9 years later in 1921 always applied the dialectical approach conceptualised by the German philosopher, Friedrich Hegel that synthesises opposing viewpoints - thesis and antithesis into a new and more comprehensive solution (synthesis) rather than allowing them to remain in destructive conflict.

The first rupture between the two organisations started in 1927 after Josiah Gumede became ANC president. The conservative forces within the ANC which included

its founders and traditional chiefs bitterly opposed Gumede's leaning towards radical actions, believing that he was turning the ANC into a political front for the Communist International (Comintern) and the SACP, fiercely protesting that Gumede was not representing its policy.

The tensions worsened when the 6th Congress of the Comintern in 1928 gave a specific directive to the South African delegates to adopt the thesis of an Independent Black (Native) Republic which called for the right to self-determination through the complete overthrow of capitalism

and imperial domination and to assert the principle of Africa for Africans with full freedom and equality with other races and the right to govern South Africa.

The formation of the short-lived united, front-body called the League of African Rights (LAR) which Gumede became its president was also seen by the ANC as a way of extending the communists influence within its ranks. All these caused Gumede to be outvoted as ANC president in 1930. Elliot Tonjeni and Bransby Ndobe were part of the radical group which was supporting Gumede to retain the ANC presidency.

In 1930 Tonjeni and Ndobe were expelled from the ANC for aligning with the SACP, for promoting Bolshevik tendencies and for causing disunity in the ANC's Western Cape region led by Professor James Thaele. They later formed the Independent-ANC (I-ANC). The election of Dr Alfred Bitini Xuma as ANC president in 1940 ushered in a new political era after he inherited an organisation plagued by divisions and factionalism. Under him, the ANC began to reorganise itself by revitalising its moribund structures; admitted women within its ranks; formed its youth and women's leagues and began to work more closely with the SACP, putting behind the antagonistic relationship of the 1920s and 1930s.

After the ANC Youth League was formed in 1944, its leaders had a strained relationship with the SACP characterized by ideological conflict. The Africanist-driven ANCYL sought to establish African Nationalism as the core policy of the liberation struggle, often viewing the SACP with skepticism and suspicion.

Despite the early ideological friction and competition for influence, by the end of the decade, the Youth League, along with the ANC, worked more closely with the SACP with significant shift toward militant action against segregationist policies, characterized by the rise of urban working-class protest, industrial strikes and emergence of a new generation of leaders.

In the 1950s, the two organisations had a working relationship transiting from mutual suspicion to a close, strategic alliance. Despite facing many difficulties of disbandment, internal revolts, splits and expulsions, the flow of the 1950s' epochal events is a living proof of their alliance which fundamentally changed the course of history: the self-liquidation of the SACP before the Suppression of Communism Act was passed and its re-emergence in 1953; the 1952 Defiance Campaign; Congress Alliance formation and the Freedom Charter's adoption in 1955.

While the decade saw the ANC ascending into a paroxysm of ideological militancy and proudly

declaring itself a national revolutionary movement, some groups emerging from the ANC opposed its radical actions and accused it of communist influence. These included:

- Bafabegiya (1951): an ultra-leftist faction led by McDonald Maseko, Maruping Seperepere and Ellen Mola-po involved in secret intrigues and lured into its ranks the *"most courageous and heroic of ANC members who ostensibly felt betrayed by their leaders"*.
- National-Minded Bloc (1952): a group led by ANC's older generation and conservatives who mostly founded the ANC among them Selope Thema, Gaur Radebe, GR Baloyi and CS Ramohanoe.
- Liberal Party(1953): a party founded to promote nonracial democratic liberalism in opposition to white supremacist apartheid and was joined by prominent ANC members like Selby Msimang and Jordan Ngubane.
- Pan Africanist Congress (1959): formed after an Africanist group led by Robert Sobukwe, Potlako Leballo and



Nyathi Pokela broke away from the ANC, rejecting the multiracialist view of the Freedom Charter, arguing that it was a betrayal of the African people's aspirations.

During the 1960s, the ANC and SACP were at a low ebb, however, its leaders understood the necessity of forging alliance. Following the Sharpeville massacre which became a decisive turning point in South Africa's history, the ANC was also declared an illegal organisation by the apartheid regime and operated from exile for 30 years. As a result, the ANC together with the SACP shifted from non-violent protest to armed struggle and formed the military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Undoubtedly, the SACP, in its alliance with the ANC, has made an enormous contribution in South Africa's national liberation struggle. In 1962, it adopted a plan termed "**The Road to South African Freedom**", detailing proposals for building of a national democratic state which had the greatest influence on the ANC's ideology.

The SACP's programme developed a two-stage theory which proposed a first-stage National Democratic Revolution (NDR) to overthrow apartheid and establish a non-racial democracy, followed by a second-stage transition to socialism. The SACP also developed a political concept called "**Colonialism of a Special Type (CST)**" to describe the unique apartheid system where the "colonizer" (white minority) and "colonized" (black majority) lived in the same country rather than being separated by sea.

It was only in 1969 at the Morogoro Conference in Tanzania that the ANC adopted the SACP's plan



and a new Strategy Tactics as a foundational policy framework to guide its actions toward achieving the NDR, aimed at creating a non-racial, non-sexist, and democracy, applying four pillars of the revolutionary struggle. Despite the watershed resolutions taken at the Morogoro conference which included building strong alliance with SACP, a dissent faction called "**The Gang of Eight**" was formed within the ANC.

The group members were expelled in 1975 after protesting the 1969 Morogoro Conference decisions, which opened ANC membership to non-Africans and increased the SACP's influence. Undoubtedly, both the ANC and SACP have a deep, decades-long alliance forged in the struggle against apartheid. The "**Revolutionary Alliance**" or "**Tripartite Alliance**" as it is called, has been anchored in shared strategic goals, overlapping leadership, and joint participation in the struggle for national liberation.

The relationship between the two organisations which has stood

the test of time, is experiencing a profound, unprecedented crisis, arguably the most severe since 1994 after the advent of a new democratic order. The crisis is largely driven by the SACP's decision to contest the 2026 local government elections independently, breaking decades of tradition where it only fielded its members under the ANC's umbrella. Their relationship comes a long way with members as comrades-in-arms, and was forged in the struggle against apartheid, and today, on the terrain of governance.

Both organisations share common goals of fighting the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. The current leaders of both the ANC and SACP cannot destroy the historic alliance which was built through blood and sweat, life and limb. In applying the dialectical methods to resolve the crisis, the moral conduct and intellectual pedigree of leaders is required where they conduct themselves properly and respect each other and learn from the past experiences to resolve the current political crisis.

THE SACP AND ELECTIONS:

Is the Tripartite Alliance whole greater and better than the sum of its parts?

■ By **JOEL NETSHITENZHE**

THE South African Communist Party (SACP) has ultimately decided to operationalise its desire to contest elections as a separate entity. 'Ultimately' because the party has been inching towards this decision for years now. The matter was broached in the 2000s, with a reluctant Party leadership – under pressure from the membership – kicking the can shorter and shorter distances down the road.

At its 2007 Congress, the SACP had resolved to contest elections *'in the context of a reconfigured Alliance'* and mandated the Central Committee (CC) to examine how this would be done. This decision was not seriously pursued, and the subsequent 2012 Congress *'was not satisfied that the mandate for the CC Commission had been adequately fulfilled'*. The matter was taken further in 2017 when the Congress resolved that the SACP *'must actively contest elections'*, within or outside *'the umbrella of a re-configured Alliance'*.

The snowball effect has brought us to where we are today, with the 2024 Special Congress agreeing with the SACP General Secretary that *'...from now on we are contesting all elections starting with the [next] local government elections'*. Reports suggest that most of the current leadership is fully



aligned with this standpoint.

While discussions on this momentous decision are still to take place between the Party, the ANC and COSATU – and civic association SANCO – it does throw many fundamental questions into bold relief. Most common in public commentary are issues around the magnitude of electoral support the party can garner and the constitutional and organisational implications for the ANC, under whose umbrella the Alliance has contested elections since 1994. Important as these questions are, there are even more fundamental ones about ideological and strategic implications for the conceptualisation and conduct of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) as hitherto commonly understood by the ANC and the SACP.

And so, does the SACP command significant electoral support? Given the paucity of data on this, the matter can only be assessed speculatively.

Reference has been made to the Metsimaholo municipality where, in December 2017, the SACP separately took part in municipality-wide by-elections. But that experience is too specific for any objective extrapolation to be made. Local leaders of the ANC, which was the leading party in the council with 19 out of 42 seats, were accused of poor service delivery, corruption and maltreatment of workers; and no corrective action was being taken by the ANC's provincial and national structures. The SACP felt it had to enter the electoral fray; and in the event, it gained the same number of seats (3) as the

ANC lost; and virtually all the other parties moved sideways.

In broader electoral contestation, it is quite possible that the SACP could draw support from a 'new' constituency thus far not already being harvested by the ANC and the professed 'socialist-oriented' parties such as the EFF, MK Party, AZAPO and the PAC. But it is also possible that it could simply cannibalise ANC support as shown in Metsimaholo. Further, there is also the possibility of rendering a sizeable chunk of ANC supporters too confused and/or conflicted to rock up at voting stations, thus suppressing the vote of both the ANC and the SACP.

In other words, as in the Gestalt theory of philosophy and natural science: when a system (in this case the Tripartite Alliance) is constituted from different components, the system usually enjoys properties that are different from just the sum of its parts. Because *'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'* – as supposedly argued by philosopher Aristotle – the ANC and the SACP may both be losers in this new arrangement.

This is a challenge that has confronted many organisations, including listed commercial companies. Large, diversified corporations usually complain about a share price being discounted due to the many individual subsidiaries. A break-up and disposals are then engineered – sometimes leading to success – on the modelling ramp that is the *'amorphous market'* and in other instances, leading to disaster.

Beyond these speculative thoughts, the closest to opinion surveys assessing support for an SACP-type workers' party are



the following:

- An Afrobarometer Survey (2014 /2015) which found that about 53% of respondents agree or strongly agree that South Africa should have a labour/workers' party that would promote worker's interests. However, almost the same proportion (54%) were critical of COSATU for being more concerned about political power than the interests of workers.
- A survey by IPSOS (2014), reported on by Eddie Webster and Mark Orkin which put the support for 'a new political party, a workers' or labour party' at about 33%, while a further 39% felt 'maybe' such a party would assist in solving the country's problems.
- In the same report, Webster and Orkin refer to a 2012 survey by CASE among a sample of COSATU shop stewards, which established that 65% of these would vote for a party formed by COSATU.

There may be other such opinion surveys; but a salutary lesson from actual elections is the experience of the Socialist Revolu-

tionary Workers Party (SRWP) formed by the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) with a membership of some 300 thousand: it mustered about 30-thousand votes in 2019 (0.14 percent of the aggregate) and did not get a single legislature seat. What is also notable is that the ANC (and its allies) have been haemorrhaging support especially in urban centres where the majority of workers are located.

It is therefore a major leap of faith on the part of the SACP to enter the electoral terrain independently at this stage.

What about the organisational and constitutional implication? Much has correctly been made of the conundrum that would arise for dual membership between the ANC and the Party, and specifically the ANC's definition of *'acts of misconduct'* which include standing in elections or acting in support of another, opposing, party or candidate. While it may have been possible to turn a blind eye in Metsimaholo, this would not be possible when the infractions are left, right, front, back and centre!



It may well be that the Party has creative proposals on managing these issues within the ambit of 'a reconfigured Alliance': if there is a common will between the SACP and the ANC, there may be a way to navigate the organisational complexities. But short of amending the ANC constitution or adopting a special resolution at the 2025 National General Council, this would be well-nigh impossible – and a messy divorce would then be in the offing!

Issues of ideology and strategy (and related tactics) present even more complex challenges.

At face value, it would be difficult, in the midst of splinters having brought the ANC below the 50 percent mark in the last general election, to sustain an argument that the Party's decision is in the best interest of all the forces of fundamental change.

Because of this 2024 post-election coincidence, it is tempting to reduce the decision to the fall-out around the formation of the Government of National Unity. The Party is profoundly disappointed that the ANC has gone into a polygamous marriage that includes the neo-liberal Democratic Alliance.

It is somewhat reassuring that the confusion around whether the Party prefers a government (minority or otherwise) that includes some form of partnership with the MK Party has been clarified. The SACP correctly characterises that party as an assembly of beneficiaries of systemic corruption and state capture. And it has also pointed to the eclectic opportunism of the MK Party, which combines 'radical economic transformation' rhetoric with backward conservatism, ethnic chauvinism,

dictatorial tendencies and dependence on strange financial benefactors.

What is intriguing, though, is whether the EFF, which is the SACP's preferred partner, is much different in relation to some of the MK Party's malign attributes! Reference in this regard can be made to some of its financial benefactors, corrupt practices at the most senior level as reported around VBS Mutual Bank and the experience of entrenched corrupt practices as recounted by ANC cadres in Ekurhuleni and other municipalities. This is besides the manifestations of dictatorial and disruptive tendencies. In the SACP's own words in 2023, the EFF is a '*proto-fascist party*' steeped in '*political thugery, lawlessness and anarchy*'.

On the 2024 post-election governance arrangements, the ANC has explained, inter alia, that: firstly, all parties had been invited and some excluded themselves through outrageous demands and/or policy approaches on GNU founding principles; secondly, given the characterisation of the MK Party and EFF above, too close a relationship with either of them would be a suffocating embrace, one with the effect of re-introducing the very viruses that the ANC's renewal efforts are meant to expunge from its body; thirdly, promotion of the EFF (and MK Party) as parties of government would strengthen relatively large political entities fishing in the same electoral pond as the ANC; and lastly, the GNU as currently constituted brings on board political representatives of all the sectors that are meant to forge a social compact.

On the other hand, notwithstanding the discordant huffing and

puffing by some GNU partners on a few matters of detail, the signatories have embraced a progressive Statement of Intent and are expected soon to adopt a 5-year Medium Term Development Plan that is expected, in essence, to reflect social transformation objectives as espoused by the ANC. Lest we forget, these objectives are firmly entrenched in South Africa's Constitution.

Now, back to the more profound and complex matters of ideology and strategy...

Treatises have been written about the relationship between the ANC and the SACP (as well as the progressive trade union movement), reflecting the intersection in the erstwhile colonial system of national oppression, class super-exploitation and patriarchy. These strands fed into each other in defining this relationship – impacting on the ANC's outlook as it evolved into a disciplined force of the Left and inversely refining the SACP's own strategic posture as an advocate of progressive nationalism.

Historically, much about this is expertly articulated in the SACP's 1962 programme, Road to South African Freedom and the ANC's 1969 Strategy and Tactics document. In the post-1994 era, the most recent conceptual articulation by the ANC is contained in its 2017 Strategy and Tactics document, and can be summarised as follows:

Firstly, the ANC's ultimate objective is the creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society – what it refers to as a National Democratic Society. As this strategic objective is progressively realised, the concentric circles

of the broad national front would start to flow into each other, with increasing intertwining of Black and white interests along class lines. *'...[T]he national question will [then] recede as a driving force for continuing change and class issues will assume greater prominence'*.

Secondly, the nature of the society pursued by the ANC can be characterised as democracy with profound social content, as articulated in the 1943 African Claims in South Africa and the 1955 Freedom Charter. This is characterised as a developmental state with elements of the best traditions of social democracy, *'which include: a system which places the needs of the poor and social issues such as health care, education and a social safety net at the top of the national agenda; intense role of the state in economic life; pursuit of full employment; quest for equality; strong partnership with the trade union movement; and promotion of international solidarity'*.

Thirdly, the ANC optimistically placed the target period for the attainment of primary features of the National Democratic Society in tandem with the attainment of the objectives set out in Vision 2030 and the National Development Plan (NDP). This optimism of course needs to be tempered due to the regression South Africa experienced in the past decade-and-a-half, but this is a story for another day. Important in the conceptualisation is that, when the National Democratic Society has been attained and when the national question recedes *'as a driving force for continuing change and class issues ... assume greater prominence'*, the historical mission of the ANC would have been realised. While



it may, for a period, play the role of sustaining, refining and improving that socio-economic system, the ANC would perform recede as the leader of continuing change.

Fourthly, the ANC views the SACP as a critical ally committed to thorough-going transformation, a necessary and important political voice of the working class which the ANC in turn recognises as a leader of the motive forces of change. To the extent that the SACP seeks to go further and attain a socialist society, it would then be the political force at the helm of that process. If (or when) this unfolds, some non-SACP members of the ANC may join the Party in that endeavour, others may simply assume an ambivalent posture while others may oppose it.

This has popularly been referred to as *'the two-stage theory'*. But the SACP is correct to argue that elements of the purported two stages feed into one another, with some attributes of socialism finding expression in the social democratic content of the NDR and elements of today's class dynamics carrying over into the future. It is in this context that the Party developed the slogan, *'socialism is the future – build it now!'*

This task of pursuing socialism in the South African context, the SACP has all along argued, entails efforts on its part to ensure as radical a process of current social transformation as possible by, among others, impacting on the thinking, the planning, the operations and the conduct of the ANC as the leader of the NDR – by dint of the quality of the Party's theory, praxis and cadres. Herein lies the fundamental question about the Party's strategy and tactics: should it throw up its hands in despair, put a spanner in the electoral works at this deeply sensitive period and abandon the ANC and thus leave it open largely to other influences?

This seems to be an admission of defeat and an eschewal of a historical responsibility.

To recapitulate: such is the essence, the speculative basis and the timing of the SACP's decision on elections that it could lead to the weakening of both the ANC and the SACP and, by extension, the National Democratic Revolution and the Party's pursuit of socialism.

Joel Netshitenzhe is the Executive Director of the Mapungubwe Institute (MISTRA).



Three decades on:

Assessing South Africa's progress since 1994

On Monday, 27 April 2026, South Africa will mark thirty-two years since its first democratic elections. Since that historic moment, the nation has travelled a remarkable and often demanding road. The journey has not been flawless. There have been setbacks, frustrations and painful contradictions that continue to test the resilience of our democracy. But when viewed in its entirety, the post-1994 era tells a story of remarkable progress. It is a story of endurance, renewal and extraordinary national achievement that deserves to be told widely, with both honesty and pride.

The democratic breakthrough of

■ By **CORNELIUS MONAMA**

1994 stands as one of the most significant political achievements of the modern era. Against the odds, South Africa chose negotiation over civil conflict, ballots over bullets, reconciliation over revenge. In doing so, we demonstrated a level of political maturity and moral courage that captured the imagination of the world. We did not simply dismantle apartheid, but we also laid the foundation for a new nation built on shared citizenship and equal dignity.

At the heart of this transformation lies our Constitution. A living cov-

enant between the state and its people. It affirms the inherent dignity of every individual, protects fundamental rights and anchors our democracy in the rule of law. Over the past three decades, the institutions that uphold this constitutional order - our courts, Chapter 9 institutions, electoral system and a vibrant civil society - have proven resilient, including in moments of profound strain.

South Africa's democracy has matured in visible and subtle ways. Citizens continue to organise, speak out, protest and participate in shaping the direction of the country. Elections remain competitive and credible. The media, with all their imperfection,

continue to play a critical watchdog role. In a global context where democratic institutions are increasingly under threat, South Africa's ability to sustain a functioning and participatory democracy remains a notable achievement.

The promise of democracy was never confined to civil and political rights alone. It was always about transforming the material conditions of people. In this regard, the progress achieved since 1994 is both substantial and measurable.

Access to electricity has expanded from just over half of households in 1994 to nearly nine in ten today. This transformation has altered the texture of daily life for millions, enabling children to study after dark, supporting small enterprises and improving overall quality of life.

Access to clean water has increased dramatically, rising from around 60% of the population in 1994 to well over 90% today. Sanitation access has similarly expanded, bringing dignity and improved public health to communities that were historically neglected.

Housing delivery stands as one of the most visible expressions of democratic change. From a base of zero in 1994, more than 4.8 million houses have been delivered, providing shelter to between 12 and 13 million people. Beyond the numbers, this represents the restoration of dignity, stability and a sense of belonging. Families that once lived in precarious conditions now have a place to call home, and communities that were once marginalised are increasingly integrated into the broader social fabric.



Equally transformative has been the expansion of the social wage. Today, South Africa's social protection system reaches over 18 million people, making it one of the most extensive in the developing world. At its centre is the Child Support Grant, which supports more than 13 million children and plays a critical role in reducing poverty and improving access to basic necessities.

The Old Age Grant provides income security to millions of elderly citizens, many of whom are the backbone of extended families. The Disability Grant ensures that persons living with disabilities are afforded dignity and a measure of independence. The Foster Child and Care Dependency Grants provide targeted support to vulnerable children and their caregivers, reinforcing the principle that no one should be left behind.

The introduction of the Social Relief of Distress Grant during the COVID-19 pandemic further demonstrated the adaptability and responsiveness of the democratic state. By extending support to unemployed adults with no income, it provided a critical lifeline during a period of unprecedented hardship. Collectively, these social protection measures

represent a sustained effort to break intergenerational cycles of poverty and to build a more inclusive society.

Healthcare has also undergone a profound transformation. In 1994, access to antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS was virtually non-existent. Today, South Africa operates the largest HIV treatment programme in the world, with more than 5.5 million people receiving life-saving medication. This achievement has not only saved lives but restored hope to millions of families.

The planned implementation of National Health Insurance (NHI) represents the next phase in this journey. NHI is an effort to give full expression to the constitutional promise that everyone has the right to access healthcare services, regardless of their socio-economic status.

Education, once designed to entrench inequality, has been fundamentally reshaped. Today, school enrolment is near universal, with over 15 million learners in the system. No-fee schools now serve the majority of learners, removing a critical barrier for poor households. The National School Nutrition Programme

provides daily meals to more than 9 million children, ensuring that hunger does not stand in the way of learning.

Higher education has expanded dramatically. Through NSFAS, more than a million students receive financial support annually, compared to only a fraction in 1994. Over time, more than 7 million young South Africans have benefited from this support. Completion rates have improved, adult illiteracy has declined, and access to tertiary education has broadened significantly. While challenges of quality and inequality persist, the trajectory is towards inclusion, opportunity and human capital development.

The black middle class has grown significantly, reflecting increased access to education, employment and economic participation. This expansion represents both the tangible gains of democracy and the emergence of new possibilities for future generations.

The economy itself has more than doubled in size since 1994. South Africa has integrated into the global economy and built diverse sectors across finance, industry, services and agriculture.

While economic growth has not always been inclusive or sufficient to eliminate poverty and unemployment, the foundation for a modern and diversified economy has been firmly established.

Land reform remains one of the most complex and contested aspects of transformation. Progress has been made, with millions of hectares transferred and millions of beneficiaries through restitution and redistribution. Yet the pace has been uneven, and much work remains to be done.



Democracy has also transformed the status of women in profound ways. The Constitution enshrined gender equality, supported by progressive legislation and expanded access to education, healthcare and economic opportunities. Today, women occupy leadership positions across government, business and civil society. While gender-based violence and inequality remain serious challenges, the trajectory is one of empowerment and increasing participation.

South Africa's global standing has undergone a dramatic transformation. From a pariah state under apartheid, the country has become an active and respected participant in international affairs. Hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the recent G20 Summit are some of the defining moments that showcased South Africa's organisational capacity and leadership while shifting global perceptions of the African continent. This international presence reflects a nation that has reasserted itself on the global stage with confidence and purpose.

Even as we celebrate these achievements, we must confront the reality that the work of

transformation is far from complete. Unemployment, inequality and poverty remain deeply entrenched. Too many young people remain excluded from economic opportunity. Corruption, governance failures and service delivery challenges have eroded public trust and slowed the pace of progress. To acknowledge these challenges is not to diminish what has been achieved. It is to affirm the seriousness of the task that lies ahead.


The long walk to freedom did not end in 1994. It entered a new and demanding phase. Our forebears did not sacrifice for a perfect South Africa. They fought for a possible South Africa in which each generation would take responsibility for advancing the cause of freedom, justice and equality.

The story of South Africa is still being written. It is a story of struggle and hardship, but also of hope and triumph.

Cornelius Monama is a government communicator who is part of the Government Communication and Information System. He writes in his personal capacity.

32 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY – A Cause To Celebrate?

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

 On the 27th April 1994, the world watched in veneration when the President of the African National Congress (ANC), and the first President of the democratic South Africa, Nelson Mandela, echoed the words, “*My President, I am here to report that South Africa is free,*” on his visit to the grave of the first president of the ANC, John Langalibalele Dube, after he cast his vote for the first time at Ohlange College in KwaZulu-Natal.

This was a great moment for the oppressed people of South Africa who defied all odds, endured pain, suffering, indignity, death and a brutal regime of apartheid, land dispossession, a system of separate development and secondary citizenship, with no voice in their country of birth where voting was reserved for the white minority. The minority ruled over the majority.

The long snaking queues were the midwives which were to deliver freedom, signifying an end to apartheid to a democratic system of governance, equality, common citizenship and human dignity. We pause to reflect to the epochs leading to this momentous day, the arduous journey of 30 years.

In 1990, the erstwhile president of the apartheid South Africa, FW de Klerk announced sweeping changes after his racist predecessor, PW Botha, to the chagrin



of the international community and the anti-apartheid movement failed to cross the Rubicon. The world applauded de Klerk’s reforms, the unbanning of the liberation movement and the release of political leaders. To the ANC and the oppressed people, these developments were not an act of altruism but a product unrelenting struggles spanning years since the period of betrayal of the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, the 1913 land dispossession law and the birth of the ANC, on the 8th January 1912.

The period leading to this historic day was difficult. The country teetered on a precipice, with internecine violence flaring across the country, acts of the right-wing subversion to collapse the negotiations, the assassination of

Comrade Chris Hani, the Boipatong massacre and other acts to plunge the country into anarchy, as a stratagem to defer a dream of a non-racial democratic South Africa.

Apartheid appendages of the homeland system of separate development entered the fray, opposed the negotiations and the creation of a unitary country based on common citizenship and one-man-one vote, the drafting of a Constitution pillared on human rights as advocated by the Freedom Charter, and the sacrosanct principle of the “*The People Shall Govern,*” which today, remains the plinth of our Constitution.

Free and fair and regular elections are the foundations of our



democracy, guaranteeing the legitimacy of the state, pillared on the dictum that “No government can claim just authority unless it is based upon the will of the people,” which is the fulcrum of our democratic system.

Substantively, what is the country celebrating, what is the impact of the 30 years of democracy? The ANC’s strategies and tactics were shaped by different conditions in different periods. This included its pillars of struggle. At the time, apartheid South Africa was isolated, and declared an international pariah. After the 1994 democratic elections, South Africa was readmitted into the international fold as a sovereign state. Today, it is a powerful roleplayer in the global space, promoting peace, inclusive multilateralism and progressive internationalism and global It is the first African country to ascend to the presidency of the G20 countries.

Apartheid used brute force and the death penalty to silence its opponents. In the aftermath of the elections, the Constitutional Court was established, abolishing the death penalty, declaring it a crime against dignity. It had Justice Yvonne Mokgoro as one of its first female justices as a commitment to gender transformation and equality, the eradication of the triple oppression of women on the basis of class, race and gender. This included the adoption of the Constitution, its signing on the 10th December 1996 in Sharpeville, in honour of those who were killed by the apartheid police on the 21 March 1960 in defiance against pass laws which were a badge of slavery and restricted freedom of movement. Today, this day is commemorated as Human Rights Day, expressed in the Constitution by the Bill of

Rights to drive the vision of the Freedom Charter.

To reverse the vestiges of apartheid and to advance socio-economic transformation, in 1996 the ANC adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which was a paradigm and blue print that elevated the people to the apex of development in a manner that is people-centred and people-driven. Today, our democracy is a Pandora’s Box for the ANC and the country, posing a perilous danger to the imperatives of the Constitution, economic development, job creation, poverty eradication, service delivery, a dream for a better life and a capable ethical developmental state.

The ANC characterised 1994 as a period of reconstruction and development. Others, in its ranks defined it as a payback period of pilfering and plundering state resources. This has had adverse implications for the ANC, its image, stature as a leader of society and stance against acts inimical to the prosperity of the country. It is these acts that account for the ANC’s electoral decline and slow service delivery.

The 1913 Land Act is an albatross to the state and the ANC. South Africa is grappling with the land question. Vast tracts of land are still in the hands of a few whites. To reverse this legacy, ensuring land redistribution, the ANC government passed the Expropriation Act. However, there is a well-coordinated fight back against this transformative. The right-wing and neo-liberal anti-transformation agenda akin to the apartheid Strategic Communication (STRAT-COM) is in full swing, with false accusations of the persecution of the minority and farm killings.

This is treasonous and pestilent to nation building, unity and the rainbow nation of the Archbishop Desmond Tutu and dream of a non-racial South Africa.

The ANC government had introduced far-reaching legislation in a number of areas to ensure diversity, inclusivity, equitable contribution in the economy. These laws range from the National Health Insurance Act, Basic Education Laws Amendment Act, and Employment Equity Amendment Act to Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment and other legislative measures to change the face of society and the strategic trust of the National Democratic Revolution. Opposition to these laws polarises society along racial lines, sows division, and defers the dream of a better life and an equal society.

South Africa is a growing country. This was proven by the resilience of our health system during the outbreak of the coronavirus that pulverised the global economy and killed millions. Through our dedicated health workers and government, the state protected the country against the deadly pandemic. The ANC has shown its determination to build a world-class health system through health infrastructure investment, training and new technology by introducing a single inclusive system by implementing the National Health Insurance Act. The resolution of the electricity crisis is one among the achievements of the ANC government, contrary to doomsayers.

The Independent Electoral Commission, Human Rights Commission, Commission for Gender Equality, Public Protector and other Chapter 9 institutions supporting democracy and Bill of

Rights are the cornerstone of our Constitution, with the Constitutional Court as the custodian.

Our commitment to nation building, the project of non-racialism, land ownership, equity, wealth sharing, inclusive economic participation and no-sexism continues amidst a neoliberal and right-wing anti-transformation agenda to perpetuate minority rule and privileges. This agenda is in full swing, polarizing the nation along racial lines, destroying our value system, heritage, Constitution, country's flag and sabotaging a dream of a country based on equality, freedom and justice.

The 27th April 2026 is a continuation of a chapter that imbues more vigour in our commitment to build a prosperous country. As we celebrate this momentous day, we do so in a sense of patriotic pride, reaffirming our allegiance to the Constitution and the vision of the Freedom Charter. As we have declared in our 2026 January 8 Statement, we will fix local government and transform the economy. We reiterate our commitment to defend our sovereignty and democracy.

The ANC has through the Constitution gave impetus and effect to the vision of the Freedom Charter. Over this period, the ANC government built millions of houses, schools, universities, hospitals, community health centres, roads and provided electricity, potable water, ensured access to education and other needs. Notwithstanding these massive achievements, the legacy of apartheid remains painfully obstinate, with poverty, unemployment and inequality high.

Do we possess the power to defend our democracy and advance

our freedom? This is a patriotic duty which should be innate in view of our responsibility to the democratic state and our sovereignty. We are eruditely taught by Vladimir Lenin that "No revolution is worth anything unless it can defend itself." What does this teach us?

Firstly, our revolution wouldn't be worth waging, would be obsolete and of no significance and impact, and that if a movement cannot hold onto its gains, the initial uprising was essentially a waste of energy and life. It emphasizes that a revolutionary movement is pointless if it cannot protect its gains from counter-revolutionary forces, ensuring that transformation survives. It highlights that power must be defended through organisation, discipline, rather than merely relying on popular sentiment populism unconnected to the revolution.

Secondly, it entails that revolutions often fail because they lack the ability to defend themselves against the old order's attempts to regain power. These are the remnants of apartheid represented by counter-revolutionary forces, narrow sectarianism such as Solidariteit and AfriForum and the

emergence of a new form of tribalism and ethnicity which pose a threat to our democracy, stability and national security with the potential to reverse the gains of our hard won democracy.

Thirdly, Lenin posits that a revolution is not just an idea but a practical shift in power that requires protecting, including preventing the cancer corruption or exploitation from emerging within the new system of democratic governance.

From the summit of the Engeli Mountains, the mighty Drakensberg, the Leolo, the ever flowing Mutale and Lepelle rivers, Ku-Gompo, Madibeng, Delft, Maluti, Giyani and the great savannahs of our beautiful land, we hear the echoes of "Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another," marking the end of apartheid, heralding the birth of a democratic South Africa, and the ultimate demise of a putrid and odious system of apartheid.

It is indeed a cause to celebrate. The challenge we have today is to defend our democracy in the advancement of our freedom!



Renewal of the ANC requires an intellectual cadre

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

THE question of renewal within the African National Congress has, in recent years, assumed a position of central importance in both internal deliberations and broader public discourse. It is invoked with regularity in organisational forums, in official statements, and in the reflections of those who remain committed to the historic mission of the movement. Yet, despite this frequency of reference, it remains necessary to interrogate, with a measure of sobriety and intellectual discipline, what is meant by renewal, and whether the efforts undertaken thus far correspond to the depth and complexity of the challenges confronting both the movement and the country.

It would be neither accurate nor constructive to suggest that the ANC has ceased to engage in intellectual work. Across its various structures, there remain ongoing initiatives directed at political education, policy development, and strategic reflection. There are cadres who continue to read, to write, and to engage critically with the conditions of South African society and the evolving global environment. These efforts must be recognised as both necessary and valuable, constituting an important foundation upon which further development may be built.

However, the central issue is whether such efforts have attained the level of consistency,



depth, and organisational centrality required of a movement that bears the responsibility of governance in a complex and rapidly changing society. It is precisely at this juncture that a more searching examination becomes necessary. For while intellectual engagement persists, it does not yet define, in a sufficiently coherent and sustained manner, the character and conduct of the movement as a whole.

It may therefore be argued that the current difficulties confronting the ANC are not only organisational or ethical in nature, but also intellectual. A movement that, at critical moments in its history, demonstrated a notable capacity for analysis, strategic clarity, and disciplined thought now exhibits, in certain respects, a tendency towards reactivity and short-termism. This observation should

not be interpreted as a repudiation of the movement, but rather as an invitation to reflect on the conditions that have contributed to this state of affairs.

A governing party cannot rely indefinitely on the legitimacy derived from its historical role, nor on the emotional attachment of the electorate to its legacy. It must continually renew its capacity to understand the society it seeks to lead, to interpret changing domestic and international conditions, and to formulate responses that are both principled and practical. In this regard, the cultivation of an intellectual cadre assumes particular importance.

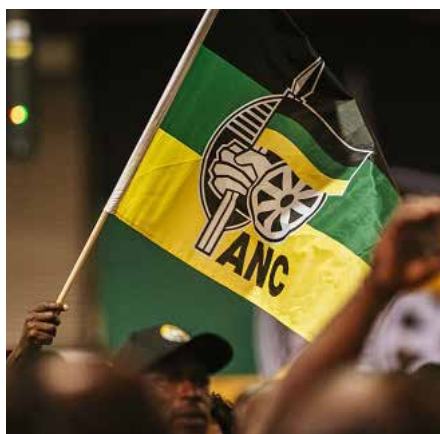
The notion of an intellectual cadre must be properly understood. It does not refer to an elitist grouping, detached from the lived realities of the people. Nor does it

imply the elevation of formal academic attainment above political experience. Rather, it speaks to the development of cadres who combine political commitment with disciplined thought, and who recognise that leadership in a modern state requires continuous learning, reflection, and engagement with ideas.

Such a cadre may be understood to embody three interrelated capacities, each of which is essential to the task of renewal.

The first is the capacity to analyse the past. The history of the ANC is both rich and complex, encompassing periods of organisational growth, mass mobilisation, underground struggle, exile, negotiation, and governance. Within this history lie invaluable lessons. However, to access these lessons requires more than commemoration or the selective invocation of historical narratives. It requires a critical interrogation of the past, an examination of the context in which decisions were made, and an honest assessment of their outcomes. Without such analysis, history risks being reduced to symbolism, rather than serving as a guide to present and future action.

The second is the capacity to advise on the present. The contemporary South African context is characterised by a convergence of challenges that are both structural and immediate. These include persistent inequality, high levels of unemployment, economic stagnation, pressures on state institutions, and shifting global dynamics that affect trade, technology, and geopolitical alignment. To engage effectively with these realities requires more than rhetorical formulation. It demands analytical rigour, an understand-



ing of empirical data, and the ability to translate political objectives into coherent and implementable policy interventions.

The third is the capacity to plan for the future. Governance is not confined to the management of immediate concerns. It entails the articulation of a long-term vision of societal development, as well as the design of strategies through which that vision may be realised. In the absence of such planning, decision-making becomes reactive, and the ability of the state to shape outcomes in a deliberate and sustained manner is diminished. A movement that governs must therefore cultivate the ability to think beyond the immediacy of events, and to position itself in relation to future challenges and opportunities.

These capacities are not abstract ideals. They are practical necessities. Where they are unevenly developed or insufficiently institutionalised, the consequences become evident in both organisational practice and state performance. It is within this context that certain tendencies, observable in varying degrees, merit careful consideration.

Among these is the persistence of anti-intellectual attitudes, wherein the engagement with ideas is, at times, overshadowed by rhetorical

assertiveness. In such instances, the articulation of positions may take precedence over their substantive grounding. There is also the challenge, in certain contexts, of conflating loyalty with competence. While unity and discipline remain essential organisational principles, they cannot substitute for the technical and analytical capabilities required for effective governance.

Furthermore, while political education continues to be undertaken, it does not always achieve the level of depth and consistency required to equip cadres with the tools necessary for contemporary analysis and decision-making. In some instances, it assumes a form that is more ceremonial than substantive, with limited engagement with the complexities of current socio-economic conditions.

The pressures associated with internal organisational dynamics have also, at times, contributed to a narrowing of focus, with immediate political considerations overshadowing long-term strategic thinking. This has implications not only for the internal functioning of the movement, but also for its capacity to provide consistent and coherent leadership in government. In addition, the relationship between political leadership and administrative capability continues to present areas of difficulty, particularly in a context where effective governance requires both political direction and technical proficiency.

To identify these tendencies is not to negate the progress that has been made, nor to overlook the efforts of those within the movement who continue to engage seriously with these challenges. Rather, it is to underscore the areas in which further work is

required, and to suggest that the consolidation and expansion of existing efforts is both necessary and urgent.

The task, therefore, is not to begin anew, but to build more deliberately and more systematically on the foundations that already exist. This requires a number of interrelated interventions.

In the first instance, political education must be strengthened. It must move beyond formality and assume the character of a sustained and rigorous process. It must equip cadres with the ability to engage critically with history, to interpret contemporary developments, and to apply knowledge in practical contexts. This entails not only the transmission of organisational perspectives, but also the cultivation of analytical skills.

Secondly, there is a need to create and sustain spaces for policy engagement and strategic reflection. Such spaces must enable the testing of ideas, the refinement of positions, and the development of coherent approaches to governance. They must be protected from the distortions of narrow factional considerations, and must instead serve the broader objective of strengthening the movement's intellectual capacity.

Thirdly, the movement must reaffirm the importance of merit and capability. Leadership, whether within the organisation or in the state, requires a combination of integrity, competence, and the ability to address complex challenges. The credibility of both the movement and the state is, to a significant extent, dependent on the extent to which these qualities are recognised and promoted.

Fourthly, the development of a



culture of writing must be encouraged. The articulation of ideas in written form serves to clarify thought, to facilitate debate, and to create a body of knowledge that informs future action. It contributes to the institutional memory of the movement, enabling successive generations of cadres to build upon the insights and experiences of those who came before them.

Finally, the question of moral courage must be addressed. An intellectual cadre is distinguished not only by the capacity to think, but also by the willingness to speak honestly and to act in accordance with principle. The sustainability of the movement depends on the extent to which such qualities are nurtured and protected.

The history of the ANC demonstrates that it has, at various junctures, embodied these attributes. It has been a movement capable of reflection, adaptation, and disciplined action. The present moment does not require the abandonment of these traditions, but rather their reaffirmation and adaptation to contemporary conditions.

The challenges confronting South Africa are of such a nature that they demand leadership that is thoughtful, prepared, and ca-

pable of navigating complexity. They require a movement that is able to interpret reality accurately, to formulate coherent responses, and to act with purpose and discipline.

In the final analysis, the question of renewal is inseparable from the question of capacity. It is not only a matter of leadership in the narrow sense, but of the collective intellectual and ethical resources of the movement. The extent to which the ANC succeeds in cultivating an intellectual cadre will, to a significant degree, determine its ability to navigate present challenges and to shape the future.

Renewal must therefore be understood as an ongoing process of political and intellectual reconstruction. It requires sustained effort, organisational commitment, and a willingness to engage in honest reflection. It demands that the movement values thinking as much as mobilisation, and preparation as much as participation.

It is in this sense that the renewal of the ANC must be approached, not as an episodic occurrence, but as a disciplined and continuous undertaking, directed towards the reconstruction of a movement that is at once reflective, capable, and equipped to lead South Africa with clarity and purpose.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

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25 April–1 May 2026

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

25 April 1859 Construction starts on modern day Suez canal

The Suez canal, linking the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and providing a short cut between Europe and Asia. The canal existed as far back as 19th century BC during the reign of Pharaoh Sesostri III. The modern day version started construction on 25 April 1859, and took the Suez Canal Company a decade to complete, with its official opening in November 1869. On July 26, 1956 Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the canal to help finance construction of the Aswan Dam on the Nile.

25 April 1900 12-year old Paul Panda Farnana arrives in Brussels to start his studies

Congolese intellectual, agronomist, Pan African and first Congolese to receive a university diploma arrived in Brussels on a sponsorship to further his education. Farnana (1988 – became a founder of the Union Congolaise, and helped lay the foundation for Congolese nationalism that would eventually lead to independence.

25 April 1918 Father of Swahili literature born

Muhammed Said Abdulla, Tanzanian author and journalist was born in Makunduchi, Zanzibar

on this day. Author of Mzimu wa Watu sa kale (Shrine of the Ancestors, 1958), his novels starred a detective lead character, Bwana Msa, catapulting Swahili literature into popular contemporary fiction, earning him the title of Father of Swahili literature. As journalist, he became editor of the Zanzibari in 1948 and also served as assistant editor of Al Falaq, Al Mahda, and Afrika Kwetu. In 1958 he became editor of Mkulima, the national agricultural magazine, where he served until his retirement in 1968. Abdulla passed on in 1991.

25 April 1932 First Speaker of Parliament, Dr Frene Ginwala born



The first speaker of a democratic and non-racial parliament, Cde Frene Noshir Ginwala was born on this day. She went into exile, trained as a lawyer and worked as a journalist and in ANC offices in Britain, before returning to South Africa after the unbanning

of the ANC. Cde Frene was also a member of the National Executive Committee, until her retirement.

25 April 1945 Conference to establish United Nations sits

The United Nations Conference on International Organisation opened in San Francisco with 45 nations in attendance to set up the UN. The only African nations attending were Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia. South Africa attended as part of the UK.

25 April 1986 HRM Mswati III takes up reigns as monarch of the Kingdom of Eswatini



King Mswati III (Makhosetive Dlamini), became King of Swaziland (now Eswatini) when he succeeded his late father King Sobhuza II, who died of pneumonia in 1982. Two relatives, Queen Dzeliwe Shongwe and Queen Ntombi Thwala, served as regents until Makhosetive, who

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

was fourteen years old when his father died, was ready to take the reins. Queen Shongwe ruled from 1982-1983 while Queen Thwala ruled from 1983 until 1986. During that time the prospective King was pursuing his studies at the English Sherborne School.

25 April 1986 Africa's fastest blind sprinter born



Ananias Shikongo, Namibian runner and Africa's fastest blind sprinter was born in Okankolo, Namibia. He lost one eye at the age 3 when accidentally hit by an arrow shot by his brother, who was aiming at a bird. He lost his second eye at age 6 when kicked by a donkey whilst working the fields. Competing in the T11 (totally blind) category at the 2016 Paralympic Games, he became the first Namibian man to win an Olympic gold medal and set a Paralympic record for the 200m.

25 April 2005 Obelisk of Axum returns to Ethiopia

This cultural treasure was returned to Ethiopia after being airlifted in pieces from Italy, after fierce lobbying by the African Union Ministers. The obelisk was stolen by the army of Italian fascist Benito Mussolini in 1937.

25 April 2007 First African Malaria Day

The African Union declared this as African Malaria Day, given the devastation of the tropical disease throughout the continent. In 2014, it was changed to World Malaria Day following a lobby by African member states of the World Health Organisation. The AU has an ongoing #RollBackMalaria campaign.

25 April 2019 Cyclone Kenneth hits Mozambique

Tropical cyclone Kenneth, which started in Madagascar on 23 April 2019, with winds of 220 km/h made landfall in Mozambique. It was the strongest tropical cyclone to make landfall in Mozambique since modern records began, killing 28 people and causing extensive damage. The cyclone also caused significant damage in the Comoro Islands and Tanzania.

26 April 1888 Author William Gqoba passed on

Author, editor, teacher, catechist, interpreter and wagon-maker William Wellington Gqoba passed on in Lovedale, Eastern Cape. He was born in Gaga, near Alice, and was one of the earliest authors in Xhosa literature. After his death, nine of Gqoba's writings were included in an anthology by W.B. Rubusana, *Zemuk' inkomo magwalandini* (1906), and two pieces in the anthology by W.G. Bennie, *Imibengo* (1935).

26 April 1951 Bantu Building Workers Act comes into effect

The Act went into effect to shield white workers in the construction

industry from competition from black workers. Sections 15 and 19 made it an offense for blacks to work in the employ of whites performing skilled labor in their homes. Black workers were subject to arrest if they performed jobs like bricklaying and carpentry.

26 April 1964 United Federation of Tanzania formed

Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar united to become the United Federation of Tanzania. The former Zanzibar islands remained semi-autonomous and held five of the country's thirty administrative regions. The other 25 are found in the mainland, formerly Tanganyika. The current president of Tanzania is Samia Suluhu Hassan and is from Zanzibar.

26 April 2010 Longest mountain bike race inaugurated

The 900km joBerg2c mountain bike race in South Africa started in Heidelberg, Gauteng and ending after nine days in Scottburg, KZN. It is the longest mountain bike race in the country and possibly in the world. The race is 99.5% off-road, passing through four provinces and 220 farms, with 280 km of single lanes.

27 April 1950 Group Areas Act passed

Apartheid as a system was obsessed with separating the citizens of South Africa on a racial basis. This was done to foster White superiority and to entrench the minority White regime at the expense of the Black majority. On 27 April 1950, the Apartheid government passed the Group Areas Act. This Act enforced the segregation of the different races



to specific areas within the urban locale. It also restricted ownership and the occupation of land to a specific statutory group. This meant that Blacks could not own or occupy land in White areas. To enforce the Group Areas Act, people were forcibly removed, and by 1980 it was reported that over 3.5 million people were removed on the basis of this barbaric Act.

27 April 1941 Senegalese author Aminata Sow Fall born



The first black Senegalese woman to publish a novel, Fall was born on this day in Saint-Louis, Senegal. She was the first woman president of the Senegal's Writers Association, served on the Commission for Educational Reform tasked with integrating African literature into the syllabus taught in Senegalese schools. Aminata Sow Fall is an award winning author with her

debut novel *Le Revenant* (1976) which critiqued the post independence Senegalese bourgeoisie, *La Grève des Battu* (1979), and *L'Appel des arènes* (1982). *Festins de la détresse* (2005) was her most recent novel, until her return in 2017 with *L'Empire du mensonge*.

27 April 1941 Togo Monument de L'Indépendance

On the second anniversary of Togo's independence from France, the national monument of independence was unveiled in the heart of its capital Lomé. It features a silhouette of a man, behind a sculpture of a woman with an offering.

27 April 1964 Relocation of Abu Simbel temples start

Stone cutters started work on the two Abu Simbel temples carved into solid rock on the banks of Lake Nasser. These were built during the reign of Pharaoh Ramses II (1279-1213 BC) to commemorate victory in the battle of Qadesh, one temple for himself and the other for his wife Nefertiti. The temples were relocated to higher ground to avoid submersion when the area was flooded by the Aswan Dam. The Abu Simbel complex is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the Nubian Monuments.

27 April 1972 Kwame Nkrumah passes on

Kwame Nkrumah, father of Pan Africanism, became the first prime minister and president of Ghana in 1957 until 1966. Ghana (formerly known as The Gold Coast) gained its independence and became a



republic in 1960. Nkrumah was a founder of the Convention People's Party. He experienced several assassination attempts. In 1966 while Nkrumah was on a visit to China, he was deposed by the police and military. He spent his later years in exile in Bucharest, Romania. Kwame Nkrumah died on 27 April 1972.

27 April 1994 South Africa's First Democratic Elections



Millions of South Africa lined up in their numbers to cast their votes in the first non-racial elections in the country, after negotiations that started in 1990. This election changed the history of South Africa. It paved the way towards a new democratic dispensation and a new constitution for the country. For the first time all races in the country were going to the polls to vote for a government of their

choice. Nineteen political parties participated and twenty-two million people voted. The election took place in a festive atmosphere, contrary to fears of political violence. The African National Congress won the election with 62.65 % of the vote. The National Party received 20.39 %, Inkatha Freedom Party 10.54 %, Freedom Front 2.2 %, Democratic Party 1.7 %, Pan Africanist Congress 1.2 % and the African Christian Democratic Party 0.5 %. Although the ANC gained a majority vote, they formed the Government of National Unity, headed by the ANC's Nelson Mandela who became the first democratic President of the country. 27 April has since been declared **Freedom Day**.

27 April 2002

Mark Shuttleworth speaks to President, from space

On this day, the continent's first astronaut, Mark Shuttleworth, spoke with President Thabo Mbeki via video call – from space.

27 April 2018

Mauritania expands death penalty

Mauritania is the only country in the world where atheism is a crime punishable by death, and on this day a new law expand the death penalty to include those convicted of 'sacrilege' and 'offending public indecency'. Although the last country in the world to ban slavery (in 1981), up to 20% of its population, mainly Haratine, lives in slavery.

28 April 1924

President Kenneth Kaunda born

Kenneth Kaunda was born in Chinsali, the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). Kaunda was a qualified



teacher and taught in a number of schools for years, and left teaching to fight for independence. In 1964, Kaunda became the first president of an independent Zambia. He remained in power until 1991. President Kenneth Kaunda supported liberation movements from Southern Africa, including providing for the headquarters of the ANC in Lusaka.

28 April 1955

William Kentridge born

The Artist and animator was born in Johannesburg, his expressionistic work in a variety of art forms including painting, prints, sculptures and animated films has featured in exhibitions worldwide.

28 April 1962

Film director Darrell Roodt born

Roodt was born in Johannesburg, and is one of South Africa's most prolific directors, with films such as *His Place of Weeping*, *Sarafina!*, *Yesterday* and *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

28 April 1978

AZAPO formed

In the aftermath of the 16 June 1976 Uprising, in Soweto, Johannesburg, the apartheid gov-

ernment banned all Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) organisations, including the Black People's Convention (BPC), the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) and the Black Community Programmes (BCP). Out of the banning of these liberation movements the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) was founded to carry on the work of liberation as an overt organisation. The organisation adopted the Black Consciousness philosophy advocated by Steven Biko and continued to propagate it in its programmes.

28 April 1990

Father Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest, is injured by a letter-bomb



Father Michael Lapsley was born in New Zealand on 2 June 1949. He was trained as an Anglican priest in Australia, where he joined The Society of the Sacred Mission. Father Lapsley came to South Africa in 1973 sent by the Mission, and served as a university chaplain at three campuses in Durban. He felt it was his duty to speak out against the injustices of the Apartheid regime. In 1976, the Apartheid government exiled Father Lapsley for his affiliation to the ANC, as well as for the support of students after the 1976 student uprising. Father Lapsley then moved to Lesotho and later Harare, Zimbabwe, where he served as a chaplain in

the ANC. In 1982, Father Lapsley moved from Lesotho to Zimbabwe, after the South African government launched a raid into Lesotho that killed 42 people. It was believed that Father Lapsley was one of the targets. On the 28 April 1990, Father Lapsley received two pieces of mail from South Africa. Included in one of the pieces of mail was a powerful letter bomb that gravely injured him. This attempt on his life was organised by the Civil Cooperation Bureau, a covert organisation of the South African Government's security apparatus.

28 April 1994 Largest and fastest refugee exodus in modern times

The Rwanda genocide created a massive refugee crisis for all Great Lakes countries, with over 2 million Rwandese fleeing to neighbouring countries. On 28 April 1994, over 200,000 people crossed the Rusumo Bridge into Tanzania in a period of 24 hours. The refugee movement, with the Rusumo Bridge movement in particular, is seen as orchestrated by those behind the genocide, carrying on the war by other means, with refugees settling along the borders of Rwanda. By the end of August 1994, UNHCR estimated that there were 2.1 million Rwandan refugees in neighboring countries located in 35 camps across the DRC, Burundi, and Tanzania.

28 April 2008 Banyana Banyana midfielder found raped and murdered

On 28 April 2008, Banyana Banyana midfielder Eudy Simelane was found in a ditch in the outskirts of her home township



KwaThema, Gauteng. She had been raped, robbed and murdered. Her rape was a reaction to her sexual orientation as Simelane was a prominent lesbian woman. Simelane had had a successful soccer career and used her celebrity status as part of her LGBTQI activism. She was out in her community and while reactions to her homosexuality were mixed, KwaThema did have a known and celebrated LGBTQI friendly sub-culture. This made Simelane's abduction, rape and murder all the more alarming. In recent weeks there have been a number of reports of violence and murder of people from the LGBTQI community.

29 April 1876 Empress Zewditu born

Africa's only head of state at the time, Empress Zewditu of Ethiopia ruled from 1916 to 1930, the country's only female Emperor



Regent. Devoutly religious, she oversaw reforms in Ethiopia's royal governance. Empress Zewditu was born Askala Maryam in the city of Harrar.

29 April 1892 Deadly cyclone hits Mauritius

At midday on this day, 195 km/h winds devastated the Indian Ocean African island state of Mauritius, killing 1200 people, destroying five towns, including the capital Port Louis and 30 of the country's 50 churches. More than 200,000 trees were uprooted and half the sugar crop ruined.

29 April 1994 Counting in first Elections start

Counting began two days after the first democratic elections in South Africa. With nearly 20 million people participating, most for the first time, voting time was extended until 29 April 1994. The ANC gained 62.60% while the National Party (NP) gained 20.40% of the votes.

29 April 1994 Worst Kenyan maritime disaster

Kenyan ferry MV Mtongwe capsized 40 meters from Mombasa shore, killing 272 of the 400 passengers on board.

29 April 1997 UN Chemicals Weapons Convention comes into effect

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, a global arms control treaty prohibits the production, storage, and use

of chemical and biological Weapons, was concluded in Geneva in 1992, but only became effective in 1997. It has so far been ratified by some 190 countries.

29 April 2019 Great Mosque of Algiers opens

The *Djamaa el Djazair* opens in Algiers, capital of Algeria. The third largest mosque in the world, with the world's tallest minaret, its prayer room has a capacity for 120,000 worshippers.

30 April 1885 Forerunner of SA Navy formed

The Natal Naval Volunteers was formed in Durban to provide maritime security to Britain's Natal colony, with a similar organisation formed in Cape Town for the same purpose in 1905. These were the nucleus of the SA Navy.

30 April 1924 Ligue Universelle pour la Defense de la Race Noire formed

The League for the Defense of the Black Race was formed by the descendant of the last king of the Dahomey (Benin), Kojou Tivalou Houénou in Paris, as part of the Pan African anti-colonial movement and a critique of French colonial empire in Africa. He travelled to the US to attend Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association.

30 April 1930 Pixley ka Seme succeeds Josiah Gumede as ANC president

Josiah Gumede was elected as president-general of the ANC during its annual congress in



1927, despite criticism of his pro-communist stance. Gumede's three-year term as president-general of the ANC was characterised by dispute, whilst introducing new strains of radical thought and a more militant stance into the ANC. Matters came to a head when the anti-communist faction of the national executive committee of the ANC took a majority decision to resign en bloc, and Thomas Mapikela took over as acting president-general. At the annual ANC conference on 30 April 1930, Pixley Seme succeeded Gumede as president general. Gumede was appointed as life-long honorary ANC president.

30 April 1964 President Ben Bella awarded Hero of the Soviet Union

The Algerian President was awarded this honour at the time of the Cold War, when both East and West sought Algeria's alignment. The FLN and Ben Bella however focused on championing the cause of liberation movements and positioned Algeria as a leader of the then Third World.

30 April 1969 Five bush colleges acts passed

Separate acts gave five Universi-

ty Colleges for blacks full university status – Fort Hare University, University of Durban Westville, University of Zululand, University of the Western Cape, and Turfloop University – separating them from UNISA. Under the new dispensation, they were supposed to produce a docile black middle class, but soon became hotbeds of political activism.

30 April 1975 Fall of Saigon marks end of Vietnam war

On 30 April, the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (Viet Cong) captured Saigon, the then capital of South Vietnam. The event marked the end of the Vietnam War, the collapse of French colonial rule and the start of a transition period from formal reunification to the formation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

30 April 1978 Filmmaker Rama Thiaw born



Rama Thiaw (45), director and screenwriter was born on this day in Nouakchott Mauritania, and grew up in Senegal since age five. Her first documentary, *Boul Fallé, la Voie de lat lute* was released in 2009, about the revival of traditional Senegalese

wrestling. Her subsequent documentaries and films are also set in Senegal. Thiaw holds masters in international economics and film, and her last film was *The Revolution shall not be Televised* (2016).

30 April 1993 World Wide Web protocols to remain free

By offering the software required to operate a web server with an open license, the European organization CERN ensured its dissemination, and the WWW flourished.

30 April 1995 Photographer Malick Sidibé first international exhibition

Malian photographer Sidibé, known for his photographs, books and films on Bamako club scenes of the 1960s and 70s opened his first international exhibition in Paris.

30 April 1995 Prince Gyasi born

Prince Gyasi Nyantakya, Ghanaian photo artist was born on this day in Accra. He started his photography using his iPhone, staging pictures with actors to tell a story. He is regarded as amongst the 21 most vivid African colourists, with bold, hopeful images, which tell the stories of marginalized individuals..

30 April 2021 Limpopo teenager takes life after bullying

The school pupil, Lufuno Mavhunga was repeatedly bullied at school, and committed suicide after a video of her being assaulted by a fellow schoolmate went

vital, sparking public discussion on bullying, misuse of social media and safety at schools.

1 May 1925 World's largest trade union formed

On this day, celebrated as Workers day, the All-China Trade Union Federation was formed. This became the world's largest trade union with a membership of 300 million.

1 May 1949 Egypt Government buys Misr Airlines

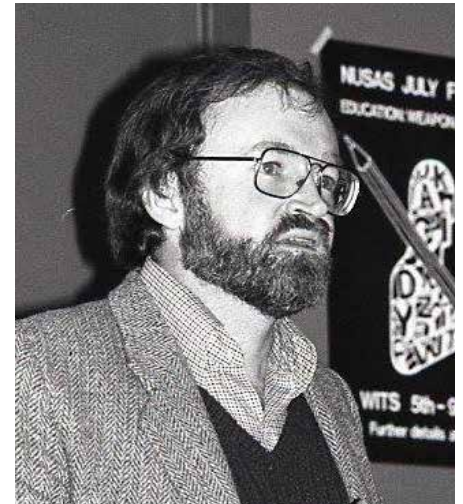
The Government of Egypt bought a stake in Misr, the privately held airline. At the time the seventh aviation carrier in the world, the wholly public-owned national carrier was later renamed EgyptAir.

1 May 1979 Wiehan Commission report tabled in Parliament

The Wiehan Commission was set up after the Durban strikes of 1973 and the Soweto uprisings of 1976 to look at industrial relations system in South Africa. Two years later the commission made recommendations that the Labour Relations Act be amended to grant Black trade unions legal recognition and to register. Other recommendations included the abolition of statutory job reservation, retention of closed shop bargaining system, the creation of a National Manpower Commission, and the introduction of an Industrial Court to resolve industrial litigation. The apartheid government used the registration process as a tool to control black trade unions, and its suppression of Black trade unions continued. However, the legal recognition of

Black trade unions made them more effective as they could organize more easily.

1 May 1989 Academic David Webster assassinated



David Joseph Webster was born in Zimbabwe in 1945. He became involved in politics while studying anthropology at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, and went on to teach at the University of the Witwatersrand. As an academic, Webster was active in the anti-apartheid movement, especially in the Detainees' Parents' Support Committee (DPSC) of which he was a founder, and another UDF affiliate, the Five Freedoms Forum. Webster was gunned down outside his house by Ferdi Barnard on instruction of the Civil Cooperation Bureau, a government agency. Barnard was sentenced in 1998 to two life sentences, but was released on parole in 2019.

1 May 2008 South Africa's first wind energy farm

The first wind farm is commissioned. The Darling Wind Farm near Cape Town has four 50 meter tall turbines that produce electricity for 700 households.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

25 April–1 May 2026

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



1-30 APRIL 2026 SOUTH AFRICAN FREEDOM MONTH

24-30 April World Immunization Week

World Immunization Week is celebrated during the last week of April. Led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and national governments, the week aims to highlight the collective action needed to protect people from vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccines have long been one of the most powerful tools in public health. Over the past 50 years, vaccines have saved more than 150 million lives – not by accident, but because ordinary people made the decision to protect themselves, their children and their communities from diseases like measles, diphtheria, pertussis, polio, and rotavirus. Today, newer vaccines against malaria, HPV, cholera, dengue, meningitis, RSV, Ebola, and mpox are saving even more lives, and helping people at every stage of life live longer and healthier thanks to scientific advancements.

During World Immunization Week, we are called upon to show the world that some family traditions are worth passing on. Under the theme, “**For every**

generation, vaccines work”, World Immunization Week will promote how vaccines have safely protected people, families, and communities for generations – and continue to safeguard our future.

Vaccines protect individuals and communities.

Vaccination not only protects you.
It protects those who can't be vaccinated



#VaccinesWork
For All

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

25 April

International Delegates Day

Delegates refer to all the country representatives in multilateral organisations that work tirelessly to protect and advance national and common global interests at the United Nations.

25 April

World Malaria Day

According to the WHO, in 2020, there were an estimated 241 million new cases of malaria and 627 000 malaria-related deaths in 85 countries. More than two thirds of deaths were among children under the age of 5 living in the WHO African Region.

26 April

World Intellectual Property Day

Creative minds the world over – architects, artists, artisans, designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, researchers, scientists and many others – come up with new ideas every day. From the arts to artificial intelligence, fashion to farming, renewable energy to retail, television to tourism, and virtual reality to videogames, to name just a few. Intellectual property protects the rights over ideas, and can include patents, copyright, industrial design rights, trademarks, plant variety rights, trade dress, and geographical origins. Countries have intellectual property rights, and the global entity that governs it is called the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

27 April

Freedom Day

Freedom Day is an annual celebration held on 27 April – the day on which South Africa held its first



non-racial democratic elections. It marks the end of over three hundred years of colonialism, segregation and white minority rule and the establishment of a new democratic government led by President Nelson Mandela and a new South African state under a new constitution. The holding of the first non-racial elections was the culmination of years of struggle and a negotiated settlement which led to the unbanning of the liberation organisations, the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles and the formal all party negotiations which drafted an interim constitution. On the first commemoration of Freedom Day, President Mandela addressed Parliament with the following words:

“As a new dawn ushered in this day, the 27th of April 1994, few of us could suppress the welling of emotion, as we were reminded of the terrible past from which we come as a nation; the great possibilities that we now have; and the bright future that beckons us. And so we assemble here today, and in other parts of the country, to mark a historic day in the life of our nation. Wherever South Africans are across the globe, our hearts beat as one, as we renew our common loyalty to our country and our commitment to its future.”

28 April

World day for Safety and Health at Work

Workplaces – mining, manufacturing and so forth – can be very hazardous to health and safety, hence the emergence of unions fighting for health and safety standards, and laws being made to ensure work-

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

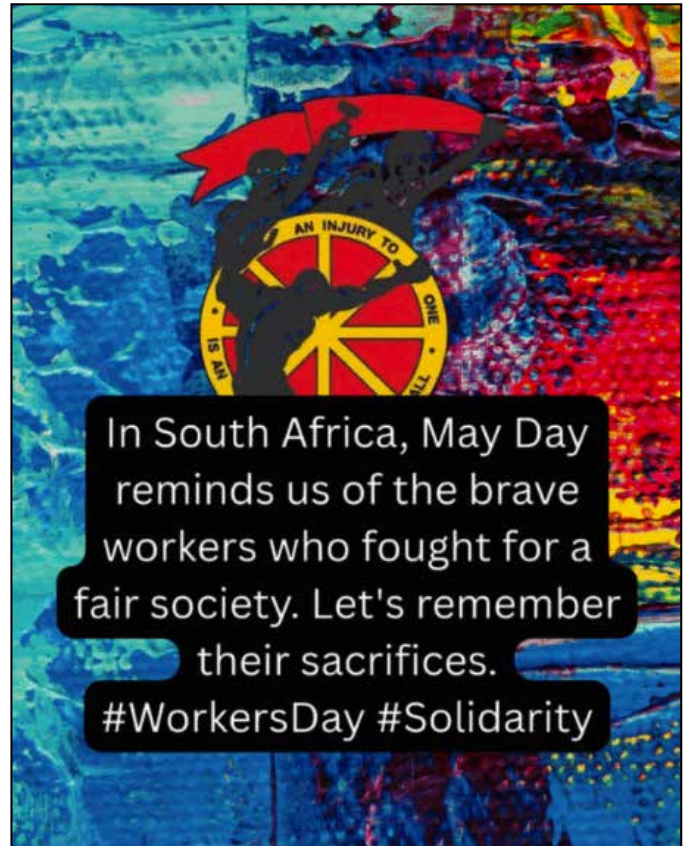
place safety. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) started observing this day emphasising the prevention of accidents and diseases at work. In the era of COVID-19, this is very important so that workers don't get infected at work, or infect customers and each other.

30 April International Jazz Day

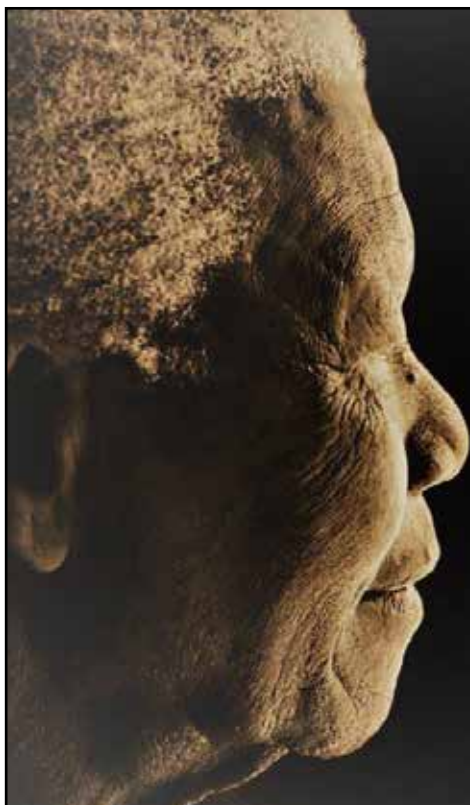
International Jazz Day raises awareness in the international community of the virtues of jazz as a force for peace, unity, dialogue and enhanced cooperation among people, as well as an educational tool.

1 May International Workers Day (May Day)

With industrialization and the development of capitalism in Europe during the late 19th Century, trade union and labour movements grew right along with countless industries, prompting trade unionists to begin to choose various days to celebrate the people's labour. In the United States and Canada, a September holiday called Labour Day, was first proposed in the 1880s. Several years later, in 1887, North America officially established Labour Day. May 1st, on the other hand, was chosen for International Workers' Day to commemorate the Haymarket affair of May 4th 1886 in Chicago, when an unidentified person



threw a bomb at the police, who responded by opening fire on the workers, killing four of them. Today, International Workers' day is celebrated on every continent. South Africa after 1994 celebrates **1 May** as **Workers Day**, a public holiday.



"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended"

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela



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