



ANC TODAY

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Conversations *with the* President



The Freedom we are celebrating today belongs to all of us

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA

AT THE **2026 FREEDOM DAY NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS**

DR RANTLAI MOLEMELA STADIUM, BLOEMFONTEIN

THIRTY-TWO years ago, on the 27th of April 1994, democratic South Africa was born.

The morning of the 27 April 1994 did not begin like an ordinary day. It began with great anticipation, excitement and a determination by millions of South Africans to participate in the birth of a nation.

Before sunrise millions of our people stood in long lines – young and old, rural and urban, black and white. Many were exposed to heavy rain and burning sun but they waited with pa-

ience, pride and dignity to cast their votes for the very first time.

More than 20 million South Africans participated in an election that was peaceful, free and fair.

It was a celebration of the human spirit and its capacity to overcome adversity.

It is an honour to mark this occasion here in Bloemfontein, where the flame of freedom was lit.

It was here in Mangaung that the African National Congress was born in 1912, bringing to-

gether for the first time people from across our country to stand against oppression and dispossession.

This is a province that suffered terribly the cruelty of colonialism and apartheid.

Here in Bloemfontein and in towns across the province, tens of thousands of Afrikaners and Africans were held in inhuman conditions in British concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War.

Many thousands, mostly women and children, died. Their



suffering stands as a shared, though unevenly remembered, chapter of South Africa's past, one that calls for remembrance, honesty and humanity.

This is a province with a history of courageous resistance.

Women from the then Orange Free State were among the first to rise against the extension of pass laws in 1913, with protests breaking out in Jagersfontein, Winburg and Bloemfontein.

They were arrested and imprisoned and their families were left without caregivers. Instead of being broken, the women of the Orange Free State became more determined because they would not accept a system that denied them dignity and freedom.

This was the site of the Witsieshoek Peasants' Revolt of 1950 against the apartheid government's oppressive land control policies. This was one of the most significant acts of resistance in rural South Africa.

The revolt was about the liveli-

hood of rural people regarding their cattle, wealth, security, identity and dignity that an oppressive government wanted to destroy.

The Witsieshoek Peasants' Revolt demonstrated that the struggle for freedom was also fought in the valleys, in the fields and in the hearts of rural communities. It was fought by farmers in the rural areas, families and ordinary people who chose courage over silence.

It was the people of this province that took Mama Winnie Mandela into the hearts and gave her comfort when she was banished to Brandfort in 1977.

History is often told through great speeches and grand events. But sometimes, its most powerful chapters are written by ordinary people who choose humanity over fear.

When Mama Winnie Mandela was banished to Brandfort, the apartheid rulers thought they were isolating her and breaking her spirit and influence. The people of Brandfort here in the

Free State did something remarkable: they did not let that voice fade. They carried it. They strengthened it. And they made it their own. They united in compassion and that became stronger than the system of a apartheid itself.

Last month we laid to rest a son of this province, the first Premier of the Free State and a stalwart of the liberation struggle, Mr Mosiuoa 'Terror' Lekota. He was a brave and principled leader who served this country with distinction. On this Freedom Day, we honour his memory.

Today, we recall the words of our first democratic President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela at his inauguration, when he said: *"The time for the healing of wounds has come. The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come. The time to build is upon us."*

On that first day of our freedom, as a nation, we entered into a social contract to build a society anchored in human dignity, equal rights and freedom for all.

Thirty years ago, the Constitution of the Republic, the legal foundation of that contract, was signed into law. That constitution became our birth certificate as a nation.

Our Constitution, which is widely regarded around the world as one of the most progressive, visionary and influential constitutions ever adopted, is a powerful promise about freedom and stands as our collective shield – protecting the freedom our people fought for.

Out of struggle came freedom; through our Constitution we have entrenched it as the unshakable foundation of our nation.

We have come far.

We stand here today not only as citizens of a democratic nation, but as custodians of a hard-won legacy of freedom. A legacy won in struggle. A legacy shaped by sacrifice, courage and an unbreakable belief in freedom and justice.

There was a time in this country when freedom was not a right but a dream.

It was a time when voices were silenced, dignity was denied to millions who were excluded from the life of the country they called home. But our people refused to accept that fate.

They organised. They resisted. They endured. And they won their freedom.

And in that struggle, they made a simple but powerful declara-

tion. The people of South Africa shall be free and that South Africa belongs to all who live in it.

When freedom came it was not a political transition. It was moral transformation. And at the centre of that transformation stands our constitution.

It is not just a legal document. It is a shield against injustice. A foundation for equality. A promise to every citizen that through it South Africa will never be governed by exclusion. Dignity will never be denied to the citizens of South Africa and freedom will never be reserved for a few.

Our freedom resulted and the right to speak and be heard. The right to move and belong. The right to vote and shape our future. The right to live with dignity. Our constitution ensured that freedom is not a slogan but a live reality.

In the 32 years of our democracy, we have built a progressive constitutional democracy, firmly anchored in the rule of law,

with an independent judiciary that serves as a guardian of the rights of all.

We have expanded access to healthcare, housing, education, water and electricity on an unprecedented scale.

We have transformed our education system that was used to perpetuate oppression to ensure universal access to education by introducing no-fee schools to expand access to education to children from poor households. Our National School Nutrition Programme feeds more than nine million learners every single day.

Through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, we have made tertiary education accessible to students from low-income households.

Last year, we recorded the highest matric pass rate in the history of South Africa.

Since the dawn of our democracy, we have steadily worked to





expand access to quality health care for all. We have built clinics and hospitals, provided free health care to pregnant women and young children, reduced child mortality and increased life expectancy.

Now we are working together to establish the National Health Insurance – the NHI – so that every person in this country has equal access to quality health care regardless of their ability to pay.

We are making progress on land reform, restoring land to many of those dispossessed since the introduction of the 1913 Natives Land Act and continuing to support its productive use.

The Free State is one of the provinces that is leading the country in providing comprehensive agricultural support to emerging and aspiring farmers.

Over the last 32 years, we have used our broad-based black economic empowerment policies to expand the participation of black South Africans, women and persons with disability in

the economy.

We have begun to redress the economic injustices of our past, expanding ownership, control and management of our economy beyond a privileged few.

The progress we have made is evident in improvements in the income and quality of life of African, coloured and Indian South Africans and the gradual reduction in inequality between races.

But this is not enough. There is much more that needs to be done. That is why we are working to strengthen our broad-based black economic empowerment policies, to make them more effective and more efficient – to ensure that they actually deliver the fundamental changes that our economy needs.

Dignity means that people must be able to live free from fear and violence.

To give greater effect to our freedom, we have dedicated greater resources and effort to tackling organised crime, gang-

sterism, gender-based violence and other forms of violent crime.

We are reforming and strengthening the criminal justice system, rooting out corruption and building a police service and a prosecuting authority in which people can have trust and confidence.

We call on all South Africans to be part of this work, to build communities, homes, schools and workplaces that are safe and secure.

Today we take the opportunity to reflect, renew and reaffirm our commitment to the social contract we entered into 32 years ago.

This is a compact that demands active citizenship, democratic oversight and a State that delivers justice, services, opportunity and dignity in return for public trust.

This is a solemn agreement that must be renewed in every interaction between the state and the people to whom it is accountable, in every service delivered and in every life improved.

The Government of National Unity is determined to drive inclusive growth and job creation, to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living, and to build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

This means we must address and overcome the many challenges facing South Africans today.

Failing water infrastructure, collapsing municipalities and deteriorating services are not mere inconveniences. They directly affect the quality of daily life. They constrain the growth of businesses and the creation of jobs.

Our resolve to strengthen local government provides an opportunity to transform municipalities, making them better run, more efficient and more responsive to the needs of our people. This is important because the truest test of our democracy is whether freedom translates into material change in people's lives.

Dignity starts with the most basic things: a roof over one's head, clean running water, reliable electricity. Freedom is about the ability to go to a clinic when one is sick, to have a school for one's children, and being provided for in old age.

Advancing human dignity is the promise of our Constitution and the fundamental value from which all other human rights flow. It is in pursuit of this fundamen-

tal value that we set out in the 2026 State of the Nation Address an ambitious economic agenda anchored in massive infrastructure investment, structural reforms and economic transformation.

We are removing obstacles to investment, making our economy more competitive and fixing key state-owned enterprises like Eskom and Transnet.

We are working with all social partners to grow industries that create jobs, such as agriculture, mining, tourism, manufacturing, renewable energy and digital industries.

It is to advance human dignity that we continue to act without fear or favour against those who undermine the promise of freedom.

Every rand stolen is an attack on our democracy.

Every project that is not completed is a betrayal of a community.

We will not rest until those who have hollowed out our in-

stitutions and diverted public resources for private gain are held to account.

No society can be free and equal while women and children continue to live in fear.

We must therefore do more to end gender-based violence.

When we held the Free State Men's Indaba here in Bloemfontein last year, I said:

"South Africa does not need a so-called new generation of men. It needs the men and boys of this generation to do better, and to be better. We need men who are protectors of women, not perpetrators. Men of South Africa must stand up and be counted, and say: Not in our Name."

That is the challenge that we, the men of South Africa, need to take up on this Freedom Day.

Fellow South Africans, we did not walk alone into freedom.

We were carried by a tide of solidarity from the nations of Africa, among many others.



These countries opened their borders to our liberation fighters. They shared their bread and their homes. They spoke for us when we could not speak for ourselves.

The leaders and people of Africa kept our struggle alive.

It cannot be, and it must never be, that we trample into the dust the African fellowship that made our freedom possible.

We are a people who live the value of ubuntu.

We should never allow the legitimate concerns of our communities about illegal migration to breed prejudice towards our fellow Africans.

We must not allow these concerns to give rise to xenophobia, directed towards people from other African countries or other any parts of the world.

Instead, we must insist that the law be upheld and enforced.

That is why we are clamping down on illegal migration and on businesses that flout our laws by hiring undocumented persons at the expense of our citizens.

We are actively rooting out corruption in our immigration system. We will not allow people to take the law into their own hands.

We extend hospitality to those



who are guests in our country, with the expectation that generosity is honoured with respect for our society and its laws.

As a nation that defeated colonialism and apartheid through international solidarity, we carry a responsibility to advance constitutional values beyond our borders.

We remain committed to multilateralism, respect for international law and principled diplomacy.

International law was born from the devastation of global conflict. It is a shield for all countries, regardless of their size or influence.

True multilateralism demands respect for diversity while remaining firm on core principles: sovereignty, human rights, accountability and peaceful coexistence.

This Freedom Day stands as a reminder that political liberation was never the final destination. It was the beginning of a longer journey towards economic freedom and social justice.

Let us continue to work together, sparing neither strength nor courage, to complete the unfinished task: the realisation of freedom that is grounded in justice, dignity and prosperity for all.

Our future will not be built by forgetting where we come from, but by acting with courage on what we have learned – united by one Constitution, bound by a collective responsibility to each other, and in pursuit of a shared destiny.

The Freedom we are celebrating today belongs to all of us.

It does not belong to one party. It does not belong to one generation.

It belongs to the people of South Africa – past, present and future.

Let us protect it. Let us uphold it. Let us live by it.

And so, as we reflect on how far we have come, and as we look to the future we must still build, let us remember this:

The freedom we enjoy today was not handed to us – it was fought for by our people and secured forever by our Constitution. Let us be worthy of that freedom.

Let us deepen it. Let us defend it. And let us ensure that it is felt by every South African, every day.

ANC reconstitutes KZN leadership to drive organisational renewal ahead of the 2026 Local Government Elections

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC) today announces the reconstituting of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Task Team (PTT) as part of a decisive organisational intervention to rebuild, renew, and strengthen the movement in the province ahead of the 2026 Local Government Elections. This intervention arises from a sober and honest assessment by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the state of the organisation in KwaZulu-Natal, including the recent electoral setbacks which have resulted in a decline in support. The NEC has reflected deeply on these developments and has resolved that urgent, focused, and disciplined organisational work is required to restore the confidence of the people and reposition the ANC as the leader of society in the province.

KwaZulu-Natal occupies a critical place in the political, economic, and organisational life of our movement and our country. The trajectory of the ANC in this province carries profound implications for the balance of forces in South Africa and the advancement of the National Democratic Revolution. It is therefore incumbent upon the movement to act with clarity, decisiveness, and unity of purpose to ensure that the ANC emerges stronger, more cohe-



sive, and firmly rooted among the people.

The reconstituted Provincial Task Team is entrusted with the responsibility to lead a comprehensive programme of organisational renewal. This programme is directed at rebuilding the ANC from the ground up, beginning with the strengthening of branches as centres of activism, political education, and community development. The work of renewal must find expression in the day-to-day conduct of cadres, in the discipline of our structures, and in the visible presence of the ANC in

the lives of our people.

Central to this effort is the restoration of organisational integrity and the deepening of the ANC's connection with communities across KwaZulu-Natal. The PTT will drive a focused programme of political education, including the rollout of the Foundation Course at all levels, to ensure that cadres are grounded in the values, traditions, and strategic perspectives of the movement. This will be accompanied by a systematic strengthening of regions and branches, and the enforcement of discipline across all structures,



including ANC caucuses in government.

Following its appointment, the Provincial Task Team convened an induction workshop to align on its mandate, programme of action, and operational approach. This process forms part of a broader effort to ensure organisational coherence, clarity of responsibilities, and collective leadership in the execution of the renewal programme. In this regard, an induction session for all Regional Task Teams (RTTs) appointed across the province will take place this afternoon, further consolidating the implementation of this intervention at all levels of the organisation.

The NEC has emphasised that all deployees of the movement must align themselves with the urgent task of improving service delivery and advancing development outcomes. The renewal of the ANC cannot be separated from the lived experience of the people. It must be reflected in the provision of water, electricity, housing,

safety, and economic opportunities. The work of government, at all spheres, must therefore be responsive, coordinated, and firmly directed towards improving the conditions of our people.

In this regard, the PTT is mandated to strengthen the participation of the ANC in the Government of Provincial Unity in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as in all municipalities, including those where the ANC is not in governance. This includes ensuring effective cooperation between national, provincial, and local government to drive development, address service delivery challenges, and stabilise governance in municipalities.

The NEC has further directed that a thorough political and organisational analysis be undertaken to understand how opposition forces have been able to exploit weaknesses within the ANC to gain support in the province. This analysis must inform a clear programme of action to reclaim the confidence of communities and to rebuild the ANC as the credi-

ble and decisive leader of society. The movement must sharpen its communication, strengthen its visibility, and engage meaningfully with all sectors of society, including workers, youth, women, professionals, traditional leaders, and the broader motive forces of the National Democratic Revolution.

The reconstitution of the PTT is undertaken in line with the ANC Constitution, which empowers the NEC to ensure that all structures of the organisation function effectively and democratically. In constituting this leadership collective, the NEC has sought to balance experience with renewal, to advance non-racialism and non-sexism, and to draw on the depth of leadership within the movement to inspire confidence and provide direction.

The NEC emphasised that the success of this intervention depends on unity, discipline, and ethical leadership. The PTT is therefore tasked with confronting all forms of corruption, criminality, and factionalism that undermine

the organisation and the developmental agenda of the state. Particular attention will be given to addressing construction-related extortion, strengthening the fight against crime and gender-based violence, and ensuring that the ANC leads in building a capable and developmental state.

The ANC remains committed to the unity and strengthening of the Alliance and the broader Mass Democratic Movement. While noting recent developments within the Alliance, the NEC reiterates that the historic mission of the Alliance remains central to the advancement of the National Democratic Revolution. The PTT will therefore work to consolidate relations with progressive formations, strengthen engagement with civil society, and deepen mass mobilisation as part of the renewal programme.

The Provincial Task Team, together with all Regional Task Teams, is mandated to implement a clear and time-bound programme of action. This includes conducting an immediate audit of the state of branches and regions, cleaning and verifying membership systems, rolling out political education and community organising programmes, and developing a ward-based electoral recovery strategy towards the 2026 Local Government Elections. The work of ANC deployees in government will be closely monitored to ensure accountability, discipline, and delivery.

The NEC has further resolved that all ANC deployees, including NEC members and national leadership, will be directly integrated into this programme of work to ensure its effective implementation. This intervention is comprehensive in scope and leaves

no area of organisational work to chance.

The reconstituting of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Task Team forms part of a broader national effort to rebuild the ANC as a disciplined, ethical, and people-centred movement capable of leading society. It is a call to all cadres to recommit themselves to the values of the organisation, to serve with humility, and to place the interests of the people above

all else.

The ANC calls on all its members, structures, and supporters in KwaZulu-Natal to rally behind this programme of renewal. The task before us is to reclaim the moral, political, and organisational high ground, to restore the confidence of our people, and to ensure that the ANC remains the primary instrument for the achievement of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous South Africa.

ANC STATEMENT ON THE EXTENSION OF THE FUEL AND DIESEL SUBSIDY

THE African National Congress (ANC) welcomes the National Treasury's extension of the reduction of fuel levy R3.00 per litre effective from 1 April 2026 to 5 May 2026. This measure includes diesel users receiving additional, targeted support, with a subsidy of nearly R4.00 per litre for 50ppm diesel, designed to support the logistics and agricultural sectors.

This comes after the reduction of the fuel and diesel in the month of March in the wake of the ranging Middle East conflict which has serious implications on the fuel and diesel prices.

This measure is in line with the ANC's priority of the reducing the high cost of living, cushioning consumers against the heavy impact of the high cost of living, and soaring fuel, diesel, food and oil prices. The ANC is optimistic of the ongoing efforts to end the conflict, allowing seamless global trade and a decline in the high

cost of living which has affected the global economy.

As an organisation, we look forward to other measures to insulate the country from economic harm and sufficiency in the supply of oil and diesel as the world explore solutions to the end the conflict.





ANC MESSAGE TO WORKERS ON MAY DAY

THE African National Congress (ANC) congratulates the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the broader labour movement on May Day 2026 for their steadfastness in fighting for workers' rights.

May Day was named International Workers' Day in honour of workers in Haymarket Square, Chicago, who in 1886 lost their lives for demanding an eight-hour working week.

Since then, it has become a rallying cry for decent wages and working conditions, for an end to child labour and slavery, for the right to organise, and eventually for the rights of women workers.

May Day became a battle cry of solidarity for workers across sectors, of all races, genders and creeds, across borders.

It became the battle cry for worker solidarity — that ***An injury to one is an injury to all.***

A PROUD TRADITION OF WORKER ORGANISATION

As capitalism planted its brutal flag in the soil of colonialism in South Africa, the indigenous populations, slaves and peasants, settler labour from Europe, and migrant labour from across Southern Africa resisted and organised in trade unions.

Throughout the twentieth century, as colonialism of a special type divided workers between white privilege and black super-exploitation and underdevelopment, black and women workers knew that they had to Organise or Starve. The workers' movement therefore became an integral part of the movement for national liberation, in strikes and protests, in the Defiance campaign, the drafting of the Women's Charter (1954) and the Freedom Charter (1955), in the 1956 Women's March and the Treason Trail.

Trade unionists and worker leaders, socialists and communists, were banned, imprisoned and

exiled, along with all activists and leaders who fought for freedom. They joined the peoples army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

The workers of the 1973 Durban strike along with the students of 1976 revived mass resistance in the country, and throughout the 1980s build their trade unions, worked in the youth, women's and civic movements to fight for workers rights, to make apartheid unworkable, and helped force the apartheid regime to negotiate with the representatives of the people.

It is within this crucible that COSATU was born in 1985, after four years of unity talks – to form **One Union One Industry, One Federation One Country.**

32 YEARS OF FREEDOM AND WORKERS RIGHTS

The 1994 transition started our journey to attack the legacy of colonialism apartheid, super exploitation and patriarchy. Our

EDITORIAL

Constitution and labour laws recognise the hard-won rights of workers to organise and for collective bargaining. Within the first democratic administration, we eliminated the racial and gender disparities in the public sector, and established NEDLAC to ensure that trade unions' shape labour relations and workers rights in this country.

After many years of struggle, the National Minimum Wage Act came into effect in 2019, protecting over 5.5 million of the most vulnerable workers.

Our common commitment as the Alliance, expressed through joint election campaigns and manifestos since 1994, saw the enduring movement towards a social wage, with access to subsidized housing for the poor, universal basic education and access to health, an increasingly comprehensive social security system, and to basic services such as water, sanitation and energy.

The work to eradicate racial and gender disparities in workplaces, the stubborn legacies of the Colour (and Gender) Bar - saw the introduction of employment equity policies and massive expansion in access to post school education and training, through NSFAS and our system of skills development in the workplace.

Despite the progress recorded, our struggle to build a truly National Democratic Society that leaves no one behind is far from over, and we have faced setbacks. Whilst the number of people in work has nearly doubled from 8.9 million in 1994 to around 17.1 million in 2026, growth and job creation, especially over the last 13 years or so, have not kept pace with growth in our population and the labour force.



Unemployment and poverty levels remain stubbornly high, with devastating impact on families, households and communities, especially on young men and women, as well as on children.

And, although we are seeing green shoots of recovery, the global situation and the real lived conditions of the motive forces, means we cannot rest on our laurels.

DECISIVE ACTION TO FIX LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND TRANSFORM THE ECONOMY

Despite the 2024 strategic setback in the national and provincial elections, the Manifesto on which the Alliance campaigned was concretised in the strategic priorities of the 7th administration led by the ANC. These are a) driving inclusive growth and job creation, (b) reducing poverty and tackling the high cost of living; and (c) building a capable, ethical and developmental state.

- To work in communities, with ward councillors and municipalities, to tackle service delivery issues and resolve the challenges facing the people, especially water, sanitation, energy, human settlements and roads.

- To ensure that councillors continually engage communities on their plans, including the IDP process, updates on projects and the budgets to be adopted.
- To engage all sectors in communities to be part of the National Dialogue, on the South Africa and communities we want, as we fix the problems and challenges of today.

In a similar vein, transforming the economy – changing its colonial and patriarchal character, so that we can have sustainable growth, investment in industries and beneficiation, growing small and medium enterprises and township and rural economies, land and agrarian reform – remain the task of the Alliance and all progressive forces.

As we celebrate 30 years of the Constitution, we recall what we said in our first Elections Manifesto at the dawn of democracy in 1994, that:

Democracy means more than just the vote. It must be measured by the quality of life of ordinary people – men and women, young and old, rural and urban.

It means giving all South Africans the opportunity to share in the country's wealth, to contribute to

its development and to improve their own lives.

FORWARD EVER, BACKWARD NEVER

Our struggle today takes place when national and global inequality are at its peak, with the richest 1% in the world capturing 42% of global wealth.

Workers' wages across the world, in neoliberalism's race to the bottom for even greater profits for the few, have been stagnant or declining. Work has become more precarious, as outsourcing and casualisation, as well as mechanisation and now Artificial intelligence, massively increasing the numbers of the working poor and unemployed.

These are compounded by the ongoing wars in the world, the genocide in Gaza, the wars in the Sudan and Ukraine, the kidnapping of Venezuela's leadership, the blockade against Cuba, and the USA/Israel war against Iran and Lebanon.

This takes place alongside emboldened extreme-right and populist forces – with attacks on women's and workers rights, diversity, equality, attacks against immigrants, particularly black people and the attack on public

services and the developmental role of the state.

We also see the manifestations of these extreme-right and populist forces in South Africa: in the "white genocide" narrative, the virulent support for Israel amongst sections of the population, the senseless violence against African immigrants, the impunity of those who commit acts of corruption, the secessionist fringe in W Cape and the push-back against transformation, including against the National Health Insurance, against broad-based black economic empowerment and affirmative action, and against our progressive foreign policy.

These manifestations have one thing in common: to divide the people and the motive forces, to undermine development, solidarity and ubuntu, and to weaken our Constitutional commitment to redress, to build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa for all.

Their goal is to isolate and weaken democratic South Africa, to discredit its principled commitment to Pan Africanism, to a better Africa and a better, just and peaceful world. Their ultimately objective is to defeat the National Democratic Revolution in South Africa.

In Local Government Elections, Workers must Vote ANC

It is for these reasons, as we celebrate and remember the struggles of workers on May Day, that we once again make the call on workers.

The ANC considers the working class a key component of those that stands to benefit from the National Democratic Revolution. COSATU and the broader labour movement, are therefore a leading part of the motive forces for change. In factories, mines, farms, shops, service sectors, in the public sector, we therefore call on COSATU unions and shop stewards, locals and members, to work to defend and advance the revolution.

This concretely means making sure all members are registered to vote, especially young workers, but also in communities.

It means participating in the selection of ANC ward candidates, so that we get people who are committed to serve.

And above all, it means to campaign and vote ANC!

Aluta continua!

Amandla!



May Day: Paying Tribute to the Working Class, Defending Unity and Advancing Transformation

■ By **MAHLENGI BHENGU**

AS the world marks May Day, the African National Congress (ANC) pays tribute to the indomitable spirit, courage and heroic role of workers whose sacrifices helped free our nation.

May Day is a poignant reminder of the struggles and hard-won victories of the working class, both globally and at home. For South Africa, May Day carries a profound revolutionary meaning. It speaks to the very soul of our struggle, to the unbreakable unity of workers and communities, and to the unfinished task of building a truly national democratic society.

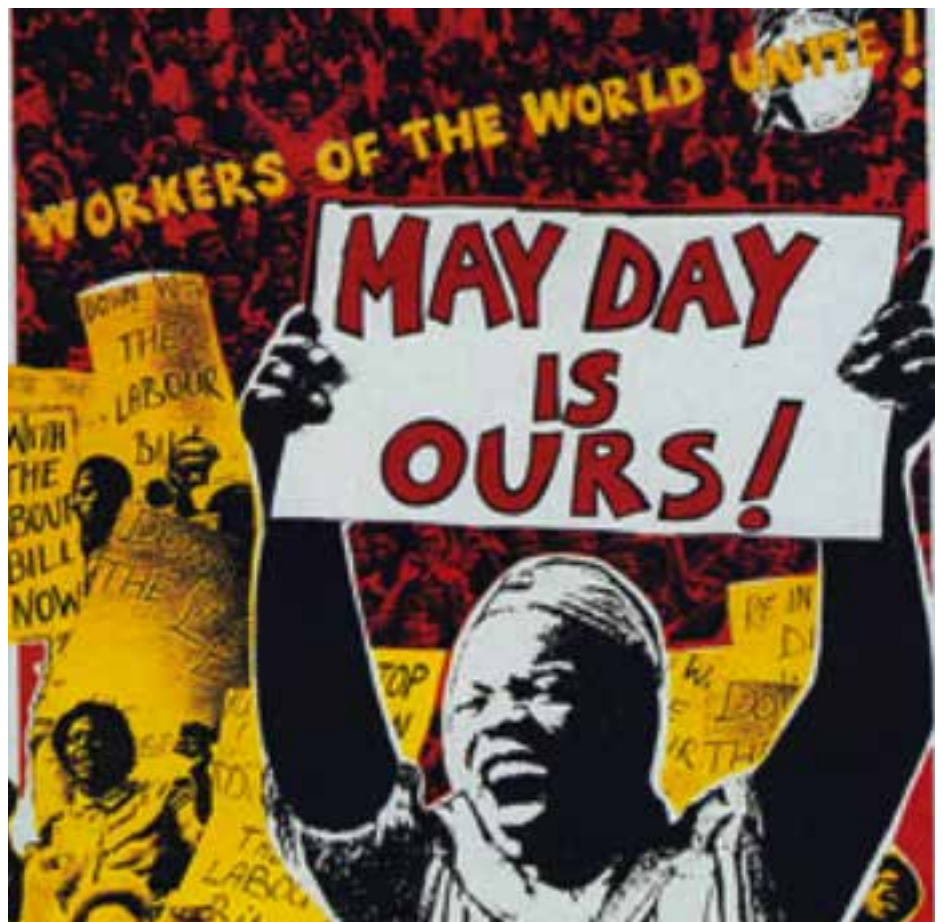
As we reflect on this day, we must ask what May Day demands of us in the current epoch, and how its powerful message must guide our actions as we intensify the struggle for fundamental transformation. At the centre of this reflection stands the working class - the primary motive force of our revolution - organised under the banner of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and its militant forerunner, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU).

We pay revolutionary tribute to these organisations and to the broader working class for their decisive role in the defeat of

apartheid and the birth of a democratic South Africa. These formations have been uncompromising defenders of workers' rights and vanguards in the struggle against exploitation, oppression and injustice. The 1994 breakthrough was a triumph forged in mass resistance, worker militancy and relentless struggle.

The roots of May Day in South Africa are thus deeply inter-

twined with the broader struggle against apartheid colonialism. Workers were not passive victims of oppression and exploitation. They were active agents of change. Factories, mines, farms and workplaces became sites of resistance and worker militancy. It was here that the working class developed a powerful consciousness that was anchored in the understanding that economic exploitation and racial oppression



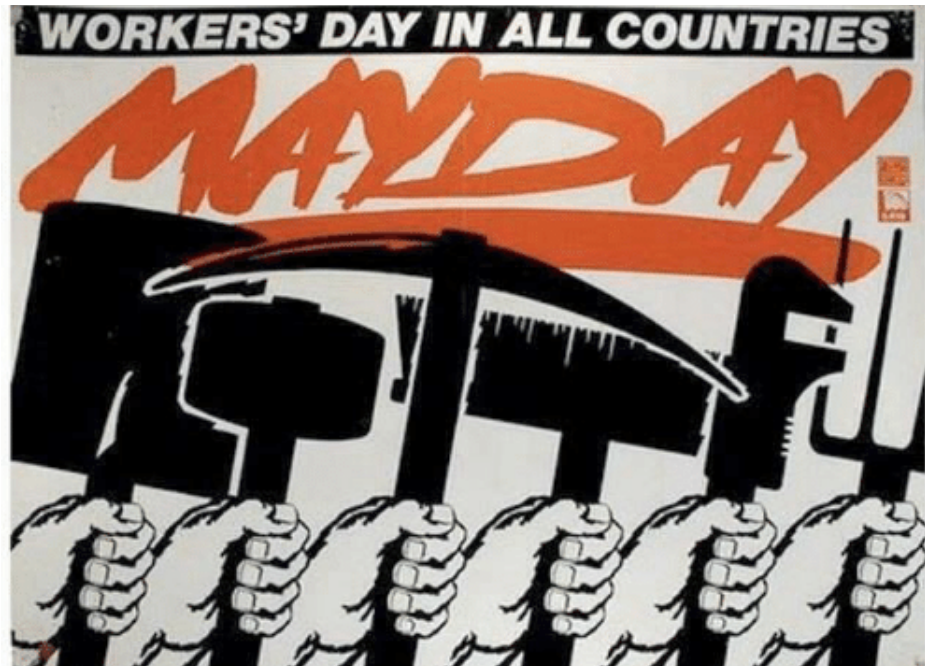
were two sides of the same coin.

The formation of the SACTU marked a turning point in this struggle. Operating under extremely repressive conditions, SACTU became the voice of workers who had been denied basic rights and dignity. It aligned itself firmly with the liberation movement, recognising that the struggle for workers' rights could not be separated from the struggle for national liberation.

This proud tradition found renewed expression in the formation of COSATU in 1985. COSATU emerged at a time when the apartheid regime was intensifying its repression against all progressive forces, but it also marked a period of heightened resistance. From its inception, COSATU positioned itself not only as a defender of workers' rights but as a central pillar of the broader liberation movement. COSATU recognised that the emancipation of the working class required a united front against apartheid and its economic foundations.

The Tripartite Alliance became a formidable force in the struggle for freedom. It combined political leadership, mass mobilisation and ideological clarity. Workers organised under COSATU played a decisive role in rendering the country ungovernable, through strikes, boycotts and mass protests.

As we reflect on the downfall of apartheid, we must be clear that the democratic breakthrough of 1994 was not handed to us. It was won through struggle, and the working class stood at the forefront of that struggle. May Day, therefore, is also a celebration of that victory which opened the door to a new constitutional order based on dignity, equality



and freedom.

The achievement of political democracy was only the beginning. The ultimate objective is the fundamental transformation of the economy and society to reflect the aspirations of the majority. It is about dismantling the structural inequalities inherited from apartheid and building a society in which all can share in the country's wealth.

Since 1994, the ANC-led government, working with organised labour, has undertaken far-reaching interventions to defend and advance workers' rights, fundamentally reshaping South Africa's labour landscape. Progressive labour laws have entrenched protections against unfair dismissal, guaranteed collective bargaining and unionisation, and ensured safe working conditions.

At the heart of this transformation has been a progressive legislative framework, including the Labour Relations Act, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, and the Employment Equity Act. These laws institutionalised

the right to organise, strike and bargain collectively, while also addressing workplace discrimination and promoting fair labour practices across sectors.

The creation of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) has been a cornerstone of this progress. The CCMA provides free, accessible dispute resolution services, enabling workers – especially the most vulnerable – to challenge unfair dismissals and labour practices without the burden of costly legal processes. This has significantly strengthened workplace justice and reduced exploitation.

A landmark achievement has been the introduction of the National Minimum Wage, which established a wage floor for millions of low-income workers in sectors such as agriculture, domestic work and retail. This intervention has helped to narrow extreme income disparities and improve the quality of life for many working families. Complementing this, sectoral determinations and labour law amendments have progressively extended protections

to historically marginalised workers, including those in informal and precarious employment.

The ANC-led government has also expanded social protection mechanisms. The Unemployment Insurance Fund has been strengthened to provide income support during periods of job loss, illness or maternity leave. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this fund played a critical role in cushioning workers and sustaining livelihoods through temporary relief schemes.

Enforcement capacity has been enhanced through labour inspectorates to ensure compliance with labour laws, while institutions such as NEDLAC have enabled structured engagement between government, labour and business on key socio-economic policies.

The impact of these interventions has been profound. We have witnessed improved working conditions, greater job security, increased equity in the workplace and the empowerment of workers to assert their rights.

These gains have not come without resistance. The forces of capital and right-wing political formations have persistently sought to resist and roll back these gains. They are intensifying their offensive. In the face of this onslaught, the ANC remains committed to working with COSATU and other partners to defend hard-won gains, strengthen collective bargaining and accelerate transformation.

The ANC remains steadfast in its commitment to the working class because we understand that economic growth cannot be built on the exploitation of labour. Sustainable development requires fairness, inclusion and justice.

As we look ahead, we must acknowledge that significant challenges remain. Unemployment, deepening inequality and persistent poverty remain the defining fault lines of our society. The changing nature of work, driven by technological advancements and globalisation, presents new complexities. These challenges require innovative responses.

We must deepen our efforts to create decent work opportunities, particularly for the youth. We must strengthen our industrial base and support sectors that can generate sustainable employment. We must continue to invest in education and skills development, so that workers can be equipped to participate meaningfully in a changing economy. We must do all this while safeguarding the rights and dignity of workers. The Alliance remains central to this task. Its relevance resides not only in its history but in its capacity to adapt and respond to contemporary realities.

Let May Day be a moment to honour those who came before us and to draw inspiration and strength from their enduring revolutionary

legacy. We salute Billy Nair, John Gaetsewe, Stephen Dlamini, Moses Mabhida, John Nkadimeng, John Gomomo, Emma Mashinini, Elijah Barayi and many other stalwarts of the working class movement. Their blood, sweat and unbreakable spirit forged the path we walk today. They remind us that unity is our greatest strength, and that divisions only empower those who wish to reverse the gains of the working class.

May Day demands that we jealously defend every hard-won right of workers. It also demands that we forge unbreakable unity and intensify the struggle for a just and equitable society. We must stand firm and close ranks against those who seek to reverse our gains, and march forward with courage and discipline.

The road that lies ahead will not be easy. Let us walk it together with unwavering commitment to the total emancipation of the working class.

Mahlengi Bhengu is the National Spokesperson of the African National Congress.

On this May Day, we salute the workers of South Africa.

It is the workers of our country who drive our economy, who produce our goods, who provide our services, who create our nation's wealth. As a society, we have a responsibility to ensure that workers are properly recognised and rewarded for the vital contribution they make.

We need to ensure that the rights of workers are protected and strengthened.

**We wish all workers everywhere a revolutionary
MAY DAY.**



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



ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE: The Role of National Liberation Politics

ADDRESS BY **ANC VETERANS LEAGUE PRESIDENT SNUKI ZIKALALA**

TO THE **Sinn Féin National Conference**

24 – 26 April 2026

ALMOST fifty years ago in South Africa, young black school students marched in protest against being taught in Afrikaans, which they regarded as the language of their oppressor, the white minority regime.

They were mowed down by police, first on June 16th in Soweto and then in many parts of the country as the uprising spread. By the end of 1976, as many as 600 people were killed, 3000 injured, and 6000 arrested – mostly youth – by the police.

But the freedom struggle was irrevocably changed, and the days of the apartheid regime were numbered. The youth had opened the door to ongoing mass mobilisation, defiance, and a people's war, which, together with the armed struggle and international solidarity, led to the successful conclusion of our struggle for self-determination and, we hoped, the end of colonialism and imperialism in Africa.

In the world today, every day is June 16th. Children are being mowed down, starved, deprived of their childhood, surviving barely in tents and temporary shelters – from Gaza to Lebanon, Iran, Cuba and Sudan.



Tragically, imperialism has not been defeated. Instead, buoyed on by the President of the United States, imperialism or neo-colonialism is intensifying, and the struggle for national liberation and self-determination must again become the rallying call.

As the African National Congress, in alliance with the South African Communist Party, we believed that national liberation was a step towards a socialist revolution, although, following one of our greatest strategists, Joe Slovo, we acknowledged that there is “no Chinese wall” between the stages, and that elements of socialism could be built during the national democratic revolution.

However, we did not envisage a backward march – one step for-

ward, two or more steps backwards, to use or abuse the famous quote by Lenin. But here we are, comrades, facing intense turmoil in Africa and South America and catastrophic wars in the Middle East. And instead of international multi-polarity, the United States sets the world agenda backed by a military-industrial complex and self-seeking allies.

It requires us, who come from progressive roots, to re-strategise. To take that one step back and revisit, and possibly revive or reinvent, the strategies and strengths of national liberation politics. Based on the South African liberation struggle, we could consider the following:

Firstly, respecting the will of the people and enabling them to be



masters of their own destiny - actively involving workers, community members, young people, and vulnerable groups around issues that affect them and then making the links to broader struggles for democracy and against class exploitation. Parties on the broad left have been neglecting this task, leading to increasing right-wing support among the working class, as we see in the United States and parts of Europe.

Secondly, international solidarity. An injury to one is an injury to all!" Last weekend, at a Conference in Spain, the governments of Mexico, Spain, and Brazil came out in defence of Cuba, and across the world, including in South Africa, progressive movements are mobilising resources and support. The Flotillas organised to Gaza and Cuba are powerful international solidarity campaigns, but we need to do more to pressure our governments to defend, reinforce and rebuild an international rules-based system.

Thirdly, building broad fronts around issues which can unite us, while recognising that there are things that divide us. This is

not always easy – in an environment where anti-democratic forces capitalise on dividing us along lines of race, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation – but this is at the heart of national liberation politics.

As I conclude, comrades, I want to call on you to stand in solidarity with the Cuban people who are facing a severe blockade by the US. The Cubans, led by Fidel Castro, were absolutely instrumental in supporting our armed struggle and in educating many thousands of young South Africans.

Lest we forget, we support the rights of the people of Palestine to self-determination and condemn the genocide committed by the Israeli government, supported by the Trump administration.

And lastly, as the ANCVL, we support the demand by Sinn Féin leadership that a thorough programme of action that will lead to Irish unity be developed and be ready for a referendum on Irish unity in 2030, as guided by the Good Friday Agreement, and a new and United Ireland should have the right to self-determination.



ANCVL President Snuki Zikalala with Sinn Féin veteran, Gerry Adams

BRIXTON RESERVOIR OPENING

Government is listening, and government is acting



Message of Support by the Minister of Water and Sanitation

PEMMY MAJODINA on the occasion of the **Official Opening of the Brixton Reservoir and Water Tower Project** by Executive Mayor Dada Morero

TODAY marks a moment of profound significance for the people of Johannesburg. We gather here not merely to unveil infrastructure, but to affirm a commitment to dignity, to resilience, and to the fundamental right of every citizen to reliable access to water. I wish to extend my warmest congratulations to Executive Mayor Dada Morero and his administration for reaching this important milestone with the completion and official opening of the Brixton Reservoir and Water Tower Project.

This project stands as a testament to purposeful leadership, strategic investment, and the unwavering determination to confront the challenges that have, in recent times, tested the resolve of this great city. The recent water

supply disruptions experienced across Johannesburg have been a source of real concern for residents, institutions and businesses alike. We have seen the strain placed on households, hospitals, schools and on economic activity. These challenges are real and demand real, lasting solutions.

It is precisely in this context that today's achievement must be understood. The Brixton Reservoir and Water Tower Project is not an isolated development. It is part of a broader, coordinated effort to stabilise and strengthen the water supply system of Johannesburg. As part of the Commando Water Supply System, this critical infrastructure will significantly enhance water storage capacity, improve supply stability, and ensure greater service reliability for

thousands of residents and key institutions.

The impact of this project will be felt far and wide. Facilities such as Rahima Moosa Mother and Child Hospital and Helen Joseph Hospital will benefit from improved water security. This will ensure that healthcare services are delivered without disruption. The University of Johannesburg, a vital centre of learning and innovation, will operate with greater certainty. The South African Broadcasting Corporation, a cornerstone of our democratic discourse, will continue its work with enhanced reliability.

As government, we are clear: Water is life, and water security is non-negotiable. The challenges facing Johannesburg's water

system – aging infrastructure, population growth, climate variability, and operational pressures – require sustained investment, collaboration, and innovation. This project demonstrates what is possible when there is alignment between national, provincial, and local government, supported by capable institutions and a shared sense of purpose.



At the same time, we must be equally clear about what will not advance our cause. There are those who seek to exploit the genuine frustrations of our people for narrow political point-scoring. They amplify challenges without offering solutions. They sow doubt rather than build confidence. Let me state without hesitation that water security is too important to be reduced to a political football. Our people deserve honesty, accountability, and, above all, action.

We must reject the politics of opportunism and embrace the politics of responsibility. The work of rebuilding and modernising our water infrastructure requires unity of purpose. It requires that we acknowledge challenges while working collectively to resolve them. It requires leadership that does not retreat in the face of difficulty, but rises to meet it, just as we have seen here today.

Executive Mayor Morero, your leadership in driving this project to completion sends a powerful message that Johannesburg is not standing still, that it is confronting its challenges head-on, and that it is investing in a more secure and sustainable future. For this, you deserve recognition and support.

But let us also be clear: This is not the end of the journey. It is a decisive step forward. More work lies ahead. We must continue to invest in infrastructure maintenance and upgrades. We must strengthen governance and operational efficiency within our water entities. We must promote water conservation and responsible usage among all residents. And we must harness innovation and partnerships to build a system that is resilient in the face of

future shocks.

To the residents of Johannesburg, I say this: Your patience and resilience have not gone unnoticed. Government is listening, and government is acting. Projects such as this one are evidence of that commitment.

Let this moment inspire us all. Let it remind us that progress is possible, even in the face of difficulty. Let it strengthen our collective resolve to build a city and country where every person can turn on a tap with confidence, knowing that water will flow.

As we stand here today, let us commit ourselves to protect our water resources, to support the institutions that deliver these services, and to work together as government, business and communities to secure a better future for all.



The opening of the Brixton Water Reservoir is one of ANC's measures to address the water crisis as announced by President Cyril Rampahosa.

The project consists of 26 mega litres of ground ground reservoir, an elevated tower and 200 litre-per second pump station.

This will alleviate the plight of the communities of Brixton and other adjacent areas

Unity in Struggle:

ANC–SACP alliance remains central to South Africa’s political future

■ By **ANDILE LUNGISA**

THE alliance between the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), stands as one of the most enduring and influential partnerships in South Africa’s liberation history. Forged in struggle and sustained through decades of repression, exile and internal debate, this relationship continues to shape the country’s politi-

cal direction at a time of renewed scrutiny over strategy and leadership.

From the early 20th century, the ANC and SACP found common cause in opposing racial capitalism and colonial rule. Contrary to long-standing claims that the Communist Party was an external imposition, its development was deeply embedded in African

political struggles. By the late 1920s, the party had become predominantly African in composition, with figures such as Albert Nzula, Moses Kotane and J.B. Marks at the forefront.

Recognition of this partnership came early. In 1927, ANC President-General Josiah Gumede described the Communist Party as “the only party that honestly and sincerely fights for the oppressed people,” reflecting the shared experiences of workers and activists in unions, campaigns and mass mobilisation.

By the mid-20th century, cooperation had intensified. The two organisations jointly shaped the Congress Alliance, co-founded Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961, and operated in close coordination while maintaining organisational independence. Their relationship, as articulated in *The African Communist* journal in 1976, rested on mutual respect for each other’s autonomy.

A defining moment came at the ANC’s 1969 Morogoro Conference, which formalized the alliance’s strategic direction. The conference affirmed that South Africa’s struggle was national in form but rooted in class realities, with leadership expected from the working class and oppressed





African majority. It also reinforced non-racialism as a core revolutionary principle.

Central to this framework was the concept of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), aligned with the SACP's Two-Stage Theory.

First the defeat of apartheid and racial domination, second, a transition toward socialism through the transformation of economic structures. The SACP's role has consistently been to ensure that political liberation is accompanied by meaningful economic change.

South Africa's experience is not

unique. Across Africa and beyond, progressive forces have historically united, often overcoming ideological and organizational differences, to achieve common national objectives.

In Mozambique, the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) was formed in 1962 in Mozambique through the merger of three nationalist movements, namely, MANU, UDENAMO and UNAMI. This consolidation of fragmented forces created a unified liberation front capable of waging an effective struggle against Portuguese colonial rule.

Similarly, in Tanzania, post-independence political consolidation

took place in 1977 with the formation of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). This followed the merger of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and Zanzibar's Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), creating a single dominant political movement that has remained central to the country's governance.

Latin America offers comparable lessons. In Uruguay, the formation of the Broad Front (Frente Amplio) in 1971 brought together socialists, communists, Christian democrats and other progressive groups into a single coalition. Despite ideological diversity, the alliance enabled sustained political mobilisation and eventually electoral success, demonstrating

the power of unity in advancing progressive transformation.

These examples underscore a consistent historical lesson that unity among progressive forces is often decisive in confronting entrenched systems of domination. South Africa's own liberation struggle was similarly strengthened by the ANC–SACP alliance, international solidarity and mass mobilisation rooted in working-class leadership.

Since 1994, the alliance has operated within a democratic constitutional framework. Parliament has served as a platform for advancing progressive legislation and institutional reform, but it has also revealed the limitations of change within a capitalist system.

The SACP has long argued that parliamentary work must complement, not replace, grassroots mobilisation. Reform without deeper transformation risks stagnation, while transformation without unity risks fragmentation.

Recent developments, including the SACP's decision to contest local government elections inde-

pendently, have brought tensions into sharper focus. Rather than signalling a complete rupture, this move reflects growing frustration over the pace of transformation, concerns about governance failures, and a desire to reassert working-class influence.

Disagreements of this nature are not unprecedented. Past moments of tension, including debates leading up to Morogoro, have often resulted in renewal rather than division.

History also offers cautionary lessons about factionalism driven by personal ambition. Past divisions have frequently been fuelled by anti-communism, racial chauvinism and narrow nationalism, often used as tools for political advancement.

Such tendencies remain relevant today. Whether expressed through populism or technocratic elitism, careerism poses a threat to the cohesion of the liberation movement. The risk of internal division, long recognised, continues to demand vigilance.

At its core, the ANC–SACP alli-

ance is not merely symbolic but strategic. The ANC provides a broad national platform, while the SACP contributes ideological depth and class analysis. Together, they form the backbone of the National Democratic Revolution.

Weakening this partnership would undermine the ability of the working class and the poor to influence South Africa's trajectory. South Africa faces persistent inequality, high unemployment and uneven progress since the end of apartheid. In this context, the stakes are high.

Unity within the alliance must be preserved, but not without critical engagement. Differences in tactics should not obscure shared long-term goals. The challenge lies in renewing the alliance, strengthening grassroots participation and accelerating meaningful transformation.

The ANC–SACP partnership was forged under conditions of intense struggle. Its future should not be jeopardised in a democratic era where the need for cohesive leadership remains as urgent as ever.



When Rules Become Power: Dispute Resolution as a Delivery Tool and how it helps us meet the Mayoral deadline

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

COMRADES, let me speak from experience. I have sat in the chair of a provincial dispute structure long enough to know two truths at the same time. First, a credible dispute process is one of the ANC's most important protections. It prevents intimidation from becoming a strategy. It protects internal democracy. It stops gatekeeping and procedural abuse from deciding who leads. Second, if we allow disputes to become an inward sport and naval gaze, we will lose the community while we win arguments inside the organisation.

That is the tightrope we must walk now.

The NEC has made a decisive call to widen nominations beyond the organisation and to actively recruit capable credible servant local leaders from across society. That is the correct directive and our systems must align. The NEC has also given us strict deadlines: mayoral candidates must be finalised and announced within weeks, not months. This means the movement must do two things at once:

- open the pool wider and raise the standard higher, and
- prevent disputes from becoming a brake that delays decisions and burns legitimacy.



This article is a practical guide for ordinary members and supporters, especially in wards and voting districts where our footprint is thin and where community trust must be earned. It explains how dispute resolution works, why it matters, and how we must upgrade it so it helps us meet deadlines and select leaders with credibility beyond our internal circles.

1) The dispute system exists to protect democracy not to replace community judgment

Dispute resolution has a clear purpose: it exists to correct breaches of rules and process that undermine fairness. It is a

safeguard against manipulation. It is not meant to be a permanent substitute for political leadership, community engagement, and collective judgment.

Where we go wrong is when we treat it as the main arena of politics. We lodge dispute after dispute, not to restore fairness, but to delay, delegitimise, and bargain for outcomes later. That is how the organisation becomes trapped in naval gazing: we fight internally while communities judge us as absent, self-absorbed, and unserious about service.

If we are serious about renewal and about the NEC's open nomination direction, then dispute

resolution must be re-centred as a fast corrective mechanism with a strong link to community intelligence.

2) What I have seen repeatedly in disputes: the patterns that keep returning

Even without naming cases or dates, the pattern is consistent. The disputes that flood provincial and regional structures usually revolve around a small set of recurring failures:

- Notice and access problems: people say meetings were called late, selectively communicated, or the venue/time kept unclear.
- Membership list manipulation: numbers shifting close to cut-off, disputes about who is in good standing, and confusion at the door.
- Quorum and “warm body” arguments: meetings proceeding without credible verification, creating immediate legitimacy problems.
- Compromised process-keepers: presiding officers or deployees seen as aligned, registers handled by interested parties, or key roles captured.
- Disruption and intimidation: meetings destabilised intentionally so that outcomes can be challenged later.
- Councillor deployment interference: internal pressure to force outcomes regardless of process.

These patterns matter because they are not random. They are the predictable weaknesses of thin organisational footprints and high-stakes positions.

And here is the brutal truth: when a ward or branch has low participation, it becomes easier to capture the process. Small circles

can control notices, registers, and chairing. That is precisely why disputes multiply in those wards and why we must design the process differently there.

3) How disputes should work in plain language

A proper dispute is not a feeling. It is not “my candidate lost.” A dispute is an evidence-based claim that a rule breach affected fairness.

A dispute must answer four questions clearly:

- What rule was breached?
- What happened, specifically?
- What evidence exists?
- What remedy do you want?

If you cannot answer those four questions, you don’t have a dispute. You have dissatisfaction and dissatisfaction must be handled politically, not through a quasi-judicial mechanism.

For ordinary members, the discipline is simple: document as you go. Don’t reconstruct later. Keep screenshots of notices. Photograph attendance registers (where permitted). Capture min-

utes. Record incidents. Get short witness statements immediately. Evidence gathered late becomes weak evidence.

4) The big upgrade we need now: community intelligence must inform dispute outcomes

We spend too much time, energy, effort and resources fighting inside the branch meetings while failing to draw in the intelligence, mood and the sense of the community where the ward is located in.

Let us be honest. Sometimes we can “win” an internal dispute and still lose the ward politically. Because both our internal Candidate A and Candidate B may be acceptable inside the ANC, but neither is credible in the community. Neither has trust. Neither can unite. Neither can win.

If dispute resolution only checks process and procedure, it will miss the bigger danger: procedurally correct but politically disastrous outcomes.

So here is the practical proposal for how the movement should





evolve the process, consistent with the NEC's opening of nominations.

A) Add a "Community Reality Test" to high-impact disputes

In wards where the ANC footprint is contested, and in metro mayoral selections, dispute committees (or the structures that receive disputes) should be able to request a short, structured "community reality check" before finalising remedies.

Not gossip. Not social media noise. Structured input:

- two or three respected civic voices;
- faith-based leadership input;
- local business forums or ratepayer associations where relevant;
- youth and women's formations;
- community safety structures.

Ask three questions only:

- Can this person lead?
- Can this person be trusted?
- Can this person unite and communicate?

This does not replace internal democracy. It strengthens legitimacy. It prevents the ANC from

selecting internally "acceptable" candidates who are externally rejected.

B) Use disputes to correct gatekeeping against open nominations

Now that the NEC is inviting nominations from outside the organisation, a new form of gatekeeping will emerge: names will be quietly filtered out before they reach assessment.

Dispute processes must be able to intervene when:

- nomination channels are hidden;
- public nominations are not recorded;
- credible community names are excluded without reasons;
- processes are manipulated to protect insiders.

This is how dispute resolution supports the NEC decision: by ensuring the opening is real, not symbolic.

5) How this helps us meet the Mayoral deadline

Let me put it bluntly: if disputes are allowed to drift, the movement will miss its own deadline

and enter the election season disorganised, divided, and publicly embarrassed.

So dispute resolution must operate with two disciplines:

A) Speed with fairness

Disputes must be processed quickly, with clear admissibility rules:

- no evidence, no case
- out of time, no case
- vague dissatisfaction, no case

This is not harshness. It is protection. It stops malicious disputes from being used as a brake on decision-making.

B) Remedies that restore legitimacy without collapsing the process

The remedy must fit the harm:

- if notice failed, correct notice and reconvene;
- if registers were manipulated, correct the register process and rerun;
- if intimidation occurred, reconvene with stronger controls and discipline;
- if officials were conflicted, replace them and restart that step.

The remedy must not be “*burn everything down.*” In thin-footprint wards, collapse is not neutral. Collapse destroys the very organisational capacity we are trying to rebuild.

6) What ordinary members and supporters should do in thin-footprint wards

If you want credible servant leadership, you must do four practical things:

- Make the nomination opening visible: share it through community networks, schools, clinics, sports clubs, civic groups, and faith institutions. If the community doesn't know the process is open, insiders will capture it.
- Demand one official notice stream: one time, one venue, one agenda, one contact person, and proof it was circulated. Confusion is a weapon.
- Keep a ward process file: notices, minutes, registers, incident logs. This is your protection.
- Use disputes responsibly: evidence-based, rule-based, seeking corrective remedies not paralysis.

7) Is recruitment and interviewing part of the dispute committee mandate?

In strict terms, dispute committees exist to resolve disputes, not to recruit candidates. But in the current moment, dispute committees can and should be accommodated within a broader process integrity system that includes:

- an open nomination mechanism (NEC direction);
- a structured assessment process;
- a community intelligence layer;

- and a dispute mechanism that corrects unfairness quickly.

In other words: the dispute committee is not the recruiter, but it must become the guardian of openness and fairness, especially where the NEC has opened nominations beyond the organisation.

Conclusion: Less naval gazing, more legitimacy, faster decisions, better names

Comrades, communities will not study our internal rules. They will study the names we present.

The NEC's opening of nominations beyond the organisation is a chance to recruit competence and restore trust. It signals humility and seriousness. It says: the ANC is willing to recruit competence and integrity wherever it exists. But it will only work if we protect the process from gatekeeping, manipulation, and endless inward fights.

Dispute resolution must be a shield, not a swamp.

A corrective mechanism, not a theatre.

A tool that restores fairness quickly, while making space for community intelligence so that we choose leaders who can actually win trust and govern.

Make the opening visible. Stop gatekeeping. Document the process. Submit evidence-based disputes when fairness is breached. Demand remedies that restore legitimacy. Hold process-keepers accountable. Protect credible servant leaders who step forward from the community.

If we do this, we meet the deadline with credibility. If we do this real renewal will emerge and capture will stop. We must produce stronger better ward and mayoral candidates.

Our People deserve the best ANC candidates. We rebuild in wards where our footprint is thin. And we begin to restore the ANC's standing where it matters most: in the daily life of the people.

LET'S DO THIS COMRADES...



Mining needs catalytic finance **to unlock the Eastern Cape mining sector**

■ By **ASHLEY NYIKO MABASA**

THE global race for clean energy has created an unprecedented hunger for critical minerals. Cobalt, lithium, nickel and copper markets have doubled in size as the world scrambles to build batteries, solar panels and wind turbines.

Investment in critical mineral development surged 30% in 2022 alone, according to the International Energy Agency, following a 20% jump the year before. China, Australia and Canada are cashing in, aided by efficient regulatory frameworks and strategic financing.

South Africa should be leading this charge. It isn't.

Instead, the country faces a cruel paradox: mineral-rich but chronically unable to capitalise on its natural wealth. Nowhere is this contradiction sharper than in the Eastern Cape.

The province sits on significant deposits of titanium, zirconium and ilmenite along the Wild Coast, minerals that the clean energy transition urgently needs, yet it remains one of South Africa's most economically marginalised regions.

The problem isn't a lack of resources. It's a financing gap that runs far deeper than simple numbers.

Beyond cheque-writing

If South Africa is to unlock a new mining boom, development finance must do more than simply provide capital. It must reshape the entire investment landscape, absorb early-stage risks, and draw in private money that currently stays on the sidelines.

Over the past decade, South Africa has expanded its network of development finance institutions to improve capital access. But access alone isn't enough. Finance must actively shape markets, not merely follow them – driving industrial transformation, technological upgrading and the green transition.

The sleeping giant

Few institutions matter more to this agenda than the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). Founded in 1940, it has bankrolled South Africa's industrialisation for generations, with deep roots in mining.

As of 2023, the IDC held assets worth approximately R159.3bn – equivalent to around 2.4% of GDP. Its portfolio mixes direct lending to industrial projects with significant equity stakes in both public and private companies.

But the question facing the IDC today isn't whether it can finance industrial activity. It's whether



it can strategically deploy that capital towards the nation's most urgent priorities – including provinces like the Eastern Cape that have historically been bypassed by the mining boom. The Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) shares this mandate at a provincial level, but operates with a far more limited balance sheet. The gap between what the ECDC can do alone and what the province actually needs makes the case for a coordinated national DFI intervention even more compelling.

Top of that list: expanding existing mining operations that could scale efficiently but remain hamstrung by infrastructure failures and financing risks.

The bottleneck choking growth

Nowhere are these constraints more obvious than in logistics. South Africa's rail and port infrastructure, particularly along key export routes, has deteriorated so badly that it now represents one of the single biggest barriers to mining expansion.

The Eastern Cape illustrates this acutely. The Port of East London operates well below its potential capacity for bulk mineral exports. Rail linkages from inland mineral zones to the coast are underdeveloped compared to Mpumalanga or the Northern Cape. And in the OR Tambo District Municipality – home to the Wild Coast's heavy mineral sands – there is virtually no extractive infrastructure at all.

Transnet, the state-owned freight operator, needs more than R250bn to rehabilitate critical infrastructure nationally. In the Eastern Cape, the conse-



quences of decades of underinvestment are compounded by the province's distance from the established mining corridors that have historically attracted capital and logistics upgrades.

Yet Transnet's balance sheet is in tatters. With a five-year capital requirement of approximately R65bn and limited government funding available, the state has resorted to extending guarantees, including a R51bn facility approved in 2023.

These interventions, whilst necessary, barely scratch the surface of a systemic crisis.

Three pillars for transformation

This is where development finance must step up, operating through three strategic pillars.

First, mobilising private capital. Development finance institutions can create blended finance structures that crowd in private investment for infrastructure. By absorbing early-stage risk and offering favourable terms, institutions like the IDC can unlock participation from commercial banks and pension funds.

There's precedent for this. The Mozal Aluminium Smelter in Mozambique – the IDC's first international investment – offers a compelling case study. In the aftermath of civil war, the IDC's early equity stake and strategic coordination helped secure global investors and unlock commercial financing. Today, Mozal stands as one of Mozambique's largest industrial employers, proof that development finance can transform perceived risk into bankable opportunity.

Second, de-risking exploration. Development finance can play a vital role in funding mineral exploration – the foundation of any sustainable mining sector.

South Africa's share of global exploration spending has collapsed from approximately 5% in 2005 to just 1% today. The risk-return profile has simply become unattractive to private investors.

By deploying patient, government-backed capital into early-stage exploration, development finance institutions can absorb the high risks associated with discovery. Once projects reach maturity, private capital can be brought in for expansion and

commercialisation. The long-running impasse over the Xolobeni mineral sands on the Wild Coast offers a cautionary lesson in what happens when that financing architecture is absent. Without a credible development finance framework capable of structuring community benefit agreements and absorbing early risk, projects stall – and the communities that could benefit most are left with neither development nor a meaningful alternative.

Third, building value chains. The global shift towards clean energy has intensified demand for minerals, but capturing real value requires more than extraction. It demands downstream processing, manufacturing and technological capability.

Here, development finance institutions can align funding with industrial policy goals, ensuring that mining expansion translates into broader economic develop-

ment through local processing and supplier development. In the Eastern Cape, this opportunity is unusually tangible. The East London Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) already hosts a growing automotive and manufacturing cluster. Minerals extracted along the Wild Coast – particularly those used in EV batteries – could feed directly into downstream processing at the IDZ, creating an integrated provincial value chain that links extraction, beneficiation and advanced manufacturing. That kind of linkage doesn't happen without deliberate, catalytic financing to connect the dots.

The coordination challenge

Ultimately, this isn't simply a financing problem. It's a coordination problem.

Development finance must operate as part of a coherent strategy linking mining, infrastructure and

industrial policy. In the Eastern Cape, that challenge is compounded by the need for genuine intergovernmental coordination, between national DFIs like the IDC and DBSA, the ECDC, the provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, and local municipalities in the OR Tambo District.

Unlike Limpopo or Mpumalanga, the Eastern Cape cannot rely on an existing critical mass of private sector mining activity to pull investment along.

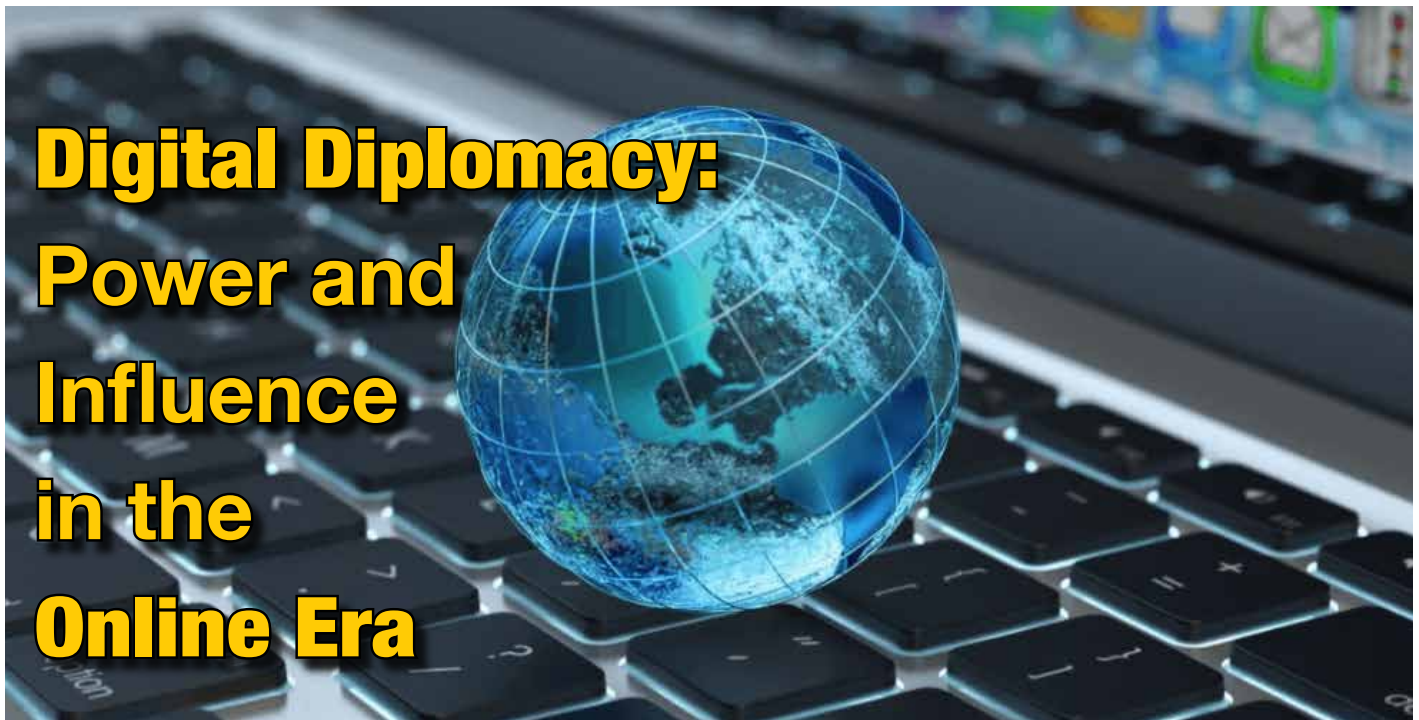
The financing architecture must be built first. South Africa's mining sector doesn't lack potential, it lacks a financing architecture capable of unlocking that potential at scale, and in provinces left behind, that gap is widest of all.

By embracing a more catalytic, risk-sharing role, our development institutions can help bridge this gap, transforming structural constraints into engines of growth.

Finally, the minerals the world needs are already here, including beneath the soils of the Eastern Cape. The question is whether South Africa can build the financial framework to get them out of the ground, into processing facilities, and into the global economy, in a way that finally delivers prosperity to the communities closest to the ground.

Ashley Nyiko Mabasa is a developmental economist and Former Manager at PwC for Infrastructure Transformation and Public Sector and ANCYL NEC and NWC Member responsible for Drafting and Data Analytics and Coordinator for Policy and M&E.





Digital Diplomacy: Power and Influence in the Online Era

■ By **LESEGO SETSHELE**

DURING the COVID 19 pandemic, TikTok exploded in South Africa. Yet the content of the social medium also varied significantly. While everyone may remember the Jerusalema being danced and trending, the platform was also being used for more serious content: health updates and guidelines, socio-economic issues, news as well as politics. As the spread of the pandemic intensified so too did the presence of international politics on social media. No longer dependent on traditional forms of diplomacy, world actors were now starting to use “digital diplomacy”.

Dawn of digital diplomacy

The term ‘digital diplomacy’, sometimes referred to as ‘e-diplomacy’ or ‘digiplomacy’, includes a variety of activities that use digital platforms and resources to carry out diplomatic relations. These

include managing international connections, interacting with foreign audiences, and addressing global concerns such as cyber security and climate change using social media, websites, and other online communication channels.

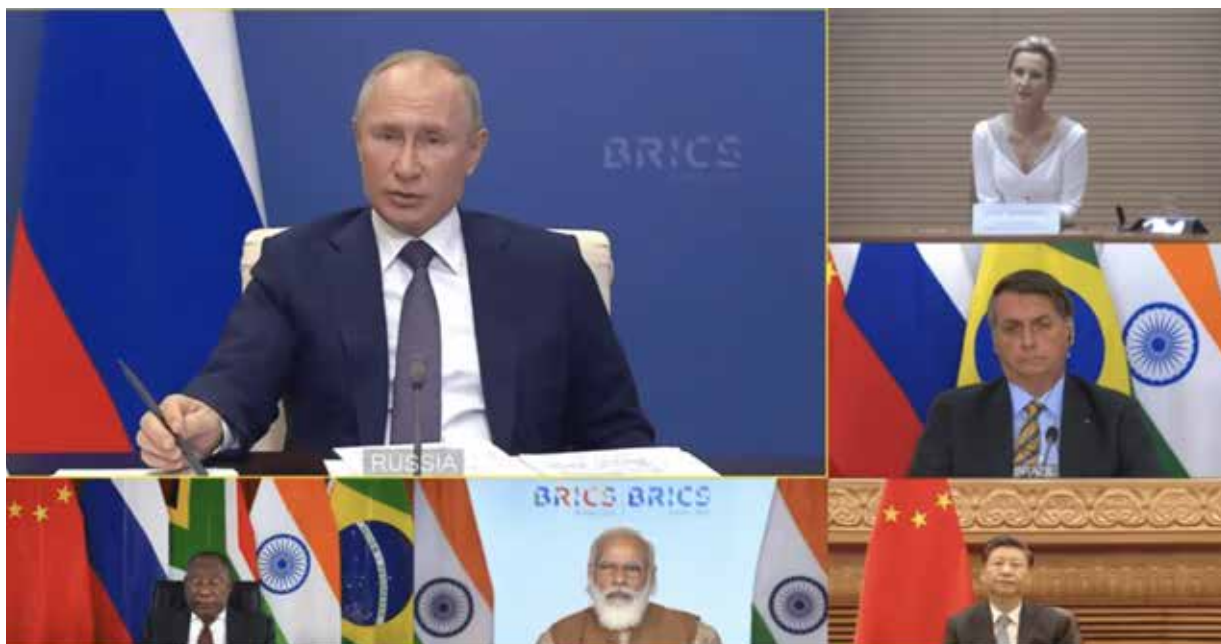
Given that it aids nations and international organisations in navigating the complexity of a digital environment, digital diplomacy has become crucial in current international relations. It promotes cooperation, increases transparency, and enables real-time communication through digitisation, each of which is essential for tackling global issues.

In the past, countries and actors mostly relied on face to face meetings, official letters, or conferences to talk to each other. Today, governments, embassies, and international organisations have embraced digital diplomacy

as a means to achieve their foreign policy objectives in a rapidly changing information landscape. This is because digital tools such as social media, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, X (formerly known as Twitter) and the like have made communication faster, more open, and easier for citizens to follow.

For example, during the pandemic, international engagements such as the 12th BRICS Leaders’ Summit took place in 2020 virtually whereas another virtual Summit took place in 2025. These summits, ministerial meetings or conferences operate mainly through virtual means such as video conferencing. This was a way of keeping discussions among the leaders alive despite travel restrictions. In many ways, the screen became their new negotiating table and even after the pandemic, many political figures and organisations continued to make use of such platforms in

12th BRICS Summit of Leaders being held virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic



order to engage each other because it is seen as more efficient and cost effective.

Very recently, we have seen X, in particular, being used in the war in West Asia. The saying goes that the truth is often the first causality in any war and we witnessed a battle of tweets between the US president, Iran and other countries. The battle is as digital as it is on the ground.

Of course, there are difficulties in the use of digital tools and its role in diplomacy. These include issues pertaining the safeguarding data, ensuring fair access to technology, and keeping track of cyberthreats. Adopting digital diplomacy for Africa involves more than simply innovation; it requires making sure that our continent actively contributes to the creation of the global digital order.

The goals of digital diplomacy

The objectives of digital diplomacy essentially represent the evolution of traditional diplomatic procedures into a dynamic, technologically advanced field. States and

other international actors position themselves to prosper in a global environment characterised by connection, by embracing public involvement, data-driven decision-making, diplomatic response, humanitarian coordination, internet freedom, external collaboration, and efficient policy planning.

The pursuit of power, influence, and collaboration in the twenty-first century is redefined by digital diplomacy.

One would imagine that a critical role of digital technology would be able to bring to life the human

rights of information, expression, among others, as well as other democratic characteristics such as accountability, responsibility and equality. Digital diplomacy is a classical case of how all areas of our lives have to catch up with the digital era. Even diplomacy has now needed to go digital. No area will be left unaffected and if that area or sphere refuses to adapt it will surely die in this digital age.

Lesego Setshele is an intern in the international relations department.



Cyril Ramaphosa  
@CyrilRamaphosa

X.com

We note the current initiatives and ongoing efforts aimed at achieving a comprehensive end to the conflict in the Middle East.

We welcome the announcement of a ceasefire and are hopeful that it will lay the basis for a permanent resolution of the conflict.

President Ramaphosa using X to communicate South Africa's position on achieving a "comprehensive end to the conflict" in West Asia.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

2–8 May 2026

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

2 May 1885 Belgium King establishes colony in Congo, foundation for Genocide

On 2 May 1885, the Congo Free State, with control of most of the Congo River Basin was established by King Leopold II of Belgium. The large central African region up to then had been able to resist European penetration. In Leopold's colony, workers were forced to meet quotas of rubber and ivory or face torture or death by the Belgium guards. Under King Leopold II rule, the genocide of Congolese citizens is estimated from 5 million to 22 million. In 1908, the Belgian parliament annexed the Congo, as a colony of Belgium to be run by state rather than the King. In 1960 the region gained its independence, renamed Zaire and now the Democratic Republic of Congo.

2 May 1938 King Moshoeshoe II born



King Moshoeshoe II, born with

the name Constantine Bereng Seeiso, was born on this day in Morija, Basutoland. Ascending to Paramount Chief of the British protectorate, he was crowned king of the Kingdom of Lesotho upon independence in 1966, until his passing in 1996.

2 May 1946 Mo Ibrahim born

The Sudanese businessman was born on this day. He used his business fortune to create the Mo Ibrahim Foundation in 2006 and annually publishes the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

2 May 1949 Sarie Marais release

The black and white South African movie, directed by Francis Coley and named after the Afrikaans volksong Sarie Marais, was released on this day. The song was sung by Boer Commandos during the Anglo Boer War.

2 May 1963 90-day detention law approved

The General Law Amendment Act 37, amended section 17 which made provision for the police to detain someone without trial for up to 90 days was approved on this day. This could be extended for another ninety days, or allow for bannings after release. The first person to die in police custody under this law

was Ngudle Solwandle and over 60 people died in custody whilst in detention without trial.

2 May 1979 Actress Genevieve Nnaji born



The actress and director Genevieve Nnaji was born in Mbaise, Nigeria and starred in a number of Nollywood productions, for which she was acknowledged in 2011 by the government as a Member of the Order of the Federal Republic. In 2018 her first film as director, *Lionheart*, was the first Netflix production made in Nigeria. Controversy struck the film, when it was removed from the 2019 Oscar nominations, for *'having too much English dialogue.'*

2 May 1980 Pope John Paul II begins first African tour

Pope John Paul II began his tour in Kinshasha, DRC and visited Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana and Kenya.

2 May 1996**Footballer Thembi Kgatlana born**

Kgatlana, professional women's football player and Banyana star striker was born in Leratong, Gauteng on this day. She also played in the US and Europe and was chosen as CAF Women's Footballer of the Year in 2018. A children's book on her life as a footballer, *Girls Don't Do That* will be released this year by Jacana Media.

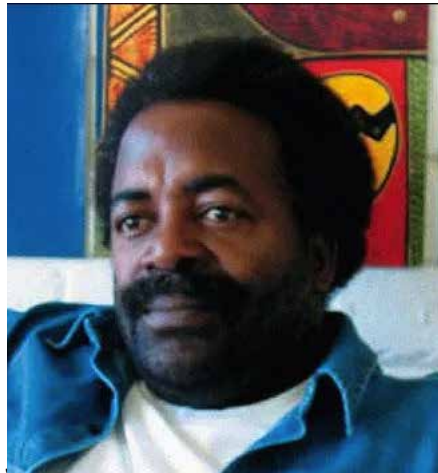
3 May 1896**Pasteur Institute of Dakar established**

The Institute was established as a research facility in Senegal, with its research initially focusing on dysentery. It was the first institute to isolate the Yellow Fever virus, catapulting it as a leading research facility for public health in West Africa. It is also amongst the few institutions on the African continent which produces vaccines.

3 May 1988**SA, Angola, Cuba, USA negotiations start about Namibian independence**

Representatives of South Africa, the United States (US), Angola and Cuba met in London (3-4 May) in search of a solution to the Angolan war and independence for Namibia. These negotiations

heralded the end of foreign intervention in the war in Angola and the ultimate independence of South West Africa/Namibia. Neil van Heerden, SA director-general of foreign affairs, led the South African delegation. The meetings, hosted by the US and led by Chester Crocker, took place in the informal atmosphere of London coffee shops in various venues. Also present at the first meeting at the coffee station at Brown's Hotel, were Gen. Jannie Geldenhuys (South Africa), Gen. Rosales del Toro (Cuba) and Antonio Dos Santos Franca 'Nдалу' (Angola). This meeting was followed in the same month by meetings in Congo-Brazzaville and the groundbreaking Cairo summit.

3 May 1963**Artist Sifiso ka-Mkame born**

in Clermont, Durban, drawing on sand walls as a child. He received formal art training at the Open School and the Little E Theatre in Durban. In 1986 he was a student teacher in screen-printing at the Community Arts Workshop. Mkame preferred oil pastel and screen-print media. He gained fame in 1988 when he sold his *'Letters to God'* series of drawings to the South African National Gallery in Cape Town. In 1996

he held his first solo exhibition at the BAT Centre in Durban and has exhibited extensively since then. His work is described as "a decorative, stylized approach that resembles African textile,... he builds up dense layers of colour with oil pastels and then scratches patterns into the pastel to create images, symbols and designs.."

3 May 1991**Windhoek Declaration on Press Freedom in Africa adopted**

At the end of a UNESCO seminar on World Press Freedom Day held in Windhoek, Namibia – journalists and other participants adopted the Windhoek Declaration on the role of media in Africa, and the importance of press freedom and freedom of information.

4 May 1843**Natal Colony established**

Britain established the Natal Colony, setting the scene for several wars with the Kingdom of Zululand and eventual conquest, incorporating Zulu lands.

4 May 1925**Ruth First born**

Ruth Heloise First, journalist, activist, academic, author and member of the ANC and SACP is born

in Johannesburg. Her parents, immigrants from Lithuania were communists, and Ruth joined the Young Left Wing Book Club at age 14 and after matriculating from Jeppe Girls High, she became active in the student movement at Wits University. She was a founding member of the Congress of Democrats, and was part of the drafting committee for the Freedom Charter in 1955. She was amongst the accused in the 1956 Treason trial, was arrested and left for exile in 1964 with her small children. She spend some time in the UK and after Mozambique independence in 1975, took up the post as Director for Research at the Eduardo Mondlane university in Maputo in 1977. First was editor-in-chief of *The Guardian*, later banned, and also editor of *Fighting Talk*, a publication of the SACP. Ruth First was the author of books *South West Africa* (1963); *117 Days* (1965); *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup d'etat in Africa* (1970); *Libya: The Elusive Revolution* (1970); *The Mozambican Miner: Proletarian and Peasant* (1983); and co-edited *The South African Connection: Western Investment in Apartheid* (1972). Ruth First paid the ultimate price when she was assassinated by the regime in Maputo on 17 August 1982.

4 May 1928 Hosni Mubarak, former Egyptian President born

Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak was born on 4 May 1928 in Kafr-El-Meslha. After finishing high school, he joined the Egyptian Military Academy, where he received a bachelor's degree in Military Science. He later joined the Egyptian Air force where he served in various units, earning a degree in Aviation Science



during this period. After completing aviation training in Russia, he served as a commander at many Egyptian air force bases and installations. He rose to the fourth President of Egypt in 1981, after Anwar Sadat was assassinated. He served as Egyptian president for nearly 30 years, from 1981 to 2011, when he was deposed during the Arab spring. Mubarak stood trial and was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2013, a sentence overturned by the courts in 2015, and he was finally released in 2017. Mubarak died on 20 February 2020.

4 May 1934 Author José Luandino Vieira born



The Angolan writer of short stories, José Luandino Vieira was born on this day. His stories reflected the African oral tradition, and he became known for his acclaimed short story *Luanda*, published in 1963. His portray-

al of colonial rule saw his work banned by the Portuguese. His first novel, *The Real Life of Domingos Xavier* was published in 1961, and his second, *Nos, os do Makuhtsu (We, from Makuhtsu)* is regarded by some as his best work.

4 May 1942 British troops land in Madagascar

Madagascar, a mountainous large island in the Indian Ocean, was previously a French colony controlled by the French Vichy government. The British were afraid that the French, would allow Japan to set up military bases on the Island. If this happened, it would have seriously threatened its sea routes leading to India and Ceylon. On 4 May 1942 British troops landed in the Bay Ambararata Mail, just west of the port of Diego Suarez at the northern tip of Madagascar. Britain then attacked its ally, France. The British decided to capture Madagascar, and handed it over to the Free French to control in order to consolidate their own routes to the East safely.

4 May 1960 Sobukwe sentenced

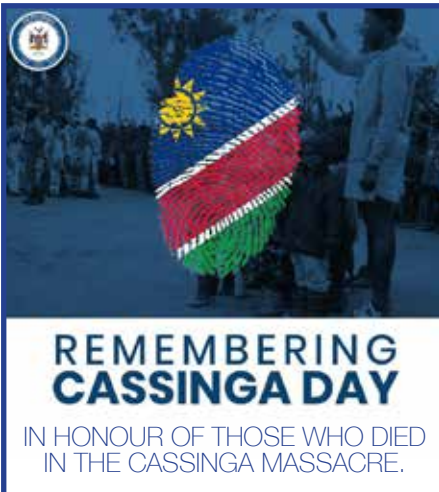
Robert Sobukwe, President of the Pan Africanist Congress, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for incitement of Africans to urge the repeal of pass laws. He refused to appeal, as he had refused the aid of an attorney, on the grounds that the court had no jurisdiction over him because it could not be considered either a court of law or a court of justice.

4 May 1966 Black Panther

The first African superhero, *The Black Panther*, debuts in Marvel

Comic's *Fantastic Four* (no.52, cover date July 1966). The story is set in fictional Wakanda, with superior technology keeping its capabilities secret. The Black Panther hero is King T'Challa. The comic has been serialized in two block-busting films, the first after the comic title in 2018 and the second *Wakanda Forever* in 2022.

4 May 1978 SADF attacks Namibian refugee camp in Cassinga, Angola



On 4 May 1978, the South African air force flew over Cassinga, a Namibian refugee camp in Southern Angola. Close to 400 SADF paratroopers were dropped near the town of Cassinga. The airborne troops bombed the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) refugee camp and People's Liberation Army of Namibia's (PLAN) military base, SWAPO's armed wing. The bombing was followed by ground forces to complete the massacre. More than 600 Namibians, mostly women and children were massacred by the SADF airborne troops, and hundreds more were injured. A United Nations (UN) delegation that visited Cassinga a few days after the tragic event reported that what

the South Africans did was criminal in legal terms and savage in moral terms. The 4 May is now called Cassinga Day and is a national public holiday in Namibia.

4 May 1994 Peace accord for Palestinian self-rule in Gaza, Jericho

On this day, Israeli Labour Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat sign a peace accord to ensure Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, also known as the Oslo Accords. Together with Shimon Peres, the two leaders received the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize. A year later, Rabin was assassinated by a Zionist extremist.

4 May 2007 Former Zambian President convicted

President Frederick Chiluba is convicted of stealing 46 million USD from the country's treasury, allegedly sending it to his London bank account in a civil case. Two years later, in August 2009, Chiluba was cleared by a Zambian court in Lusaka of corruption and embezzling of 500,000 USD, with the judge ruling that the funds could not be traced to government money.

4 May 2018 Attack on Timbuktu

The Ansar Dine Islamic group occupied Timbuktu and went on the rampage in the city, destroying ancient archeological treasures, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Ancient documents in the city were saved and hidden away by Malian librarians and other volunteers, captured in the book *The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu* (2021).

4 May 2021 Nigerian director released Zoom movie



The film *Heart2Heart* by Nigerian director Obi Emelonye is the first commercial movie released on the internet platform Zoom. Emelonye shot the movie during the Covid-19 pandemic, gathering actors on Zoom to produce the story.

5 May 1925 Afrikaans declared an official language

The language originally developed from Dutch after colonization by settlers from the Netherlands. The language developed and was used by settlers, slaves and traders, and also influenced by indigenous languages, including Khoisan languages. Afrikaans became the spark for the 1976 student uprisings, when it was introduced as a forced language of instruction in black schools. According to StatsSA Community Survey (2018), 12.2% of the population speaks Afrikaans.

5 May 1930 National Museum of Fine Arts of Algiers opens doors

Set in an impressive garden, the Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Alger (National Museum of Fine Arts of Algiers) opens its doors to the public for the first time. It is regarded as one of the largest art

museums in Africa. By 2022, the museum houses over 4000 artworks, including prominent Algerian artists such as Baya, Yelles and Racim. Today it houses over 8,000 artworks.

5 May 1952 Feminist Author Hafsat Abdulwaheed born

Nigerian writer and women's rights activist was born on this day in Kano City, Nigeria. She was the first Hausa woman to publish a novel and has written more than 30 books, fiction, non-fiction and poetry. She made an unsuccessful attempt at political office in Northern Nigeria, where no woman held high office.

5 May 1953 Egypt becomes a Republic

A recommendation by the Egyptian Constitutional Commission that the 5,000-year-old monarchy ruled by Pharos be ended adopted. Egypt became a republic on this day.

5 May 1960 Kenneth Kaunda meets Martin Luther King

Zambian independence leader Kenneth Kaunda meets US civil rights leader Martin Luther King in Atlanta, Georgia forging ties between the African liberation and Civil Rights movement.

5 May 1971 Musician Franco born

Frank Losokwane, King of Rumba was born on this day in Gabane, Botswana. A prolific recording artist, he has released more than 18 albums since 2001, when he formed his band Franco and Afro Musica, performing kwasa kwasa music.

5 May 1978 Journalist Redi Tihabi born



South African journalist and broadcaster, was born on this day in Soweto. A pioneer reporter on gender based violence, she works in broadcasting at home and recently with the BBC News, and published her award-winning memoirs in Endings and Beginnings (2021). Tihabi is also an ultra-marathon runner.

5 May 1983 Tricameral Constitution passed

The Apartheid Government passed the third South African constitution, which introduced a racist tricameral system, where Indians and Coloureds vote for segregated parliaments. This, along with the racist Black Local Authority Act, prompted the United Democratic Front in August 1983, a broad front of anti-apartheid organisations, which called for the boycott of the tricameral parliament elections, organising under the slogan **UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides**.

5 May 2018 Truth about farm attacks

After global rightwing groups claims that attacks on white South African farmers are so widespread that it constitutes 'white genocide', the SA Police Services

released crime statistics, showing that white South Africans make up 8.1% of South Africa's murder victims, a smaller percentage than their representation of the country's population (9%).

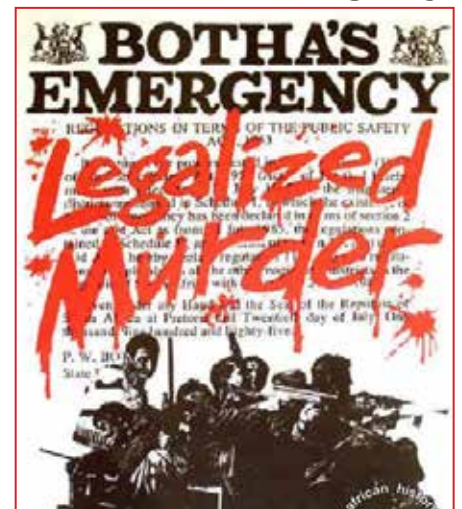
6 May 1945 Biking Minister born

Ojo Maduekwa, Nigerian foreign minister (2007–2010) was born in Abia state. As Tourism minister he advocated bicycles for use in crowded cities and countryside. The Minister cycled to work every day, even after a bus pushed him off the road and into a ditch.

6 May 1959 Congo adopts new flag

The Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) ahead of independence adopts a new national flag, green for the forests and agriculture, yellow friendships of nobility of the people, and red as part of the Pan African movement.

6 May 1960 18,000 people arrested under State of Emergency



Parliament received reports that 18,000 persons had been arrested and detained since the proclamation of the emergency on 30 March 1960.

6 May 1994 Diplomatic relations with West African states

The democratic government signs agreements establishing diplomatic relations with Ghana, Mali and Senegal. These countries cut ties with apartheid South Africa after independence and only resumed links after the end of apartheid in 1994.

6 May 1994 First democratic elections results announced

Judge Johann Kriegler announces the final results of the first democratic elections, one week after elections. Despite major problems of fraud in KZN, Judge Kriegler announced the elections 'substantially free and fair.'

6 May 2016 Kigali Convention Centre hosts first event

The stunning Kigali International Convention Centre finally opened its doors to host its first event, the World Economic Forum on Africa. The multipurpose 32,200 m² has become an important landmark of the Rwandan capital.

7 May 1955 Actress Sharlene Surty-Richards born



The South African actress was born on this day in Upington, in the Northern Cape. She is known for her roles on television soap operas such as *Egoli* and the well-received, classic movie *Fie-la se Kind* (1988). Surty-Richards passed on in June 2021.

7 May 1985 Arusha Conference on Women and Children under Apartheid

The Arusha International Conference on "Women and Children under Apartheid" was convened by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Government of Tanzania, as part of the activities of the OAU in support of the struggle in South Africa.

7 May 1987 Cosatu House bombed



Early morning on 7 May 1987, two large bombs ripped through the basement of COSATU House in Johannesburg. Although no one was killed, the badly damaged building was declared a health hazard and Cosatu and affiliates forced to vacate offices. In 1998, former Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok with 22 members of the former security police appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to apply for amnesty for their involvement in the Cosatu House bombing.

7 May 2006 Minister Stella Sigcau passed on



Former Transkei Prime Minister and Minister of Public Work Stella Sigcau died at Durban's St Augustine Hospital at the age of 69. In 1994 first-post apartheid government she was appointed Minister of Public Enterprise and in 1999, when President Thabo Mbeki reshuffled his cabinet, she was given the ministerial of Public works. Mme Sigcau was also a member of the NEC of the ANC.

8 May 1921 Afrikaans replaces Dutch

The replacement of Dutch by Afrikaans as official language of South Africa is approved by a joint sitting of Parliament, one month after JBM Hertzog becomes prime minister.

8 May 1934 Prof Sibusiso Bhengu, first democratic Minister of Education born

The first national minister of education in South Africa's Government of National Unity (GNU), Prof. Sibusiso Mandlenkosi Emmanuel Bengu was born in Kranskop, Natal. In 1969 he founded the Dlangezwa High School near Empangeni and was



the Principal of the school until 1976. He completed a PhD in Political Science at the University of Geneva in 1974 and was appointed as a Professor in 1977 at the University of Zululand. He served as general secretary of the IFP, and left South Africa in 1978 to take up a position as Secretary for Research and Social Action for the Lutheran World Foundation. He returned to South Africa in 1991 and became the Vice-chancellor of Fort Hare Uni-

versity. In 1994 he was appointed Minister of Education and in 1999 as Ambassador to Germany.

8 May 1996 Adoption of South Africa's Constitution



The democratic Constitution of South Africa is adopted by Parliament. The constitution with its bill of rights addresses the legacy of the past, as well as guarantee political, civil, socio-economic and environmental rights, the form of government and the role of different spheres of gov-

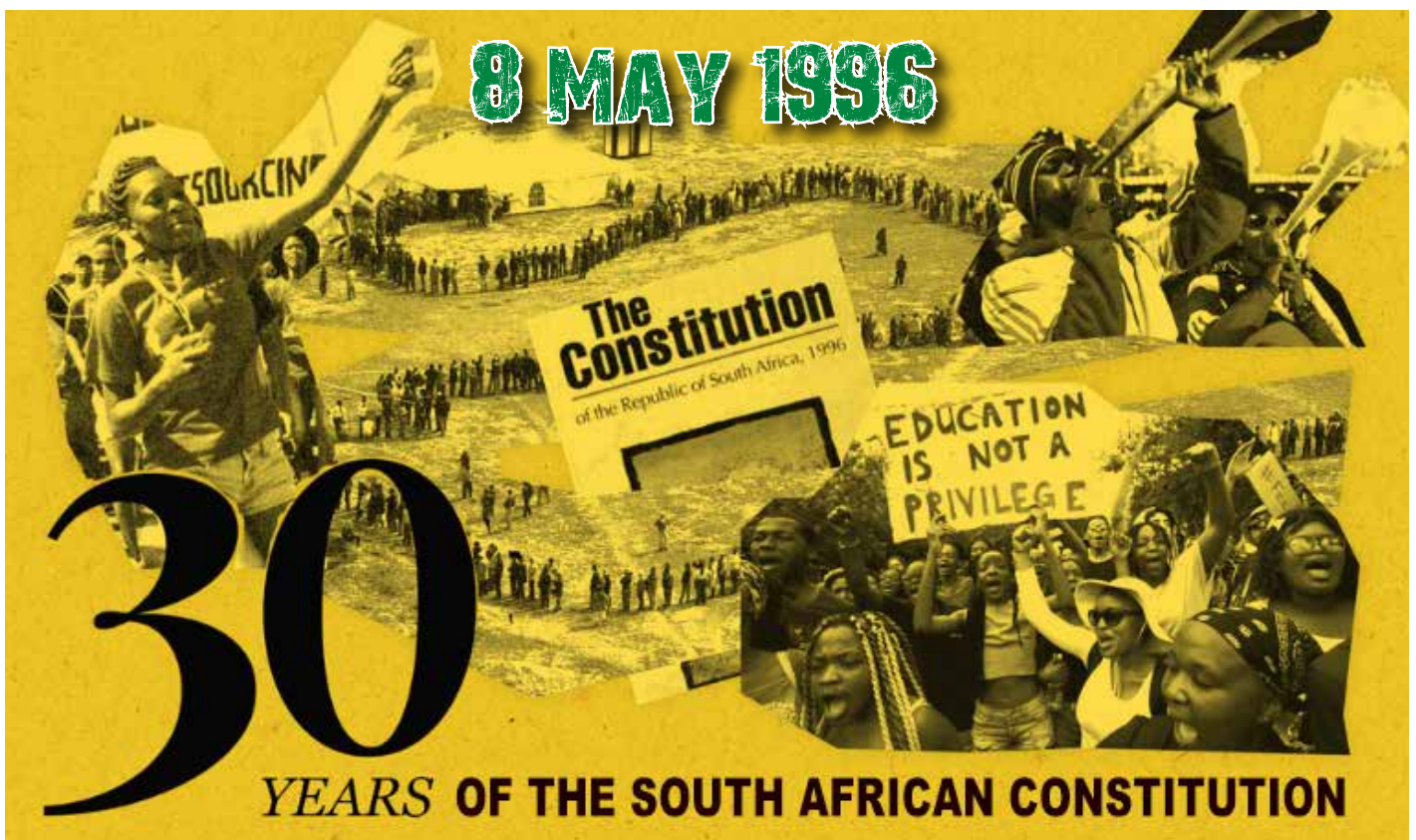
ernment. On this day, then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki also made his historic, "*I am an African*" speech to Parliament.

8 May 1977 Djibouti votes for independence

Voters in French Somaliland approve a referendum calling for independence from France by a near unanimous 98.8% Yes vote. The colony formally became independent on 27 June 1977, with the name Djibouti.

9 May 1950 Bhawani Sannyassi Dayal passed on

Bhawani Sannyassi Dayal, journalist and campaigner for Indian rights in SA, died in Ajmer, India. Dayal was one of the organisers of the Indian strike led by Mohandas Gandhi at Newcastle in 1913, and was a representative of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC).



INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

2–8 May 2026

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

2 May

World Tuna Day

Tunas are amazing fish, they can jump high out of the water, they travel in huge schools and they are warm-blooded. They have also been known to team up with dolphins for protection from sharks. There are around 40 different tuna species making their home in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans and in the Mediterranean Sea. Tuna and tuna-like species of fish is a significant source of food, with their meat rich in Omega-3, and with minerals, proteins and vitamin B12, it is eaten in rich and poor countries alike. As a result of the amazing qualities of tuna, the fish are threatened by an overwhelming demand. World Tuna day reminds us that overfishing can threaten an important source of food, and unsafe fishing practices harm other species like dolphins.

3 May

World Press Freedom Day

World Press Freedom Day is an international observance proclaimed by the United Nations in 1993. It aims to:

- Celebrate the principles of press freedom;
- Evaluate the state of media independence globally;
- Defend journalists from threats and censorship; and



- Honour journalists who lost their lives in the line of duty.

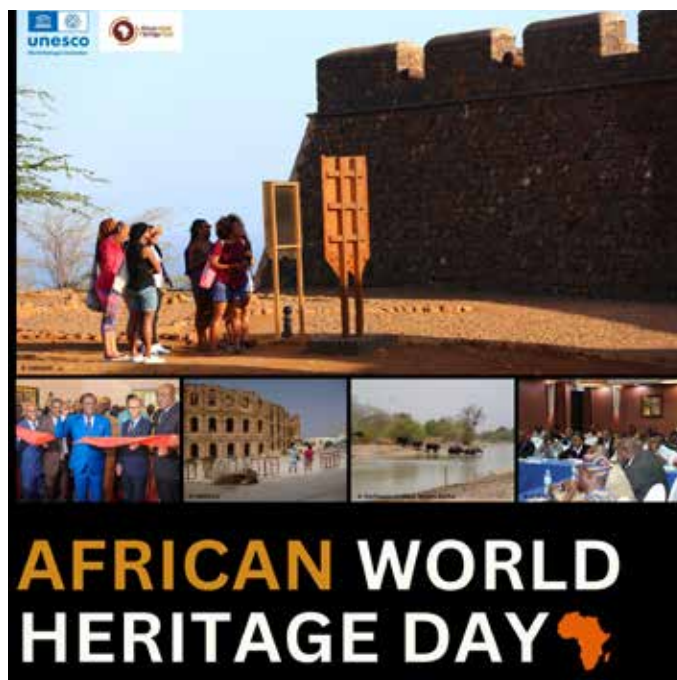
In simple terms, it highlights why free media is the backbone of democracy. The theme for World Press Freedom Day 2026 is ***Shaping a Future at Peace***. This theme focuses on how free and independent journalism contributes to global peace and stability by:

- Promoting access to accurate information;
- Encouraging accountability and transparency;
- Strengthening public trust; and
- Supporting sustainable development.

The theme also highlights the growing role of ***technology and AI***, and how ***misinformation can impact democracy and security***.

5 May

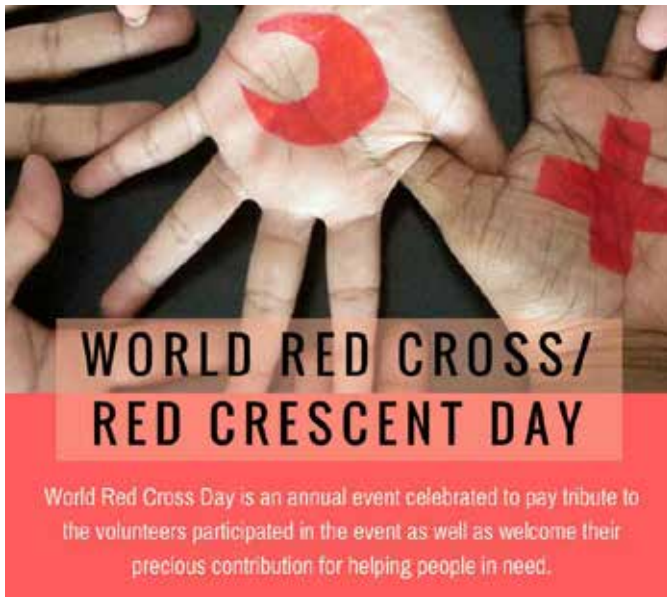
African World Heritage Day



While Africa is underrepresented on the World Heritage List (African properties account for some 12% of all inscribed sites worldwide), a disproportionately

high percentage (39%) of these properties are on the World Heritage List in Danger. Faced with various contemporary threats such as climate change, uncontrolled development, poaching, civil unrest and instability, many of Africa's wonders risk losing their outstanding universal value.

8 May World Red Crescent and Red Cross Day



Each year Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is celebrated on 8 May. This is to commemorate those who volunteer their time in assisting these organisations in caring for vulnerable communities. The Red Cross Society was founded in 1863 after Henry Dunant; a Swiss national, who witnessed the suffering of the wounded, dying, and displaced in a battle in Northern Italy. The Red Cross or Crescent work worldwide as volunteers in public good and charitable causes, as well as disaster situations and conflicts. The Red Cross played a major role in reducing incidence of measles by campaigning for vaccination, and in the fight to eradicate malaria. The Red Cross is a Christian symbol, and in Muslim countries, the Red Crescent is the symbol of this organization. In Iran, the local chapter uses the symbol of the Red Lion and Sun.

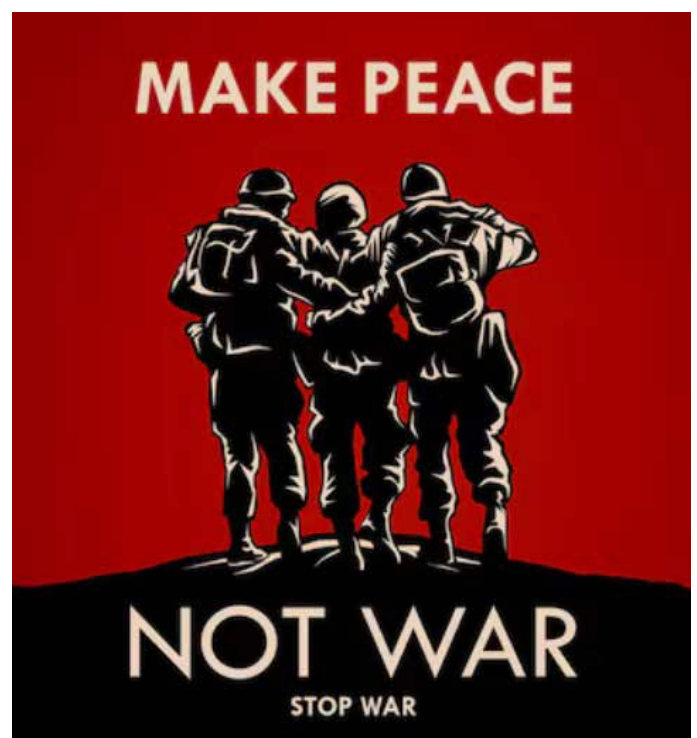
8 May World Ovarian Cancer Day

Ovarian cancer occurs in the ovaries – containing human egg cells in women – causing a host of complications and is often misdiagnosed, causing deaths of over 140,000 women a year, if not diagnosed and treated early.

8-9 May Second World War Remembrance Day



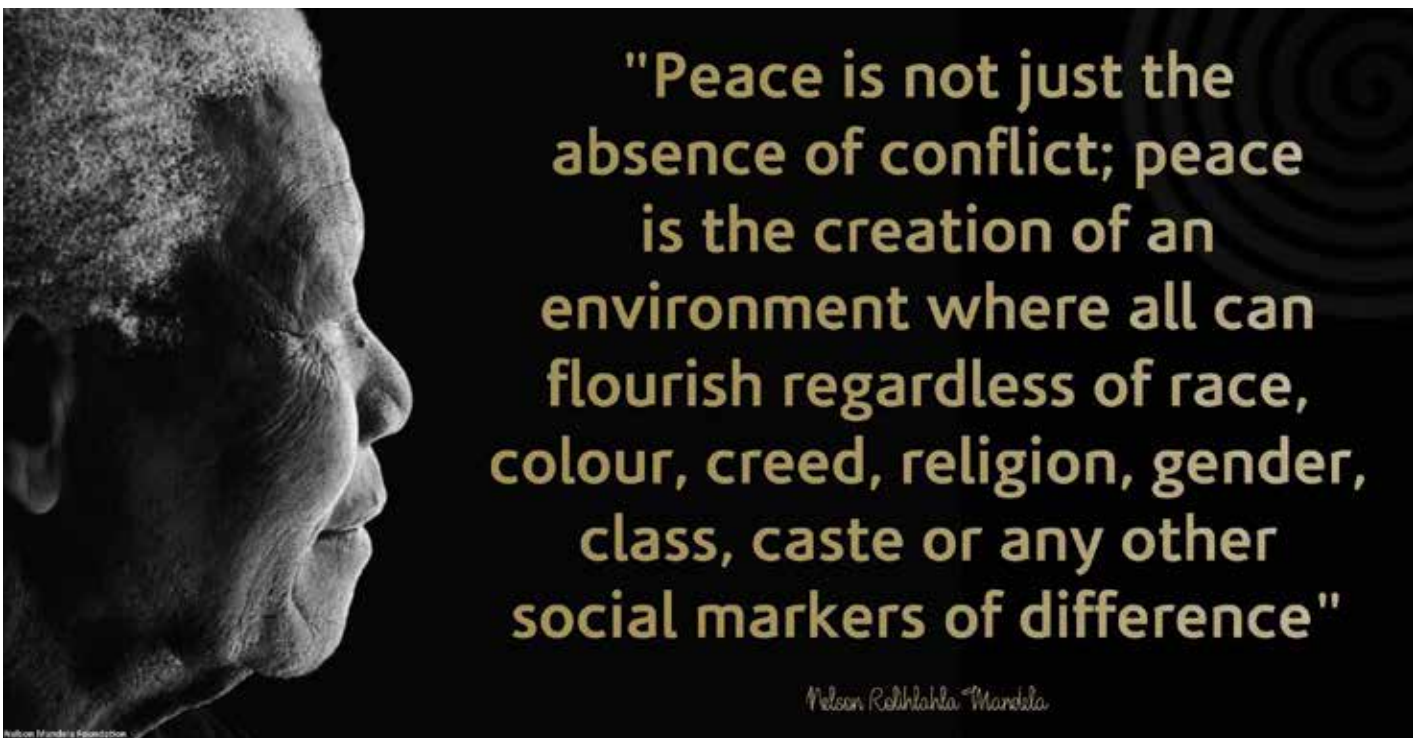
The Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War (May 8 and May 9) is an annual international day of remembrance designated by Resolution 59/26 of the United Nations General Assembly on November 22, 2004. The resolution urges "Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and individuals" to pay tribute to the victims of World War II. It begins on May 8, the anniversary of the date when the World War II Allies accepted the unconditional surrender of the armed forces of Nazi Germany and the end of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich.





The Second World War took place from 1939-1945, engulfed nearly the entire globe, although the main conflict was between Germany, Italy and Japan on the one hand, and the Allies, which included the France, Great Britain, the USA, the Soviet Union and to a lesser extent, China. With over 40 million civilian deaths and 20 million soldiers who died. Nearly half of all deaths were in the Soviet Union alone; it was not only the world's largest conflict, but also its bloodiest. It became one of the watershed moments of the twentieth century history, with the extension of the Soviet Union into eastern and central Europe, the shift in power away from Europe to the USA, the coming to power of Mao Zedong in China (1949), the initiation of the European

common market, the growth of social democracy in Europe and the emergence of a bipolar world with two opposing ideological powers – the Soviet Union and the USA. The Second World War involved all of the European powers colonies, in the form of soldiers, invasions and financing the war, and with the Allies banner of a war against fascism and for freedom, raising hopes for independence struggles. Post the WW2, a number of countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas gained their independence. WW2 Remembrance Day is commemorated across the world, since most countries lost soldiers. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists about 11,023 known white and black South African soldiers who lost their lives during the war.





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