



ANC TODAY

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Conversations *with the* President



Celebrating 30 years of our Constitution through popular participation

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

AS we mark thirty years since the adoption of our country's constitution this month, we can reflect with pride on the political culture we have built as a nation – a culture that is robust, participatory, continuously evolving and firmly anchored in the democratic values we hold dear.

We are fortunate to live in a society with a vibrant public space and deeply engaged citizens who know that they have a voice, and more importantly, that their voice matters. It is this active participation by the people of South Africa that continues to give life, meaning and resilience to our constitutional democracy.

Civil society in our country remains vibrant and resilient. Our

constitution safeguards freedom of conscience, thought and expression, whilst firmly entrenching media freedom as one of the cornerstones of democracy. Political contestation takes place openly and freely, reflecting the strength and maturity of our democratic order.

Our courts continue to serve as institutions that our people trust, and provide recourse for ordinary South Africans, political actors and organisations. In our country, no one is above the law and scrutiny – and no individual or institution is beyond accountability. It is this commitment to constitutionalism, transparency and the rule of law that sustains public confidence in our democracy.

These are all a credit to the consti-

tutional order we have worked to build over the last three decades.

There is a strong culture of participatory democracy in our country, which began with the constitution-making process itself. The Constitutional Assembly was determined that all South Africans should participate meaningfully in drawing up our first democratic constitution.

As I said at the time, we wanted a People's Constitution where every South African would be able to put his or her own brick towards building the new South Africa.

For nearly a year and a half, we criss-crossed the length and breadth of the country to get people's inputs on the type of constitution they wanted to see as the

supreme law of the land. Citizens of all races, ages and classes participated. We facilitated community meetings and engaged with people at their places of work and study.

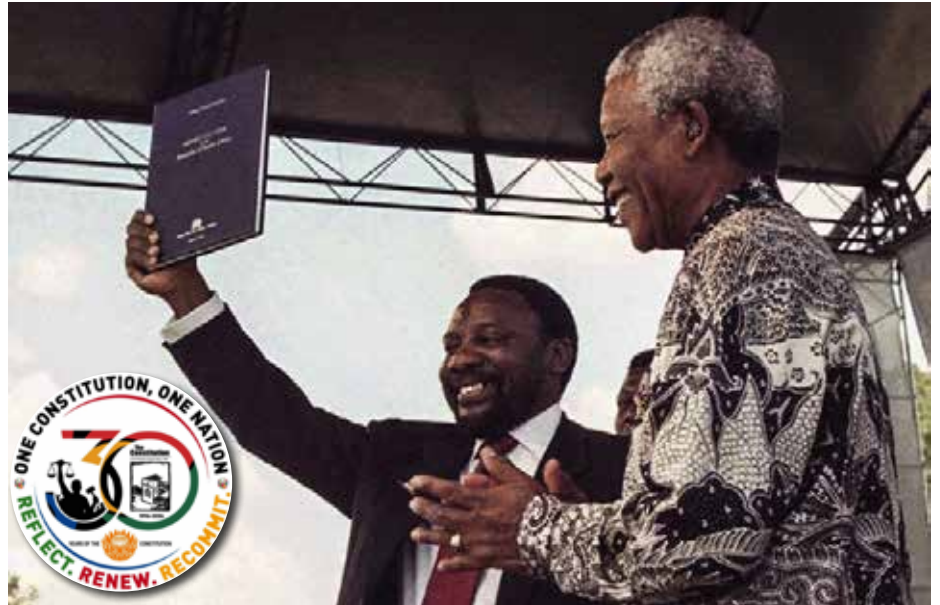
I remember taking part in radio shows where listeners would call in with their ideas on what should be in the constitution. The callers had a deep understanding of why human rights mattered, which was born out of their own personal experiences with injustice. What some of them related about their own harrowing experiences of apartheid oppression was a painful reminder of why we needed this constitution. They spoke of unfair dismissals by employers, of being denied access to beaches, of land being taken from them and of unfair treatment at the hands of public officials.

We received thousands of written submissions on a range of issues such as reproductive health rights, taxation, gun ownership, conserving the environment, and animal welfare. There were submissions about protecting the elderly and people with disabilities, on language preservation and on sexual orientation.

The outcome of all the submissions, that ran into hundreds of thousands of pages and words, was a homegrown constitution that reflects the aspirations of the South African people who had a hand in drafting it.

The participatory approach that produced our constitution continues to guide our efforts to transform South Africa.

Members of the public participate in law-making through public hearings. They are able to comment on draft policies, regulations and envi-



ronmental decisions. Through the annual Taking Parliament to the People programme convened by the National Council of Provinces, people are able to interact directly with their elected representatives.

South Africa ranks amongst the leading countries in the world for an open, transparent and participatory budget process. Through the annual parliamentary budget hearings that are currently underway, the budgeting process is open to public scrutiny and Parliamentary oversight.

While some may argue that participatory democracy slows decision-making or leads to excessive contestation, it is a fundamental tenet of our constitutional order. For our democracy to retain legitimacy, citizens must be confident that their voices are counted when making decisions that affect them most.

Soon, the next phase of the National Dialogue process will commence in earnest, and we must together strive for the broad participatory inclusivity that characterised the constitution-making process.

The National Dialogue Steer-

ing Committee has announced that between June and August this year, they will be holding up to 195 pilot dialogues across the nine provinces that will include ward-based engagements, digital engagements and sectoral dialogues. They will be prioritising direct community participation.

We are determined that the National Dialogue should fully reflect South Africa's racial, cultural, social, economic and geographic diversity.

Just as the 1994 generation played a direct role in the production of the birth certificate of the new South Africa, so too does today's generation carry a responsibility to participate meaningfully in the National Dialogue. This is particularly important for the young people who will live with the impact of the decisions we make today.

As we look with optimism to this new phase in the life of our nation, I call on all South Africans to come together once more and be part of crafting a new vision for South Africa that both speaks to our contemporary challenges and lays the groundwork for the South Africa we want to be.

Statement on the Outcomes of the Meeting of the National Executive Committee

held on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May 2026

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC), on behalf of the National Executive Committee and on behalf of every cadre of our Movement, conveys its warmest greetings to the Muslim community of South Africa and across the world on this auspicious occasion of Eid al-Adha. Eid Mubarak. May this season of sacrifice and reflection carry peace, blessing and renewed purpose into every home and into every heart.

The National Executive Committee of the African National Congress (NEC), the highest decision-making body of the ANC between National Conferences, met in ordinary session at the Protea Hotel at OR Tambo Airport in Ekurhuleni on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May 2026.

The NEC had a successful and productive meeting. The NEC is fully united on the conditions that prevail in our country today, and fully united on what lies ahead. We leave that meeting with a single line of march — focused on the Local Government Elections of 4 November 2026, focused on fixing local government, and focused on the work the ANC owes the people of South Africa in this season.

The NEC received the Political Overview of the President of the



African National Congress, Cde Cyril Ramaphosa, on the central theme of fixing local government. It received the Report of the National Working Committee, the Report of the Electoral Committee, the Consolidated Provincial Weekly Status Reports, the Report of the Integrity Commission, and other housekeeping matters. The NEC took decisions on every substantive matter the Reports placed before it.

The central frame of the period ahead

The central frame of the period before the African National Congress is the Local Government Elections of Wednesday 4 November 2026 — one hundred and

sixty-three days from today. The ANC enters that contest with the disciplined work of its structures in every region, every province, and every branch of the African National Congress, focused on one outcome: a credible, capable and renewed African National Congress at the side of every community of our Republic, delivering on the local-government promise the Freedom Charter has carried since 1955.

Fixing local government is not a slogan for this period. It is the work of the period. The President's Political Overview placed the matter squarely before the NEC, and the NEC adopted decisions on every operational front. I turn to those decisions now.

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On Local Government — Communities, Infrastructure, Mayors

The NEC has confirmed the priority of the eight municipalities under active Inter-Ministerial Committee on the Management and Performance Turn-Around Strategy intervention, and has directed the North West Provincial Executive Committee to table a North West Stabilisation Plan.

The Local Government Action Plan, six months in operation, has been ratified in its current pillar ratings. The NEC Subcommittee on Local Government Interventions has been directed to segment the work into short-term, medium-term and long-term horizons within fourteen days.

On infrastructure, the NEC has directed every deployee of the African National Congress in government to prioritise the delivery of infrastructure projects in roads, water and electricity. These are the immediate things that touch the lives of our people. Where water scarcity is highly felt, the NEC resolved that there should be no community without water and the immediate implementation of underground (borehole) and spring water connections must be rolled out with immediate effect.

On the Cost of Living and the Ten-Point Plan for the Economy

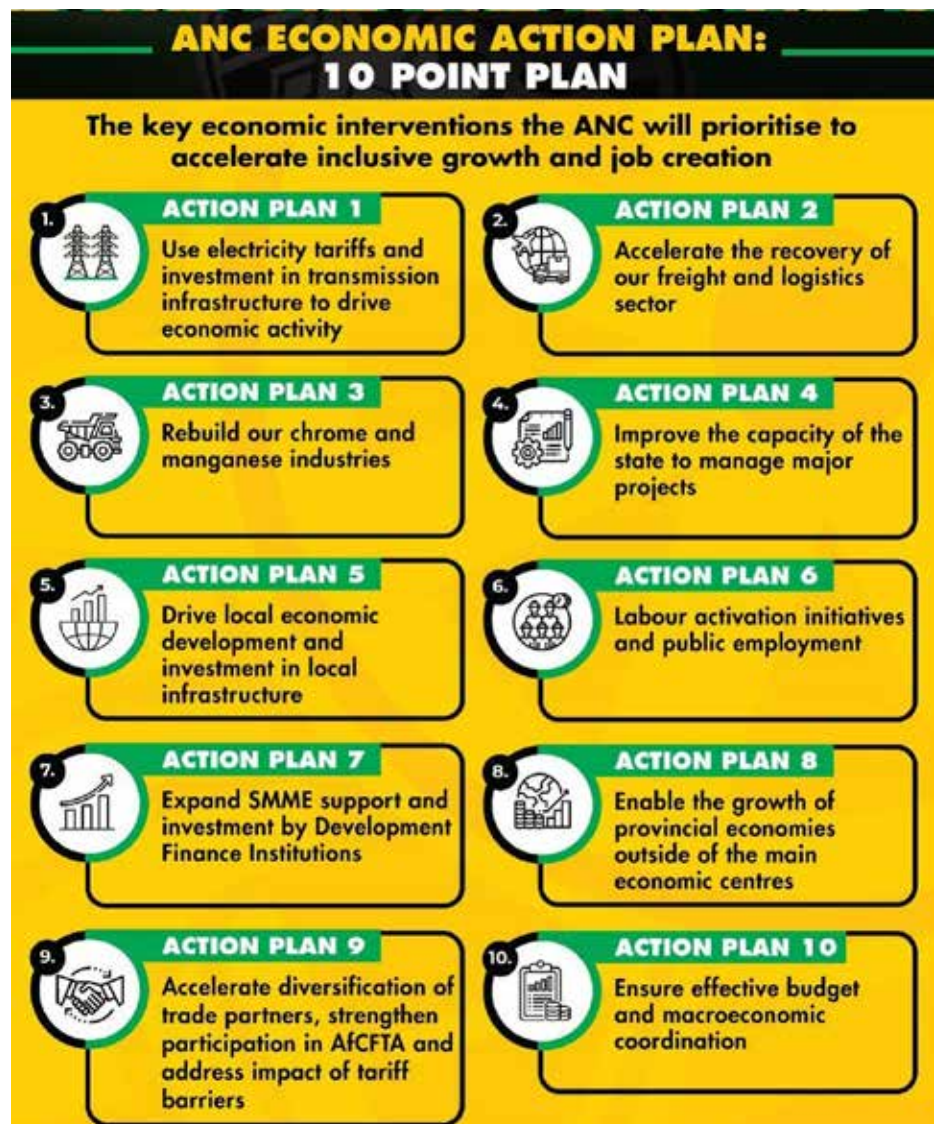
The pressures of the international situation translate, in this country, into rising prices at the petrol pump, rising prices on the supermarket shelf and rising stress in our communities. The National Executive Committee is alive to this reality and to the daily strain it places upon the working and the unemployed people of South Africa.

The ANC commends Cde Enoch Godongwana, Minister of Finance, for the boldness and the immediacy with which he read the conjuncture arising from the war on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and for the decisive intervention he took on the fuel levy.

That decision has cushioned the consumer at the petrol pump, has cushioned the taxi-commuter on the way to work, has cushioned the small trader at the loading dock, and has cushioned every household for whom transport and fuel are a major contributor to the cost of living. This is the African National Congress government at work — reading the international conjuncture in real

time and acting in defence of the working and the unemployed people of our country.

The National Executive Committee further resolved to redouble the work of the African National Congress in government on the Ten-Point Plan for the economy — to drive the South African economy from its present growth path onto a job-creating growth trajectory. The Ten-Point Plan is the operational programme that carries the economic policy direction of the 55th National Conference and of the National General Council 2025 Base Document into the work of the State. Its pillars — fixed-investment acceleration, infrastructure



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delivery, industrial policy, township and rural economy development, the just energy transition, the digital economy, food security, BRICS-plus and continental trade integration, skills and the demographic dividend, and macroeconomic stability — are the work of the period. The African National Congress will measure itself, in this conjuncture, by the speed and the seriousness with which the Plan moves from paper into lived improvement in the conditions of the people.

On Economic Transformation and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment

The National Executive Committee commends the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development for the boldness with which she has heard the line of march set by the January 8 Statement of 2026 — that this is the year to fix local government and to push harder on the transformation of the economy — and for the directness with which she has acted upon it in the legal sector. Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is the law of the Republic. It applies to every professional sector — to legal practice, to medical practice, to engineering, to accounting, to architecture, to the consulting professions, and across every domain in which the economy of our country is conducted.

Income equality and the equity of ownership are not optional ornaments of our constitutional order; they are the substance of the second radical phase of the National Democratic Revolution, as confirmed at the 55th National Conference at NASREC in 2017 and reaffirmed in the National General Council 2025 Base Doc-



ument. The African National Congress carries this work forward without apology and without retreat. Where the law is in place, it must be applied. Where the law requires sharpening, it will be sharpened. The ANC commends the Minister, and we commend every comrade in government and in the institutions of the State who is now placing this line of march into effect.

On the Cleaning up of State Institutions

The Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Criminality, Political Interference and Corruption in the Criminal Justice System, headed by retired Constitutional Court Justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga, will table its second interim report to the President of the Republic on Friday 29 May 2026 — this week. The final report of the Commission is due on Sunday 31 August 2026. The Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on the Allegations related to the South African Police Service continues its work.

The African National Congress reaffirms, in the clearest terms, the leading role of the ANC in the cleaning up of the State in-

stitutions of our Republic. The Madlanga Commission was established by the President of the Republic; the Ad Hoc Committee is led by Members of Parliament of the African National Congress; the National Prosecuting Authority, the Investigating Directorate against Corruption, the Hawks, the South African Revenue Service, the Asset Forfeiture Unit, the Financial Intelligence Centre, and the Auditor-General with its expanded material-irregularity powers, are all doing the work that the country requires of them.

It is the African National Congress that is the principal author of the laws now fighting corruption in our country — the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act of 2004, the Prevention of Organised Crime Act of 1998, the Financial Intelligence Centre Act of 2001, the Protected Disclosures Act of 2000, the Public Audit Amendment Act of 2018 with its material-irregularity powers, the National Strategic Intelligence Act, and many others. It is the African National Congress that continues to strengthen these laws and not weaken them. It is the African National Congress that is prepared to have matters which

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may be reputationally damaging aired in public — because we are serious about renewal, and because we are serious about ridding ourselves and our country of all forms of corruption and unethical conduct. It is the African National Congress, at times alone and at times together with the people of South Africa, that has built this country, that has built its constitutional framework, and that has built its democratic institutions.

We say openly that the ANC will return the South African Police Service to a constitutional footing as a service department of and for the people of the Republic. The demilitarisation of the structures and the uniform of the South African Police Service is the agenda the ANC carries into the period ahead, and into the work of the criminal justice system reform that the Madlanga Commission and the Ad Hoc Committee will speak to.

On the National Health Insurance

The Constitutional Court delivered judgment on Monday 18 May 2026 in *Solidarity Trade Union and Others against the Minister of Health*, declaring the certificate-of-need provisions at sections 36 to 40 of the National Health Act, Act 61 of 2003, unconstitutional. The NEC has reaffirmed, in the clearest terms, the ANC's full support for the National Health Insurance Act, Act 15 of 2024, and for the phased and lawful implementation now under way. The Comrade Minister of Health, Cde Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, is commended for the disciplined manner in which the Department continues with the implementation. The certificate-of-need provisions sit in a different Act from

the National Health Insurance Act. The unconstitutional declaration of certain provisions in one Act does not, in law or in fact, displace the constitutional validity and the lawful implementation of the National Health Insurance Act, Act 15 of 2024.

The National Executive Committee commends the Minister of Health and the entire National Department of Health for the steady, disciplined work being carried out across the public health system in this period — on the roll-out of the National Health Insurance; on the country's vigilance against the regional outbreak of Ebola in the equatorial countries to our north; on the tuberculosis programme, which remains the largest national tuberculosis programme in the world; and on the continuing gains in the combat against the human immunodeficiency virus. The ANC reaffirms the historic position of the African National Congress, drawn from the Freedom Charter of 1955 and given constitutional form in section 27 of the Constitution of

the Republic: a publicly funded, universal, equitable system of healthcare for all who live in our country.

On Migration, Peace and Stability — the Government is at Work

The NEC spent substantial time discussing and evaluating the question of the present mobilisation against unlawful migrant communities in our Republic. The NEC finds that the issues raised by the activist community are, in the main, genuine complaints and genuine demands. The movements that have emerged across our country are, in the main, demanding a visible government and a visible State. The movements are calling for our government to act with a sense of visible purpose on the issues that touch our people directly.

The NEC does not characterise the majority of these activities as xenophobic in their general character. The NEC understands the pressures on our economy and

XENOPHOBIA



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FIKILE MBALULA
ANC SECRETARY GENERAL



on our communities arising from unlawful immigration, and the NEC shares the concerns of the people of South Africa on these matters. The NEC, however, cautions the organisers and the leaders of the movements to be vigilant against third-force infiltration of their ranks.

The discipline of lawful protest is the discipline of every South African in our democracy.

The conduct of vigilantism, hate speech and intimidation that the country has seen in some of its streets, at some of its clinic doors, at some of its school gates and at some of its factory floors over the past period is, in the proper legal characterisation, conduct that falls within the Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Act, Act 16 of 2023. A child that seeks education must be supported by all of us, a child that seeks immunisation against measles or polio must be given the necessary support – we are not a cruel people. A child that does not get these vaccines will be a danger to the community.

The ANC supports the application of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Acts by the National Prosecuting Authority and by the South African Police Service on every act that meets its provisions.

When we protest and when we mount pressure movements — which is our constitutional right and the standing tradition of our struggle — we urge our people to balance their actions with the discipline of legality. We cannot fight unlawful conduct in a democracy by ourselves engaging in unlawful conduct. We must, together, safeguard the reputation, the image and the stability of our country, so that we do not end up

causing more harm than the harm we set out to address. We are a great people among the peoples of the world. We are called upon by our forebears to make demands but to remain humane; to protest but to carry ubuntu in our hands; to agitate progressively but to remember our own long road to freedom — and the road our continent walked with us on that journey. To leave weapons at home and not carry them in public. To respect our traditions like the traditions of amabutho and not misuse these great heritage instruments in a manner that causes disrepute to our pride as South Africans.

Let me be clear: the demands placed on our government to act decisively on the question of border management, on the national-security issues that arise, on the strain on our people and our communities at the coalface of unlawful immigration and all its manifestations — from human trafficking to illicit trade, from crime to the corruption of government officials in Home Affairs and the South African Police Service — these demands are genuine and these demands are real. And the government is at work on every one of them.

The National Executive Committee further calls upon the private sector — upon the employers, upon the recruitment agencies, upon every enterprise operating on the soil of the Republic — to adhere, without exception, to the labour laws and to the immigration laws of the country.

The recruitment of undocumented workers in order to suppress wages, to circumvent the Labour Relations Act, to evade the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, to

undermine the Sectoral Determinations of the Minister of Employment and Labour, and to displace the rightful claims of South African workers and of legally resident workers on the job market is criminal. It is unpatriotic. It is a direct subversion of the laws of our country and of the spirit of national reconstruction that the Constitution of the Republic enjoins upon every actor in our economy.

The ANC places the private sector squarely on notice: the African National Congress in government will pursue, through the Department of Employment and Labour, through the National Prosecuting Authority, through the South African Revenue Service, and through the labour inspectorate, every enterprise that profits from this practice. The cost of compliance with the law is borne by the lawful employer and by the lawful worker; the African National Congress government will ensure that those who externalise that cost onto our communities and onto our country pay the full weight of the law.

The President of the Republic announced the rolling out of ten thousand additional posts in the Department of Employment and Labour. These ten thousand new positions will be filled and trained as labour inspectors. They will be South African inspectors, empowered to intercept the unlawful employment of any person not authorised by South African law to be employed by enterprises operating in our country. Where an employer is found undercutting our labour laws, the inspectorate will act. We ask our people once again, to refrain from taking the law into their own hands — when we do so, we allow critics to call us names, shame us as a vigilante society.

The Border Management Authority has commenced a build programme to upgrade at least six of our principal border posts and the surrounding infrastructure. The upgrade introduces technology and a modernised interface capable of tracking and tracing any tourist who overstays the lawful period of stay and any person who enters for a short-term stay and then declines to leave. The technology includes smart drone capability operating in real time, monitoring every kilometre of the South African border.

The Special Investigating Unit continues its mandate to rid the Department of Home Affairs of officials who place our people at risk by selling undeserved official documentation. The Hawks and the National Prosecuting Authority continue their cases. The work on the South African Police Service is publicly before the country on the television screens — to rid the Service of bribe-takers and of officers involved in syndicate crime, and to move them from the Service directly into the cells of the Department of Correctional Services.

The NEC further urges the Department of Home Affairs to consider, with appropriate urgency, the re-introduction of quota limits on immigration intake. Our country must decide, transparently and in the public interest, how many additional persons with the means at its disposal can lawfully and humanely accommodate. The instrument exists in our law — section 19 of the Immigration Act, Act 13 of 2002, provides the framework.

The NEC also encourages South Africans to engage in the public-participation processes of Parliament on Bills now before

the legislature. Among these are Bills that will protect the rights of every South African to create and to operate an enterprise — the constitutional right at section 22 of our Constitution — and Bills that will close the route by which a person travels through several safe countries on the journey to our Republic and only applies for asylum or refugee status on arrival here. The principle of first-safe-country is a principle of international refugee law, and the legislative reform now under way will give it operational effect in South Africa.

The President of the Republic of South Africa travels to Egypt for the Mid-Year Coordination Meeting of the African Union, held at El Alamein from Wednesday 24 to Saturday 27 June 2026. The African National Congress, through the Government of the Republic, will table at El Alamein the foundations of a Continental Compact on Migration in Africa — a framework paper that moves the continental conversation from the register of accusation to the register of shared responsibility. The Compact is the African an-

swer to a continental question. We will not allow our country to be reduced to a single line of caricature on a question that is the continent's question and the world's question together.

The NEC urges every Provincial Premier in the Republic to activate a Quick Response Team on immigrant tensions in their province, working in concurrence with the South African Police Service, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Social Development, the Provincial Disaster Management Centres, and the National Disaster Management Centre.

On the Evictions in the Western Cape

The NEC has received the matter of the farm laborers evictions taking place in the Western Cape. The Secretary General's Office will further engage the Western Cape Provincial Task Team of the African National Congress to develop and advance a Programme of Action on the evictions question. The ANC does not stand by

WESTERN CAPE FARM EVICTIONS



The NEC has received the matter of the farm laborers evictions taking place in the Western Cape. The Movement does not stand by while the people of our Republic are removed from their land and from their homes in the Western Cape.

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ANC SECRETARY GENERAL

while the people of our Republic are removed from their land and from their homes.

On the International Situation — Iran, Palestine, Lebanon

The National Executive Committee reflected on the international situation and on the urgency of a just, durable and political resolution to the multiple conflicts now bearing down on humanity. The path of war is not the path of solution.

The war on the Islamic Republic of Iran is a matter of the gravest concern to the African National Congress and to our country. The ANC, in the tradition of Cde Oliver Tambo and the Harare Declaration of 1989, calls on all parties — the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Government of the State of Israel, the Government of the United States of America, the Governments of the Arab States, the Governments of the major powers, and the multilateral institutions seated under the United Nations Charter — to choose the path of negotiation and to set aside the path of arms. The escalation of armed action between great-power blocs in the Middle East places the global economy under strain, places African economies under strain, and places ordinary households in our country under strain through the rising cost of fuels, the rising cost of staples and the rising cost of credit.

The National Executive Committee commends Cde Ronald Lamola, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, for the discipline and the principled clarity with which South African diplomacy carried itself at the recent BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meet-

ON PALESTINE



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The National Executive Committee further calls for a political solution to the continuing war on the Palestinian people in Gaza and in the West Bank. The Movement reaffirms the standing position of the South African government on the matter in the Middle East.

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ing. The ANC places on record its appreciation to the Minister and his team for the work that placed our country firmly on the side of dialogue, of multilateralism, of the United Nations Charter, and of the rule of international law in this trying season.

The National Executive Committee further calls for a political solution to the continuing war on the Palestinian people in Gaza and in the West Bank. The ANC reaffirms the standing position of the South African government before the International Court of Justice in the matter of South Africa against Israel: the genocide must end, the occupation must end, and the two-state solution must be brought into effect. The African National Congress notes with the deepest pain the continued invasion of the sovereign territory of Lebanon and the resulting suffering inflicted upon the civilian populations of southern Lebanon. We call on all parties to seek a peaceful, negotiated solution to the difficulties of the region.

On Provincial Task Teams in the Eastern Cape and in Gauteng

The Special meeting of the NEC convened in Cape Town on Wednesday 13 May 2026 took the decision that Provincial Task Teams must be established in the Eastern Cape and in Gauteng, in place of the Provincial Executive Committees whose terms have expired without a Provincial Conference having sat. The Special NEC left the implementation and the formulation of the membership to the National Working Committee. The NEC that met this past weekend has noted the compositions placed before it.

For the avoidance of doubt: the governments of the Eastern Cape and of Gauteng are not affected by these organisational arrangements of the ANC. The Comrade Premier of Gauteng, Cde Panyaza Lesufi, and the Comrade Premier of the Eastern Cape, Cde Oscar Mabuyane, and the Members of the Executive Councils in both provinces, continue to discharge their constitutional

responsibilities. The provincial legislatures continue to sit. The work of the State continues. The Provincial Task Team in each province will carry the African National Congress through the Local Government Elections and will, at the earliest procedurally ripe moment, convene the postponed Provincial Conferences in the ordinary course.

On the Regional ANC Conference Season — Mangaung as the Last

The ANC has, in this period, concluded the season of Regional Conferences. The West Rand Regional Conference convened successfully from 18 to 20 May 2026; the Mangaung Regional Conference rerun is scheduled for the weekend of 29 and 30 May 2026 — this coming weekend. Mangaung will be the last regional conference convened by the ANC before the Local Government Elections. No further regional conferences will be held before 4 November 2026.

The ANC carries its campaign forward through the Regional Executive Committees seated to date, through the Provincial Task Teams in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, and through the appropriate dispute-cure processes of the ANC's own constitutional structures where conferences could not convene. The discipline is settled. The focus from this point on is the Local Government Elections of 4 November 2026.

On the Integrity Commission Report

The NEC received and considered the Report of the African National Congress Integrity Commission on matters concerning five named comrades. The NEC

thanks and salutes the members of the Integrity Commission, which stands at the core of the African National Congress's renewal programme and at the core of the upholding of ethical conduct and good governance from within our ranks.

The NEC fully endorsed the Report of the Integrity Commission and its recommendations on each of the comrades named. Further to that endorsement, the NEC resolved to take an additional step: the NEC shall refer all five matters to the National Disciplinary Committee of the African National Congress for action under the constitutional disciplinary process of the ANC, with the NEC itself serving as the complainant. The Office of the Secretary General will give effect to the resolution in the ordinary course.

The five comrades whose matters have been referred to the National Disciplinary Committee, with the NEC as the complainant, are: Cde Tolashe, Cde Cele, Cde Mkhwane, Cde Khalipa, and Cde Zungu. The constitutional disciplinary process will run in the ordinary course.

The National Executive Committee commends, in the strongest terms, the African National Congress Integrity Commission for the depth, the fearlessness and the discipline with which it has discharged its mandate within the ANC. The Integrity Commission is the conscience of the African National Congress. Its work — performed without favour and without fear — is one of the principal instruments by which the ANC renews itself and holds itself to the standard the people of South Africa expect of it. The ANC places on record its profound appreciation to the Chairperson of the Integrity Commission and to every Commissioner who has served the ANC and the country through this organ of self-correction.

On the Tripartite Alliance and the So-Called Conference of the Left

The African National Congress reaffirms, as the NEC has reaffirmed in every sitting since the founding of the Tripartite Alliance, the relationship between the ANC and the South African Communist Party, and the broader alliance of the African National Congress,





the South African Communist Party, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the South African National Civic Organisation. The Alliance has stood the test of time. The Alliance has stood the test of personalities. The Alliance has been founded, since its analytical articulation at Morogoro in 1969 and reaffirmed at Kabwe in 1985, on the principle of unity and struggle against the enemy of the people.

The relationship between the components of the Alliance is dialectical and complementary. The African National Congress is the leading force of the broad national liberation front; the South African Communist Party carries the vanguard role of the working class within the front. That is the position the ANC has carried since 1969, and that is the position the ANC carries today.

On the so-called Conference of the Left convened by the South African Communist Party from Friday 29 May 2026 in Boksburg: the African National Congress was invited to participate. The

African National Congress, after careful deliberation in its Officials and at the National Working Committee of 18 and 19 May 2026, chose to stay away. Then NEC resolved to support that position.

The African National Congress will not participate in the Conference. We have, however, invited the leadership of the South African Communist Party to a principal-level engagement on the underlying questions, in the standing discipline of the Alliance.

We say openly to our country: the African National Congress does not consider this convening to be a Conference of the Left. The composition is itself the political argument. A gathering that proposes to sit chambers of commerce alongside the Bolshevik Party, the uMkhonto we-Sizwe Party alongside AZAPO, business formations alongside trade unions, is not a left formation in any received meaning of the term. It is a coalition of negation — united by what it stands

against, namely the African National Congress in government — and unable to articulate the positive programme by which the working class and the people would advance under its banner. It is a political project dressed in theoretical clothing.

The ANC notes, with the seriousness the matter deserves, that the convening forces have chosen to associate themselves at this gathering with formations whose principal leadership figures were identified by the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture — the Zondo Commission — as central to the wrecking of the South African institutions the African National Congress built: the South African Revenue Service; the National Prosecuting Authority; the Hawks; the State Security Agency; Eskom; Transnet; and the public-procurement system across the State. The ANC places that association on the public record.

The Alliance stands. The African National Congress remains

the centre of the broad national liberation front and of the broad democratic and patriotic forces of our Republic. The work of this period is the work of the National Democratic Revolution. The answer is in every Branch General Meeting, in every ward, in every municipality, and in every street of the Republic in which the African National Congress has stood, stands, and will stand. The African National Congress is at work.

On the Story our Country Deserves

The NEC reflected, in this meeting, on the gap that exists between the objective record of progress in the living conditions of South Africans over the past three decades and the lived experience of many of our people today. Both readings are real. The objective record carries the story of millions of houses delivered, of millions of additional South Africans connected to piped water and to electricity, of the National Health Insurance Act now in lawful implementation, of free education at our schools and at our TVET colleges, of one of the largest social-grant systems on

the African continent.

The lived experience is shaped by the cost of living, by unemployment, by crime, and by corruption — every one of these is real, and every one of these the ANC reads carefully. The NEC has directed the communications work of the ANC to carry both readings into the country at the same time. We do not deny the lived experience of our people. We do not concede the objective record of what has been built since 1994. The honest conversation with our people is the conversation that holds both at once.

On Bereavements

The NEC observed a moment's silence for Cde Bushy Maape, former Premier of the North West Province and a cadre of the ANC of long and faithful standing. The Office of the Secretary General has been directed to convey, on behalf of the NEC, the formal condolences of the ANC to the Maape family and to the North West structures. The NEC also observed a moment's silence for all comrades whose passing has been recorded in the period un-

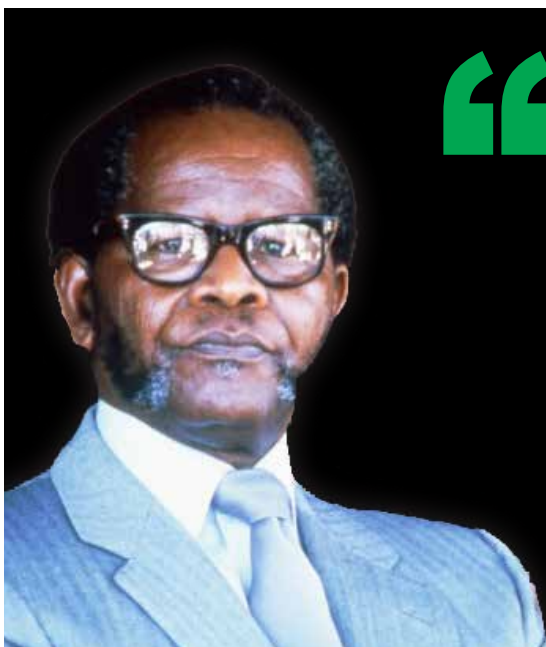
der review.

The Campaign Rhythm to 4 November 2026

Comrades, members of the media, fellow South Africans — the work of every cadre, every branch, every region and every province of the African National Congress now converges on the date of the Local Government Elections of 4 November 2026.

The ANC carries into this period the standing inheritance of its canon — the Freedom Charter, on which the ANC has rested for over seven decades, and which we shall again commemorate on Freedom Charter Day, this 26 June 2026.

The Strategy and Tactics tradition from Morogoro 1969 through Kabwe 1985 through to the National General Council Base Document of 2025. The National Democratic Revolution as the strategic objective. The broad national liberation front as the alliance through which we carry the moment. The discipline of the cadre as the instrument by which the line of march is held.



The distinctive feature of a revolutionary cadre is a high level of discipline, dedication and courage in carrying out the tasks assigned by the Movement.

Such cadres are guided by our goal of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

OLIVER REGINALD TAMBO



From Plans to Pipes: Why Africa's Infrastructure Future Will Be Decided by Execution

■ By **DAVID MAHLOBO**

AFRICA has never suffered from a shortage of infrastructure plans. Across the continent, governments, regional bodies, development finance institutions and the private sector have produced countless master plans, strategies and policy frameworks aimed at transforming our economies through infrastructure-led growth.

The real challenge confronting Africa today is not vision. It is execution. That reality formed the central message of my recent address at the DEVAC Infrastructure Summit in Johannesburg under the theme, *“Africa's Infrastructure in Motion – From Projects to Progress.”* The theme could not have been more appropriate. For Africa, the defining developmental question of our time is whether we can finally move beyond declarations and conference resolutions toward practical implementation that changes the daily lives of our people.

Infrastructure remains the backbone of every modern economy. Roads, railways, ports, energy systems, digital networks, water infrastructure and sanitation systems are not simply construction projects. They are the productive foundations upon which economic growth, industrialisation, trade, investment and social develop-



ment depend.

Without reliable infrastructure, there can be no sustainable economic expansion. Businesses cannot operate competitively. Investors lose confidence. Manufacturing declines. Logistics costs rise. Agriculture becomes vulnerable. Communities remain excluded from economic opportunity. Young people remain unemployed.

This is particularly important for Africa, a continent with immense economic potential, a rapidly urbanising population and one of the youngest demographics in the world. Yet despite this potential, major infrastructure deficits continue to constrain growth

across much of the continent.

The lesson emerging across Africa is increasingly clear: infrastructure delivery requires more than ambition. It requires capable institutions, sound governance, technical expertise, project preparation, financial sustainability and long-term maintenance.

Too often, infrastructure conversations focus almost exclusively on announcing projects. But announcing projects is not development. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies are not delivery. Real progress is measured by whether water flows consistently from taps, whether electricity reaches homes and factories reliably, whether wastewater systems function properly,

whether trains move efficiently, and whether businesses can produce competitively.

South Africa's own experience demonstrates both the dangers of infrastructure decline and the possibilities of recovery through decisive intervention. For years, load shedding imposed devastating economic and social costs on our country. Economic growth was constrained, investor confidence weakened and households endured daily disruption.

Many believed the crisis had become permanent. But through policy reform, accelerated investment, regulatory changes, improved operational management and stronger coordination between government and the private sector, South Africa has made significant progress in stabilising the energy sector.

The importance of this achievement extends beyond electricity. It demonstrates that even deeply entrenched infrastructure challenges can be overcome through strategic leadership, institutional coordination and disciplined implementation. The same lesson now applies to water and sanitation.

South Africa is a water-scarce country. We receive significantly less rainfall than the global average, while nearly all our available water resources are already allocated. Projections indicate that without decisive intervention, the country could face a water deficit of up to 17 percent by 2030.

But contrary to popular perception, the immediate challenge confronting many communities is not always the absolute absence of water resources. In many cases, the deeper crisis lies in infra-

structure management, governance failures, ageing systems, financial instability and poor maintenance within municipal water services.

Across the country, communities continue to experience recurring water interruptions, sewer spillages and declining service reliability even where infrastructure already exists. The latest Green Drop and No Drop assessments reveal a deeply concerning reality. Nearly half of treated municipal water is lost through leaks, poor management systems or operational inefficiencies. Wastewater infrastructure in many municipalities continues to deteriorate.

This is not merely a technical problem. It is fundamentally an institutional and governance challenge. Infrastructure without capable institutions eventually collapses. Pipes alone do not deliver water security. Sustainable infrastructure requires professional management, proper maintenance, financial discipline and long-term operational sustainability.

Government is therefore pursuing reforms aimed not only at

expanding infrastructure investment, but also at strengthening the institutions responsible for delivering services. The Department of Water and Sanitation has allocated approximately R12.8 billion this financial year toward municipal water and sanitation infrastructure projects across the country. Strategic investments are being directed toward improving supply reliability, rehabilitating wastewater systems, reducing water losses and expanding access to underserved communities.

At the same time, reforms are being implemented to improve the financial and operational sustainability of municipal water services. Municipalities are being encouraged to ring-fence water revenues, strengthen accountability and ensure that income generated through water services is reinvested into maintenance, operations and future infrastructure expansion.

This is critical because one of the major lessons emerging from infrastructure failure globally is that maintenance can no longer be treated as secondary to new construction. In fact, one of the



cheapest and most effective infrastructure investments often lies in improving efficiency, reducing losses and maintaining existing systems properly.

South Africa is also investing significantly in long-term national bulk water infrastructure. Approximately R105 billion has been committed toward strategic water infrastructure projects up to 2030. These include major catalytic projects such as the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase Two, the uMkhomazi Water Project in KwaZulu-Natal, the Mokolo-Crocodile Water Augmentation Project in Limpopo, the Vaal-Gamagara Scheme in the Northern Cape and the Mzimvubu Water Project in the Eastern Cape.

These projects are not isolated engineering exercises. They are economic infrastructure platforms designed to support industrial development, mining, agriculture, energy generation, regional integration and long-term water security. However, government also recognises an important reality: public finances alone will not be sufficient to address Africa's growing infrastructure demands.

This is why infrastructure financing models must evolve. Across the continent, increasing emphasis must be placed on blended finance, infrastructure preparation facilities, public-private partnerships, concession models and alternative implementation mechanisms capable of mobilising private capital and technical expertise at scale.

South Africa's establishment of the Water Partnerships Office within the Development Bank of Southern Africa reflects this strategic shift. The Office is designed to help municipalities prepare



bankable water projects and attract investment into critical areas such as non-revenue water reduction, wastewater treatment, desalination, water reuse and alternative service delivery mechanisms.

Importantly, this approach is not about privatising public assets. It is about mobilising investment, innovation and expertise to improve public service delivery and ensure sustainability.

The broader lesson for Africa is that infrastructure delivery cannot succeed through fragmented approaches. Governments, development finance institutions, investors, engineers, technology providers and the private sector must increasingly operate as strategic partners within integrated infrastructure ecosystems.

Africa now stands at an important historical moment. The continent's future growth trajectory will depend significantly on whether we build infrastructure systems that are reliable, resilient, climate-responsive and inclusive.

Infrastructure is ultimately not

about concrete, steel or pipelines alone. It is about economic freedom. It is about restoring dignity to communities. It is about creating jobs for young people. It is about enabling industrialisation, regional trade and inclusive growth.

History will not judge African governments by the number of plans we produce or summits we convene. History will judge us by whether our people have reliable water, functioning sanitation, stable electricity, efficient transport systems and expanding economic opportunity.

The task before us is therefore clear. We must build institutions that can deliver. We must prepare projects that can attract investment. We must strengthen governance and accountability. We must embrace innovation and partnerships. And above all, we must ensure that infrastructure investment ultimately improves the lived reality of ordinary citizens.

Africa's infrastructure future will not be built through plans alone. It will be built through execution.



The Impact of Water, Sanitation and Sewerage Spills on Men and Women in South Africa's Democratic Municipalities

■ By **GREGORY NYONGANE**

MORE than 30 years into democracy, many communities across South Africa continue to face collapsing water infrastructure, sewerage spills, polluted rivers, broken sanitation systems, and poor refuse removal. In many municipalities, raw sewage flows openly in streets, rivers, schools, clinics, and residential areas. The crisis has become not only a service delivery issue but also a human rights, health, gender, environmental, and dignity crisis.

The Constitution of South Africa guarantees every citizen the right to dignity, access to clean water, a healthy environment, and adequate sanitation. However, in many municipalities these rights

remain unrealised. Sewerage spills and water shortages disproportionately affect poor communities, informal settlements, rural villages, women, children, elderly persons, and unemployed men who already face social vulnerability.

The State of Municipal Water and Sanitation

Across several municipalities, ageing infrastructure, corruption, poor planning, lack of maintenance, political instability, and skills shortages have contributed to the collapse of sanitation systems. Wastewater treatment plants are dysfunctional, pump stations are vandalised, and untreated sewage contaminates streams and groundwater.

Communities are increasingly exposed to:

- Overflowing drains
- Burst sewer pipes
- Contaminated drinking water
- Unsafe pit toilets
- Polluted rivers
- Water interruptions
- Cholera and diarrhoeal outbreaks
- Environmental degradation.

The situation affects economic development, tourism, agriculture, education, and public health.

How Sewerage Spills Affect Women

1. Loss of Dignity and Safety
Women suffer greatly when sanitation systems collapse. Many

women and girls are forced to:

- Walk long distances to access toilets
- Use unsafe communal toilets
- Relieve themselves in open spaces
- Bathe with contaminated water.

This exposes women to:

- Sexual harassment
- Gender-based violence (GBV)
- Rape risks
- Psychological trauma.

In informal settlements and rural areas, women often wait until late at night to use toilets due to lack of privacy, increasing vulnerability to attacks.

2. Health and Reproductive Risks

Dirty water and poor sanitation contribute to:

- Urinary tract infections
- Skin diseases
- Menstrual hygiene challenges
- Reproductive infections
- Gastrointestinal illnesses.

Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable because exposure to contaminated environments may affect maternal health and infant development.

3. Burden of Caregiving

Women are traditionally expected to care for sick children, elderly relatives, and family members. When waterborne diseases spread through communities, women carry the emotional, physical, and financial burden of caregiving.

This reduces:

- Employment opportunities
- Educational participation
- Economic productivity
- Emotional wellbeing.



How Sewerage Spills Affect Men

1. Psychological Pressure and Social Frustration

Men in many communities experience intense frustration when unable to provide safe living conditions for their families. Water shortages and sanitation collapse often contribute to:

- Stress
- Anger
- Depression
- Feelings of failure
- Alcohol and substance abuse.

Many unemployed men already struggling economically become emotionally affected by deteriorating municipal services.

2. Health Risks for Male Workers

Men working in municipal infrastructure, Construction, Waste management, Plumbing and Agriculture are often directly exposed to raw sewage and contaminated environments.

Long-term exposure may result in:

- Respiratory diseases
- Skin infections
- Chemical exposure
- Waterborne illnesses.

Without proper protective equip-

ment and occupational health systems, many workers remain vulnerable.

3. Impact on Employment and Economic Survival

Poor sanitation damages local economies. Businesses close, tourism declines, and investors avoid municipalities with collapsing infrastructure.

This leads to:

- Rising unemployment
- Poverty
- Community instability
- Increased crime.

Men who depend on informal work, farming, taxis, street trading, or local economic activity are heavily affected when communities become environmentally unsafe.

Impact on Children and Youth

Children growing up near sewerage spills often suffer from:

- Chronic illness
- School absenteeism
- Malnutrition
- Psychological distress.

Schools without proper toilets expose learners to humiliation and health risks. Teenage girls particularly suffer during menstruation

when sanitation facilities are unsafe or unavailable.

Environmental and Community Consequences

Untreated sewage pollutes rivers, wetlands, underground water and agricultural land.

Communities depending on rivers for washing, drinking, livestock, or farming become exposed to dangerous bacteria and toxins.

Environmental destruction also weakens:

- Food security
- Biodiversity
- Tourism potential
- Climate resilience.

Governance and Accountability Challenges

The continued sewerage crisis reflects deeper governance failures within some municipalities, including:

- Corruption
- Poor procurement systems
- Lack of consequence management
- Political instability

- Weak technical capacity
- Failure to maintain infrastructure
- Irregular expenditure.

Communities increasingly question whether municipalities are fulfilling their constitutional obligations.

Constitutional and Human Rights Perspective

Section 27 of the Constitution guarantees access to sufficient water, while Section 24 guarantees the right to an environment that is not harmful to health or wellbeing.

Poor sanitation violates human dignity, equality, public health rights as well as environmental rights.

The crisis therefore becomes not only an engineering problem but also a constitutional and ethical issue.

The Gender Dimension of Water and Sanitation

Water and sanitation are gen-

dered issues because women and men experience the crisis differently:

- Women face safety and caregiving burdens.
- Men experience economic and psychological pressures.
- Children suffer developmental consequences.
- Elderly persons face mobility and health risks.

A gender-responsive sanitation policy is therefore necessary in all municipalities.

Recommendations

Municipal Level

- Upgrade ageing sewer infrastructure
- Employ qualified engineers and technicians
- Improve maintenance systems
- Introduce anti-corruption monitoring
- Strengthen wastewater treatment facilities
- Improve rapid response teams for sewer blockages.

Community Level

- Strengthen ward committee oversight
- Encourage community reporting systems
- Promote environmental awareness campaigns
- Support community clean-up programmes.

National and Provincial Government

- Increase infrastructure grants
- Monitor dysfunctional municipalities
- Strengthen consequence management
- Deploy technical intervention teams
- Prioritise rural sanitation development.



**Sustainable Development
Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

Gender-Based Interventions

- Build safe sanitation facilities for women and girls
- Improve lighting around public toilets
- Integrate GBV prevention into sanitation planning
- Provide menstrual hygiene support in schools.

Conclusion

The water and sanitation crisis in many municipalities within democratic South Africa reflects a broader crisis of governance, inequality, and human dignity.

Sewerage spills are not merely environmental inconveniences; they are indicators of failing infrastructure, social injustice, public health danger, and broken accountability systems.

Women carry the burden of caregiving and safety risks, while men experience economic and psychological pressure linked to failing living conditions. Children and vulnerable communities suffer long-term consequences that affect health, education, and development.

If municipalities fail to address water and sanitation challenges urgently, the promise of democracy risks becoming meaningless for communities still living among sewage, polluted rivers, and collapsing infrastructure.

Clean water and dignified sanitation are not privileges – they are constitutional rights essential for restoring human dignity, equality, and sustainable development.

Gregory Nyongane is the Convener of the Men Must Talk Movement.

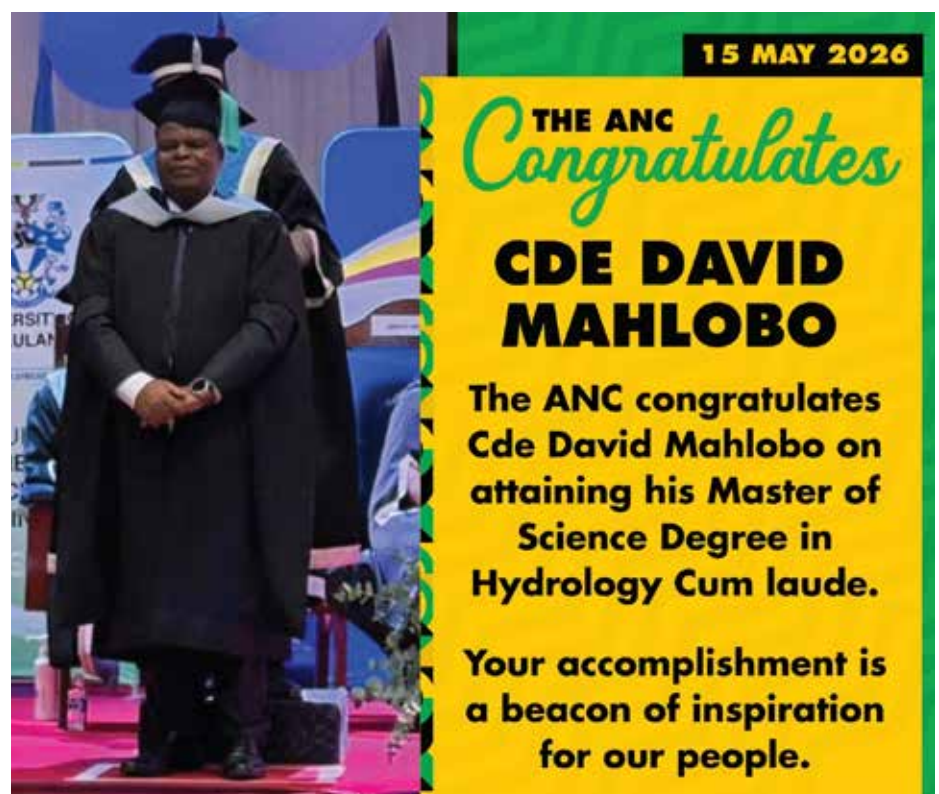
David Mahlobo and the politics of selective recognition

■ By **LEBOGANG MASEKO**

I observed social media commentary last week when the African National Congress (ANC) used its social media pages to congratulate the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, David Mahlobo, on receiving his Master of Science Degree in Hydrology cum laude from the University of Zululand. In a country where citizens consistently call for leaders who are fit for purpose, many of the comments were unfair, misplaced, and deeply revealing of how quickly we dismiss merit when it does not fit our preconceived political narratives.

Too often in South African politics, individuals become prisoners of public caricature. David Mahlobo has long been reduced in some circles to the “rhino horn man” label, a nickname repeatedly weaponised to overshadow every other aspect of his public life and professional contribution. Whether fair or unfair, the persistence of that label has meant that his academic achievements, technical understanding and governance experience are frequently ignored or deliberately minimised.

What many people may not know



is that Mahlobo did not simply arrive in the Department of Water and Sanitation through political convenience. He began his journey in the department as a young scientist. He worked his way up through the ranks, gaining practical institutional knowledge and understanding the sector from the ground up. That matters. It means he is not learning the department from briefing notes and media summaries alone. He understands the culture, the technical demands, and the lived realities of the people who work within it.

In fact, his story reflects something South Africans often say they want. Leaders with both technical understanding and institutional memory.

A Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation holding an advanced degree in Hydrology is not something that should be mocked. It should be welcomed. South Africa's water challenges are not merely political but technical. The country faces ageing infrastructure, collapsing municipal systems, groundwater depletion, climate variability, water losses, pollution, and growing pressure on supply networks. These are complex scientific and engineering challenges that require leadership capable of understanding both policy and technical realities.

And unlike many leaders who speak only in broad policy language, Mahlobo has increasingly positioned himself around practical institutional reforms aimed at fixing long-standing service delivery failures.

One of the clearest examples is



his leadership around the establishment of the Vaal Corporation Water Utility, a new Special Purpose Vehicle created to restore full functionality to the water and sanitation systems of Emfuleni Local Municipality.

This intervention is not cosmetic politics. It is a structural reform designed to confront years of infrastructure collapse, weak governance, wastewater spillages, unreliable water supply, and catastrophic levels of non-revenue water. Through a partnership between Rand Water Services and Emfuleni's Metsi-a-Lekwa, the SPV represents a decisive shift toward professionalised, accountable, and technically capable water services management.

Importantly, this initiative aligns with broader reforms contained in the Water Services Amendment Bill and Operation Vulindlela Phase 2, reforms aimed at creating capable and sustainable water institutions with modern technical standards and clear governance responsibilities.

Equally significant is his role, alongside Minister Pemmy Majodina and Deputy Minister Sello Seitholo, in championing the establishment of the National Water

Resource Infrastructure Agency. This reform has the potential to fundamentally reshape how South Africa finances, develops, manages, and maintains strategic water infrastructure. By championing institutional reforms of this scale, Mahlobo and the department's leadership are attempting to create durable systems rather than temporary political fixes.

Mahlobo has also consistently recognised something many technocrats overlook: water governance in South Africa cannot succeed without meaningful engagement with traditional leadership structures and local communities.

His efforts to strengthen relationships with traditional leaders across the country are not ceremonial exercises. They are essential to building trust, facilitating development projects, and ensuring that communities become active partners rather than passive recipients of government decisions.

A most recent engagement session he led with Inkosi Ngubane of the KwaZashuke Tribal Authority in Pietermaritzburg reflected this approach. The discussions focused on strengthening partnerships to secure long-term water security in the region, particularly around the strategically important Upper uMkhomazi Bulk Water Supply Project.

What stood out was not simply the project itself, but the manner in which Mahlobo approached community concerns. He directly engaged amakhosi on sensitive matters such as possible family



relocations and assured communities that the Department would proceed with transparency, fairness, and respect for the rights and dignity of affected residents. That approach matters deeply in South Africa's context.

Traditional leaders remain influential custodians of communities, land relations, and local social cohesion. Building respectful partnerships with them is not backward governance but smart governance.

But beyond the qualifications and policy interventions, there is another side to David Mahlobo that many commentators never see. And that is his humanity.

I have personally witnessed moments that revealed the kind of leader and person he is. Almost three years ago, when we lost a colleague in a tragic road accident, I saw Mahlobo supporting our unit during an emotionally devastating period. It was not performative politics. It was genuine compassion and presence at a time when people needed leadership that was human before it was administrative.

I have also witnessed him stand firmly against abuses of power in professional spaces. I have seen junior officials defended, supported, and treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. In environments where hierarchy often silences younger professionals, Mahlobo has consistently shown a willingness to listen and protect those who may otherwise feel voiceless.

This is also a man who identifies young talent, nurtures it, and allows people room to grow. He understands that developing professionals requires patience. He allows people to make mistakes, learn from them, and improve rather than humiliating them for every imperfection. That kind of leadership is increasingly rare.

He is soft-spoken, yet stern when necessary. Measured, but not weak. I have listened to him speak in both professional and relaxed spaces, and one thing that has always stood out is his insistence that he does not want to be surrounded by people who merely praise him. He encourages challenge. He wants people to contest his views, interrogate his

ideas, and disagree with his politics when necessary. That openness to criticism is not the mark of an insecure leader. It is the mark of someone confident enough to know that leadership is strengthened by honest engagement, not blind loyalty.

None of this means he should be immune from criticism. No public figure should be. And I am not suggesting that we must praise a fish for swimming. But we must also learn to give credit where it is earned and deserved.

Perhaps one of South Africa's greatest weaknesses is that we often wait until people are dead before we acknowledge their contribution. We become generous with praise only when someone is no longer alive to hear it. While people are living, growing, learning, and trying to contribute meaningfully, we too often reduce them to caricatures, slogans and political insults.

David Mahlobo is not a saint. No one is. But fairness demands that we recognise substance when we see it.

South Africa cannot continue to demand capable, technically informed, grounded leadership while simultaneously dismissing individuals who demonstrate exactly those qualities. David Mahlobo's journey, from young scientist to Deputy Minister, from practitioner to hydrology graduate cum laude, reflects a seriousness about public service that deserves fair acknowledgement, even from those who may disagree with him politically.

Lebogang Maseko is a Media Relations Specialist. She writes in her personal capacity.

'From BGM to Ballot: **The Next Few Weeks Will Decide Whether the ANC Rebuilds Trust or Confirms Doubt**'

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THE next few weeks are not routine organisational business. It's make or break. As the ANC we must prove, in practice, that it can renew itself where it matters most: in local government, where people experience the state as either a source of dignity or a source of humiliation.

Communities do not meet the ANC first in our policy documents. They meet the ANC when the local office is closed, when the ANC councillor is not available, when the bill is wrong, when the water is off, when uncollected refuse lies for days, when contractors fail and nobody enforces consequence, when safety collapses into fear, and when uMama comes for help and leaves feeling smaller than when she arrived.

That is why Branch General Meetings and the broader candidate selection process including public invites and inputs are not 'internal procedures'. They are the first act of governance. They are how we decide whether the ANC shows up in people's lives as a competent servant movement or fades out as a movement trapped in the past with internal battles.

Hence it must be done right.

Integrity must be displayed everywhere by all, so we welcome the tougher recent NEC statement that referred five comrades to the National Disciplinary Committee and endorsed the Integrity Commission's recommendations. Now the political message is clearer: unethical conduct has consequences, and the ANC is signalling that being a comrade whether you a 'tiger or fly' is no shield against accountability or no protection against impunity.

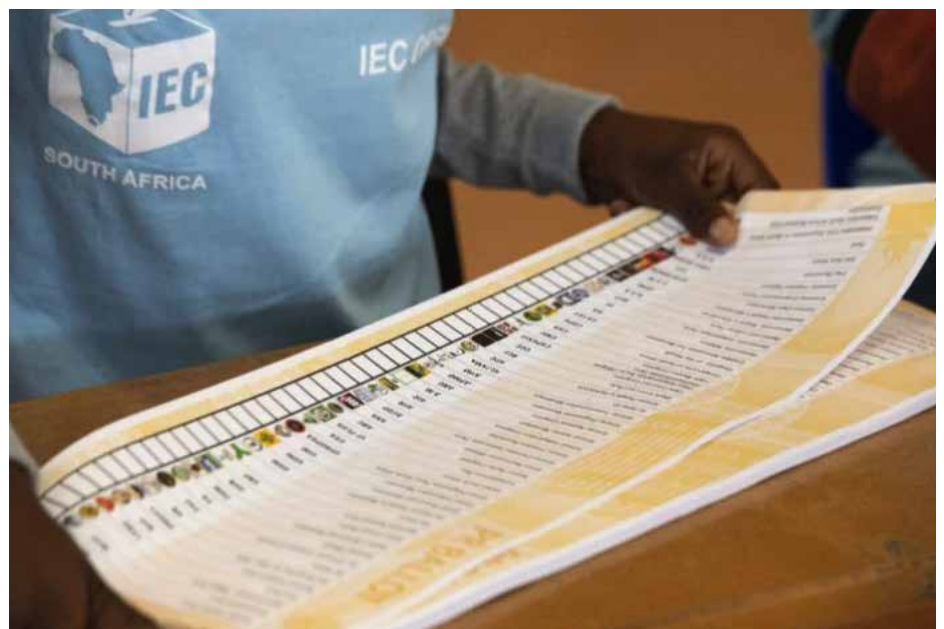
This significant message must come down, localised, be experienced and felt where communities suffer most from weak and corrupt local leadership. If we want people to believe again,

our candidate selection must become the frontline of integrity, not the backdoor of compromise.

What is at stake for every ANC local leader and organiser:

If you are a branch leader, a voting district coordinator, BTT member, a zonal convenor, a sub-regional or regional leader, or an ordinary cadre who still hopes and believes the ANC can be better here is the reality: The public will judge the ANC by the calibre of names we produce.

Not by our speeches. Not by our statements. Not by our history. Not by show. We are judged by





our actions. Our people will judge us by whether our councillor candidates look like: disciplined committed servants of the people, or beneficiaries of internal arrangements. The next few weeks are crucial, beyond the nominations the ANC must show that it remains a credible instrument of service, delivery and development.

The real-life BGM challenges we must confront head-on

Let us not romanticise it. These are the practical problems that repeatedly undermine BGMs and candidate selection, and they must be managed deliberately:

- **Notice confusion and selective communication:** comrades arrive late, or not at all; venues change; purpose is unclear; the process starts contested.
- **Membership and registrar disputes:** paid-up status, lapsed members, cut-off rules, probation rules, “who qualifies to vote” becomes a political fight.
- **Gatekeeping and slate behaviour:** a small circle tries to “own” the branch, control nominations, and intimidate dissent.

- **Disruptions and intimidation:** meetings destabilised intentionally to block outcomes, force reruns, or create bargaining space later.
- **Money politics and inducements:** transport, food, favours, promises, transactional lobbying. Even rumours of this poison legitimacy.
- **PR list obsession:** too many want PR placement; too few want the hard daily work of wards; candidates lack constituency muscle.
- **Women crowded out by default:** unless we deliberately identify, recruit, and support women early, nominations skew male and we scramble late.
- **Disputes used as strategy:** disputes lodged not to correct wrongdoing, but to delay decisions and bargain later.

These are not “*technical problems*.” These are the pathways through which the ANC loses trust and loses wards. Let us not allow personalities, factions and patronage networks to undermine the ANC and our firm commitment to serve our communities.

We must internalise and apply the candidate guidelines. In simple terms, they require:

- Proper notice and openness. A meeting that is not properly convened will not be respected and will be disputed. Every branch must treat notice as evidence, not a courtesy.
- A fair nomination structures. Branches must nominate a set of candidates through a clear process not through shouting, intimidation, or side meetings. The rules require that nominations are structured and that the process is not distorted by personal campaigns.
- A women representation discipline. You do not “discover” women candidates at the end. You build and nominate women at the start. Remember 50/50 representation and ‘zebra’. This must be implemented with seriousness, not compliance panic and after thought.
- A community legitimacy step. Candidate selection is not only internal. The guidelines require real credible community engagement so that the ANC does not nominate leaders who are popular inside the room but rejected outside it. Community legitimacy is not optional in 2026; it is survival. Remember the ANC must provide and deliver the best

credible trusted local candidate.

- An evidence-based dispute discipline. Disputes must correct real wrongdoing, fast. They must not become a parallel election. Where disputes are evidence-based and corrective, they strengthen legitimacy. Where disputes are tactical and endless, they destroy the movement's time and credibility.
- Clean campaigning rules. No negative campaigning. No money politics. No inducements. No violence or intimidation. If we say we are serious about integrity, it must start here.

Recommendations: what local ANC leaders must do in the next few weeks. Do things right. Just decisive actions with integrity.

1) Establish a Branch Election

Task Team in every branch/ ward with seven roles, minimum:

- convenor (chair);
- secretary (administration and 'process file') custodian;
- membership verification lead;
- women recruitment lead;

- youth mobilisation lead;
- community liaison (civics/ faith/sport/safety structures) order; and
- safety marshal.

2) Build the "process file" from day one. Every branch must keep a file with:

- proof of notice distribution;
- venue and agenda;
- attendance register;
- minutes;
- candidate one-pagers (CV and 100-day plan);
- incident log (if disruption occurs); and
- signed decision sheets.

This file is your protection. It is how you defend legitimacy. It is how you reduce disputes.

3) Agree on councillor standards (what type of councillor, profile, attributes, etc) before you debate names. Stop negotiating personalities. Agree to the standards first.

Every ward candidate must sign a Weekly Service Pledge/ Contract:

- fixed weekly office hours;
- weekly service tracker (faults logged, reference numbers,

- escalation, feedback);
- monthly public report-back;
- zero procurement interference;
- safety coordination routine; and
- ward committee discipline (meetings, minutes, follow-up).

If a candidate cannot live this rhythm, they are not ready.

4) Run a "credibility test" in addition to an internal vote Internal votes are necessary, but insufficient. The question is: will the community respect this person?

Ask three questions as a branch: Can this person lead and unite? Can this person be trusted under pressure? Can this person deliver weekly, not seasonally?

A candidate who cannot pass the credibility test should not be deployed, even if they have internal support.

5) Build women candidates deliberately. Do not wait for the meeting. Identify women candidates now. Approach them directly. Coach them. Build a support team around them. Women are



not a checkbox, they are central to credibility and renewal.

6) Stop PR obsession from weakening ward work. A ward is where trust is built. PR should support ward strength, not replace it. We need committed hard working candidates, who can canvass, mobilise, and do service work not only attend meetings.

Require every aspirant to show constituency capability: contacts, mobilisation proof, service record. If someone cannot organise people, they cannot claim leadership.

7) Enforce a strict discipline against money politics and intimidation. This is where integrity becomes real. Do not tolerate inducements or intimidation, because this is sure and first signal of corruption.

8) Use disputes to correct wrongs, not to delay outcomes. Disputes must be evidence-based and corrective. No evidence, no case. Out of time, no case. Vague dissatisfaction, no case. This is not harshness. It is organisational survival.

Two ward realities, two strategies. We must stop pretending all wards are the same.

1) Wards with strong ANC organisation

Risk: gatekeeping and slate capture. **Response:** clean procedure, evidence discipline, stop intimidation, require service proof.

2) Wards where ANC footprint



is thin

Risk: small-circle outcomes rejected by the community. **Response:** broaden nominations, recruit credible local leaders, run a community legitimacy step, and protect the openness from gatekeeping.

This is also where the invitation to broader participation becomes powerful: it is a chance to bring in respected community builders who can carry credibility where the ANC must grow.

A call to progressives and community leaders

To ANC supporters, progressives, civic leaders, faith leaders, professionals, youth mentors, women leaders, and concerned South Africans: the ANC needs your best people, not your commentary from the sidelines.

If you know a credible servant leader – someone ethical, capable, community-rooted – put that name forward. If you are that person, step forward. Local government will not be rescued by slogans. It will be rescued by

credible and committed people. We need more Doers, less talkers.

Final word: the revolution is judged in the ward

Comrades, the organisation is sending a message that discipline and accountability matter.

That message must land where communities feel it most: in the candidates we deploy and the conduct we model. The next few weeks will decide whether the ANC rebuilds trust or confirms doubt.

Communities will not study our circulars. They will study our names. They will study our behaviour. They will study whether we show up when there is no camera.

So let us choose candidates who will truly be servants of the people, competent, incorruptible, disciplined, and present.

And let us run processes that look like a movement ready to govern again.



Breaking the Traditions and Values of the ANC-Led Revolutionary Alliance Betrays the Aspirations of the Majority – **A Horse Without Its Wagon**

■ By **AMBASSADOR PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

This is the edited version of my article, written on the 17th of January 2013, published in the weekly ANC Today, reaffirming the strategic leadership role of the revolutionary alliance, as the lifeblood of our national democratic revolution. It was during an interesting period of a widening discourse, with growing voice calling for the South African Communist Party, to contest elections independent of the historic alliance formations.

THE melodrama attracted intensity, immediately after the election of Dr Blade Nzimande, as the General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, during the elective national congress, held at Shaft 17, Johannesburg, in the year 1998. The beginning of a new trajectory, in the history of our revolutionary alliance formations, shadowed by diminishing leadership role of the South African Communist Party, as a hegemonic vanguard of our struggles for national liberation.

The South African Communist Party, was bequeathed into political wilderness, of selective revolutionary phrasing, vulgarising the theory of our vanguard party, declaration of slogans, inconsequent to concrete realities of our

historical epoch. Worrisome period of left-wing opportunism, exhilarating tactical questions at the expense of strategic questions.

The Communist Party was thrown into a political turmoil, abandoning its revolutionary posture and character, as the vanguard of the most advanced in society, a bulwark internationalist of the working class movement, embroiling itself into abstract formulas, agitating for members of the SACP to stand as independent candidates, during the cross-border disputes in Moutse, Matatiele, Khutsong, Bushbuckridge and Meetsemagolo.

Vladimir Lenin, in *“What is to be done”*, teaches us that the revolutionary theory of the vanguard is not a dogma, but a guide

reflecting concrete realities of class contradictions in society. That we have to fight revolutionary phrasing, so that future generations, should not come to blame us, of having being part of a mock of opportunists, who have ruined our democratic revolution.

My article was dedicated for the 101 anniversary celebrations, of the birth of the African National Congress, on the 8th of January 2013, the historic significance of its first year into the second century of its existence. Reaffirming its historic revolutionary leadership role, as the oldest liberation movement on the African continent, and most probably the whole world.

Celebrating more than a century of rich history of unbroken record of heroic struggles by the people of our country, against imperialism and colonial oppression and exploitation. Selfless contribution by the overwhelming majority of our people, fighting for freedom and dignity, emancipating themselves from the shackles of poverty, disease and underdevelopment.

The National Executive Committee of the ANC, declared the year, as the year of unity in action towards socio economic freedom. A theme consistent with the objective concrete realities, of our own specific conditions in the current phase of our national democratic revolution.

Our national liberation movement reasserting its revolutionary posture and character, a living embodiment of true culture and traditions of our struggles. Reaffirming its commitment to the noble cause of the world progressive movement, of liberating the people of the world against the vestiges of imperialism and colonialism.



The revolutionary character and the posture, consistent with the spirit of internationalism, emanating from the plenary session of the second congress of the third international held in 1920. The historic plenary session, which adopted the most profound theoretical analysis, of the objective political and socio-economic realities of the South African situation.

The plenary session of the third international, proceeding from the concrete basis of the theoretical analysis of the historical period, of concrete material conditions of the people in the former colonies and semi colonies, posed the most important theoretical question, of the dialectical relationship between the world Communist movement and revolutionary liberation movements in the former colonies and semi colonies.

After thorough analysis of the world class balance of forces, the plenary adopted a theoretical formulation, which categorised all colonies and the semi colonies of the world, as the foundation and colonial base of imperialism. Instructing all Communist parties of the world, to establish relation-

ships with revolutionary movements, led by the oppressed people in the colonies and semi colonies.

The understanding was from the point of view that the success of the struggles of the people in the colonies and semi colonies, was a precondition for the victories of the struggles of the international working class movement. A watershed political decision, which heralded anew political impetus, building and consolidating organisational capacity of the world revolutionary movement.

Communist parties across the world, together with other revolutionary nationalist movements, joined the struggles of the oppressed people, against imperialism and colonial domination. Planting new forms of struggles, deepening the crisis of the world colonial system, opening new frontiers for successful revolutions, with many former colonies and semi colonies, gaining independence.

The instruction by the third international, to the communist parties of the world, collaborating

with national liberation movements, built new capacities and strength of the world proletariat movement, ushering political freedom to millions of the people of the world. Transforming the world Communist movement, into a formidable political force of our modern age.

With regard to the specific situation of the south african political socio and economic conditions, the plenary called for the creation of the an independent native south african republic, as a stage towards a workers and peasant republic, with full equal rights of all races. This profound slogan for the creation of a native republic, in accordance with the specific concrete socio economic conditions of our country, became a bedrock for the formation of the theoretical foundations, of our national democratic revolution. Providing a basis for a deeper insight, of the understanding the dialectical relationship between the national, class and gender questions.

The black republic thesis became the mainstay from which our revolutionary alliance, extrapolated the theory that the oppressed people of South Africa, do not only suffer from capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination, but also from racial discrimination. Bringing the understanding that the struggles for the oppressed people of our country from apartheid colonialism, was part of the worldwide struggles of the working class, for freedom and dignity.

Vladimir Lenin says *“Marxism teaches the proletariat not to keep aloof from the bourgeois revolution, not to be indifferent to it, not to allow the leadership of the revolution to be assumed*

by the bourgeoisie, but on the contrary, to take a most energetic part in it, to fight most resolutely for consistent proletarian democracy, for carrying the revolution to its conclusion.

“We cannot jump out of the bourgeois-democratic boundaries of the Russian revolution, but we can vastly extend these boundaries, and within these boundaries, we can and must fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for the conditions that will make it possible, to prepare its forces for future complete victory”.

He says *“a socialist revolution is not one single act, not one single battle on a single front; but a whole epoch of intensified class conflicts, a long series of battles on all fronts, i.e., battles around all the problems of economics and politics, which can culminate only in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It would be a fundamental mistake, to suppose that the struggle for democracy, can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc.*

“On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious, unless

it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy. Of course, democracy is also a form of stage which must disappear when the state disappears, but this will take place only in the process of a transition, from completely victorious and consolidated socialism, to complete communism.”

We celebrated the 101 anniversary of the birth of our national liberation movement, twenty two years after the shockwaves of the sudden collapse, of the communist states in the soviet union and the eastern Europe. Which ushered in a new phenomenon of the unipolar world of imperialist triumphalism, consolidation of the Washington consensus and aggressive military industrial complex.

The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe, was the greatest setback to the struggles of the world working class movement. It was indeed a setback, to the spirit of proletariat internationalism, that prevailed during the historic plenary, of the second congress of





the third international.

Today the suffering people of the world, find themselves having to take forward the struggles, for their own liberation under difficult conditions, imposed by the complex and hostile socio-economic conditions of the unipolar world. The unprecedented levels of poverty, disease and underdevelopment, is a living testimony that capitalism and imperialism cannot resolve its own contradictions.

The mismanagement of the world economic systems, by the monopoly capital in the USA and the European Union, has plunged humanity and the world into a perpetual state of a crisis. The Eurozone has become the epicentre of the world economic crisis.

The spiralling crisis has compelled many of the European member states, to impose harsh austerity measures, that saw huge cuts on social spending, privatisation of the key sectors of the economy, high inflation and increased living standards, increased inequalities and unemployment etc. This crisis has also inflicted serious adverse

effects on our own economy, and therefore our revolutionary programme, for socio economic transformation.

Given the analysis of the world socio and economic relations, therefore the theme by our National Executive Committee to declare 2013, as the year for unity in action for socio economic transformation, was consistent with the immediate task of our movement, of confronting the three and half centuries contradictions, of the legacy of imperialism and apartheid colonialism imposed on our people.

We celebrated the birthday of our national liberation movement, few days after the people of our country and the world, commemorated the 18th anniversary of the passing on of one of the most outstanding and finest revolutionary fighter of our movement, and the former general secretary of the SACP, Cde Joe Slovo. The outstanding son of our movement, master of the physics and chemistry of the South African liberation struggles, and our transition to democracy.

In his intervention of the “Two

Tactics of social democracy”, Lenin would again say “*Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary- democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy, and privilege, its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage-worker against the employer, the struggle for socialism.*”

His profound theoretical contribution, towards the south african transitional period, saw the adoption of the sun set clause, the most strategic intervention that crafted our way forward towards our negotiated political settlement. He understood precisely that a revolution has a past and a future. That it requires the most strategic intervention, to navigate the transition of our national democratic revolution, from the apartheid regime to our democratic dispensation.

The sun set clause intervention navigated our transition to democracy, during the most difficult period, of events in the history of the world. It happened on the eve of:

- The collapse of the soviet block and the communist



- states in the Eastern Europe.
- The unbanning of the liberation movement and the release of our leadership from apartheid jails.
- When our democratic movement had to confront the realities of the apartheid structural economic framework, which over decades marginalised the vast majority of our people from the commanding heights of our economy.
- And when we had to honour our obligation, to pay the massive apartheid debt, owed to the international finance institutions.

It is from this context that I appreciate the contribution of the son of our soil, of giving the best tactical approaches, during the most complex period of our transition, from apartheid racist regime to our new democratic dispensation.

As the most disciplined cadre of our movement, he understood the essence of the political significance of the communist parties working with the revolutionary national movements, consistent with the instruction of the historic plenary, of the third international.

The ANC remains to be the only national liberation movement in the whole world, from amongst the countries of the former colonies and semi-colonies, still in alliance with a communist party. We are the only country in the world, where the communist party and a liberation movement, are still working together in consistence with the revolutionary traditions, of the plenary of the second congress of the third international.

We are the only country in the world, where a national revolutionary movement and a com-

munist party, are still pursuing common struggles, against the worldwide challenges of exploitation and oppression, by imperialism and neo colonialism.

Our revolutionary Alliance is the life blood of our people and our future generations to come. Our struggles for future humanity, would be futile, without the unity of revolution alliance formations, under the tutelage of our national liberation movement, the ANC. Our National democratic revolution without the alliance of the ANC, SACP, COSATU will be like horse without a carrier-wagon.

It is therefore in accordance with this fundamental tradition, that we will be in consistent to the spirit of the proletariat internationalism, that prevailed during the historic plenary of the second congress of the third international.

The reason why the South African Communist Party, should continue occupying the forefront trenches of our struggles, defending the gains of our democratic revolution, under the leadership of our revolutionary alliance, led by the African National Congress.

I never thought during my lifetime, I will be forced to choose between the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. I never thought that the vanguard, the fortress of our democratic revolution, the most advanced in society, can take such reckless political decision, demolishing such a precious monument of the struggles of the people of our country.

I am convinced there is still room for the South African Communist Party, to change its decision of contesting the coming local gov-

ernment elections, independent of the historic alliance formations.

The best revolutionary is the one who is able to change his mind at each and every turn of events, guided by the theory of our revolution, which is fundamentally about the unity of our struggles.

Breaking the revolutionary alliance led by the African National Congress is a betrayal of the interests and aspirations of the majority of our people, is the betrayal of the founding mothers and fathers of the international Communist movement, betrayal of millions of our forebears, those who relinquished their own life, for the freedom and dignity of all humanity. It is a betrayal of the future humanity, betrayal of the aspirations of many generations of man to come.

We therefore need to combat the growing tendency, within the ranks of our movement, of individual moving at a supersonic speed, calling for the destruction of the foundations of our revolutionary alliance. We need to consolidate for the unity of our revolutionary alliance, a noble task bestowed unto our shoulders, by generations of man to come.

To be a revolutionary is the most sacred and yet conscious decision we take, to sacrifice our personal interests, to become selfless servants of our people. Leadership was never an entitlement, but an opportunity given by our people to learn.

Ambassador Phatse Justice Piitso is a member of the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). He writes this in his personal capacity.

Why are so many citizens from **other African countries** so desperate to leave those countries and **settle in South Africa?**

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

ONE of the most uncomfortable conversations South Africa must eventually have with honesty and maturity is this: our country has become both a refuge for the victims of state collapse in Africa and, at the same time, a playground for some of the very elites responsible for that collapse.

This contradiction sits at the centre of many of the tensions currently exploding around immigration, xenophobia, corruption, organised crime and public anger in South Africa. We cannot continue pretending that these issues exist separately. They are connected. Deeply connected.

The recent legal troubles involving Bellarmine “Chatunga” Mugabe, the son of the late Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe, brought this contradiction sharply into focus. Mugabe’s son was arrested in Johannesburg following a shooting incident at a luxury property in Hyde Park, one of the wealthiest suburbs in the country. The case included charges linked to attempted murder, firearms and immigration violations.

Now, let us pause here for a moment.

Zimbabwe, under Robert Mug-

abe’s long rule, went through one of the most devastating economic collapses in modern African history. Millions of ordinary Zimbabweans were driven into poverty. Professionals, teachers, artisans, engineers, nurses and labourers fled their country in search of survival. South Africa became one of the primary destinations of that migration.

Some crossed legally. Many did not.

Many South Africans today encounter the consequences daily in overstretched hospitals, informal

settlements, schools, labour markets and rising social tensions. Whether one agrees or disagrees with how these frustrations are expressed, it is impossible to deny that the pressures are real.

Yet while ordinary Zimbabweans crossed the Limpopo looking for dignity and survival, sections of the political elite connected to the same collapsed system were enjoying the finest suburbs of Johannesburg, driving luxury vehicles, shopping in Sandton and living lives of astonishing excess. That contradiction is morally offensive.



South Africans are repeatedly told that raising concerns about illegal immigration automatically amounts to xenophobia. Certainly, there are genuinely xenophobic and criminal elements in our society who target vulnerable migrants, and they must be condemned without ambiguity. But there is another issue that many prefer not to confront because it is politically inconvenient.

Why does South Africa continue to allow politically connected elites from failing African states to use this country as a safe haven for their wealth while their citizens flee economic devastation back home?

This is not just about Zimbabwe.

Over the years, South Africa has quietly become a preferred destination for politically exposed persons, connected families, business intermediaries and politically linked elites from across the continent. Some buy luxury homes through opaque structures. Others establish businesses. Others move money into our property market and financial system. Their children attend elite private schools and universities while public institutions back home crumble.

Meanwhile, their citizens board buses, taxis and dangerous smuggling routes into South Africa because they can no longer survive in countries blessed with minerals, oil, gas, agricultural wealth and strategic resources.

One of the greatest tragedies of post-colonial Africa is that some liberation movements that came to power promising dignity and economic justice gradually evolved into patronage machines for politically connected families



and elites. The state became a feeding trough. National resources became private assets.

In countries rich with diamonds, oil, cobalt, copper, timber and gold, ordinary citizens remain trapped in poverty while ruling classes accumulate astonishing wealth.

The Democratic Republic of Congo possesses extraordinary mineral wealth that powers modern global technology, yet millions remain trapped in insecurity and poverty. Equatorial Guinea became an oil-rich state, yet much of its wealth accumulated around the ruling elite while ordinary citizens saw little transformation. Angola's post-war oil boom produced billionaires alongside deep social inequality. In several countries, presidents and politically connected families accumulated property portfolios abroad while state institutions weakened at home.

South Africa has often functioned as one of the destinations where this wealth lands.

Luxury estates in Sandton, Hyde Park, Waterfall, Constantia and

Umhlanga increasingly reflect not only domestic inequality but also continental elite migration of wealth.

What makes this situation explosive is that the victims and the beneficiaries of state collapse increasingly coexist in the same South African spaces.

The domestic worker cleaning a mansion in Sandton may come from the same country whose political elite owns the property.

The undocumented migrant selling fruit at a traffic light may have fled the same corruption and elite looting that financed the luxury vehicle parked at a nearby restaurant.

This is why simplistic slogans will never solve this problem.

South Africa cannot police immigration effectively while simultaneously operating as a laundering and luxury destination for politically exposed elites linked to collapsed governance systems elsewhere on the continent.

The issue therefore is not merely border management. It is political



hypocrisy.

Our laws around property ownership, beneficial ownership transparency, politically exposed persons, immigration enforcement and financial flows require serious strengthening. South Africa must develop far more aggressive scrutiny regarding unexplained wealth entering the country from politically connected individuals across the continent. It cannot be correct that ordinary undocumented migrants are hunted daily in townships while politically connected elites move millions through property markets, private schools, luxury dealerships and high-end estates with little public scrutiny.

If South Africa is serious about addressing the immigration crisis honestly, then it must confront both sides of the problem.

It must secure its borders and strengthen immigration management.

But it must also stop being a comfortable retirement village, shopping mall and investment shelter for elites connected to the destruction of African states.

Otherwise we create a moral-

ly absurd situation where South Africans are expected to absorb both the human consequences of collapsed governance elsewhere and the conspicuous consumption of those linked to that collapse.

The continent cannot continue like this indefinitely.

Africa's ordinary people are not poor because the continent lacks resources. In many cases they are poor because predatory political systems hollowed out state

capacity, destroyed economic confidence and converted national wealth into private family accumulation.

South Africans are increasingly reacting emotionally and sometimes dangerously to the visible pressures of migration. But beneath that anger lies a deeper unresolved question which many African governments do not want asked.

Why are so many citizens desperate to leave countries that are so rich?

And why do so many politically connected elites from those same countries choose South Africa as the place to enjoy the wealth accumulated from systems that failed their own people?

Those questions are uncomfortable.

But they are necessary.

And South Africa can no longer avoid them.



Of Africa Day, Pan-Africanism, Xenophobia and the Hypocrisy of Open Borders:

Defending African Unity Without Sacrificing Sovereignty

■ By **CORNELIUS TANANA MONAMA**

AFRICA Day is a profound reminder of Africa's shared destiny, its unfinished struggles and its enduring aspirations for unity, dignity, sovereignty and development. Africa Day should not be reduced to romantic slogans detached from present realities or empty rhetorical speeches and nostalgic tributes to our liberation past. It must instead serve as a powerful call to confront today's challenges with determination, resolve and concrete action.

For South Africa, Africa Day carries an even deeper meaning. Our freedom was nurtured, defended and advanced by African and international solidarity. A number of countries across the continent sheltered exiles, trained freedom fighters and mobilised international support against apartheid. South Africans must never forget the historic sacrifices made by fellow African nations during the liberation struggle.

In a rapidly shifting geopolitical era marked by economic uncertainty, intensifying competition between global powers, climate instability, unemployment and rising social pressures, Africa faces urgent questions of governance, development, accountability and sovereignty. South Africa stands at the centre of many of these de-



bates due to its strategic position on the continent.

Africa Day should also be a moment of pride and celebration. Africa is asserting its leadership in global affairs, with South Africa and President Cyril Ramaphosa playing a pivotal role in elevating the continent's stature on the international stage. Far from being peripheral, Africa is emerging as a credible force for principled diplomacy, multilateralism, and ne-

gotiated solutions to global challenges.

Under Ramaphosa's stewardship, South Africa has positioned itself, and by extension the continent, as a bridge-builder and advocate for justice. The voice of Africa is steadily becoming stronger and more influential in global diplomacy. In an increasingly fragmented world order characterised by geopolitical rivalry and

the weakening of multilateral institutions, this growing African agency is significant.

At the broader continental level, South Africa has been instrumental in advancing African solutions to African problems through African Union-led peace missions, institutional reform and economic integration. These efforts signal a fundamental shift. Africa is no longer a passive recipient of global decisions but an architect of its own destiny and an active player in driving international outcomes.

This was powerfully demonstrated in South Africa's response to the Russia-Ukraine War. Rather than choosing sides in a distant conflict, South Africa championed dialogue, de-escalation and a negotiated settlement. In 2023, President Ramaphosa led an African peace mission to Moscow and Kyiv, demonstrating that African nations will no longer accept exclusion from decisions that shape the global order. The mission amplified Africa's collective voice, demanding inclusion at the table on issues of peace and security.

A landmark demonstration of this elevated role came when South Africa hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg in November 2025, the first time the forum convened on African soil. The summit placed African priorities at the centre of the global agenda, delivering concrete wins on debt sustainability, infrastructure investment, climate finance, food security, and critical minerals. By steering the world's premier economic forum towards the needs of the Global South, South Africa dramatically enhanced both its own prestige and the continent's standing, proving that Africa is a vital and indispensable partner in shaping a more equitable world order.

South Africa's rise as a respected diplomatic actor demonstrates that African leadership can shape global conversations meaningfully and credibly. Through Ramaphosa's leadership, South Africa is not only reclaiming its own voice but has also helped amplify Africa's voice in world affairs.

These developments should be celebrated on Africa Day because they reflect a continent gradually

asserting its voice and agency in world affairs. For far too long, Africa was treated merely as a site of intervention, extraction and dependency. Increasingly, Africa, with South Africa often at the forefront, is positioning itself as an active participant in shaping the global agenda, advocating for peace and defending the interests of the developing world.

While South Africa's growing diplomatic stature deserves recognition, the country also faces immense domestic and regional pressures that cannot be ignored. Over the past decade, South Africa has become a destination for millions of foreign nationals from across the continent. Migration itself is not a new phenomenon, but the problem arises when it becomes unmanaged and undocumented.

Weak governance, corruption, unemployment, instability and economic collapse elsewhere have driven migration pressures. South Africans are increasingly frustrated by the perception that some African governments have outsourced their socio-economic problems to South Africa.



Curiously, when South Africans legitimately demand stronger border controls, the enforcement of immigration laws and the protection of already strained public resources, they are frequently dismissed as xenophobic. Such characterisations are both unfair and dishonest.

Every sovereign nation has the right and obligation to regulate immigration according to its own laws, economic capacity and national interests. African states across the continent enforce immigration laws, deport undocumented migrants and prioritise their own citizens for employment and business opportunities without being labelled xenophobic, revealing a troubling double standard.

It is within this context that PLO Lumumba's recent intervention must be understood. Lumumba rightly raises concerns about violence, vigilantism and the protection of human dignity. Criminal attacks against foreign nationals must be condemned unequivocally, and South Africa's constitutional order demands the protection of all people within its borders.

However, Lumumba's intervention reflects a selective and incomplete understanding of the immigration crisis confronting South Africa. He appears to suggest that South Africa alone bears a unique moral obligation to absorb the continent's socio-economic pressures because some African countries supported our liberation struggle. This argument is neither sustainable nor consistent with how sovereign states operate. Solidarity during liberation cannot mean a permanent surrender of South Africa's right to regulate immigration and



protect limited public resources for its citizens.

As Africans, we need to have an honest conversation. Why, for example, must people migrate from distant countries and travel thousands of kilometres to South Africa instead of seeking refuge or opportunities in the nearest neighbouring country? When other nations deport migrants or restrict certain business sectors to their own citizens, it is defended as sovereignty, yet similar actions by South Africa are framed as xenophobia.

There is also a troubling tendency among some self-proclaimed Pan-Africanists to advocate for open borders - but only in South Africa! South Africa is expected to be the only venue for this farcical experiment by some pseudo-Pan-Africanists. True Pan-Africanism was never intended to erase national sovereignty. It envisioned cooperation among strong, self-sufficient states, not one country absorbing the consequences of socio-economic difficulties or governance failures confronting parts of the continent.

South Africans are not xenophobic for demanding lawful migration, secure borders and fair access to limited opportunities. Respect for

sovereignty, lawful migration and accountable governance are neither xenophobic nor betrayals of Pan-Africanism.

Africa Day demands maturity, honesty and consistency. It demands that the root causes of migration be confronted head-on. At the same time, South Africa must strengthen border security and restore confidence in the rule of law.

Most importantly, Africa Day should renew Africa's collective vision. The continent cannot afford to remain dependent, fragmented and reactive in an increasingly competitive global order. It needs leadership that is committed to delivering jobs, dignity and opportunities for its people.

For Africa to achieve its full potential, leaders will need to foster genuine continental solidarity instead of viewing South Africa as a permanent pressure valve. The long-term solution lies not in exporting people, but in building functioning economies, stable democracies and capable states across the continent. Only then can Africa Day truly represent both the memory of liberation and the promise of shared prosperity, mutual respect and genuine African renewal.

When history judges our generation, it must never be said that we saw the crisis confronting our continent, understood the solutions and still failed to act. Let it be said, instead, that we chose action over rhetoric, courage over complacency and responsibility over indifference.

Cornelius Monama is a public servant. He writes in his personal capacity.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

30 May–5 June 2026

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

30 May 1919

Britain and Belgium swop African territories

Belgium and Britain signed the Anglo-Belgium agreement where Britain gives Rwanda and Burundi (Ruanda-Urundi) to Belgium, in exchange for control of Belgium East Africa (Tanzania), of course without consulting the peoples about the exchange of their lands.

30 May 1921

Film maker Jamie Uys born



Renowned South African filmmaker Jamie Uys was born in Boksburg on this day. He directed 24 films mainly in Afrikaans, including the 1980 hit, *The Gods Must be Crazy*.

30 May 1946

Annie Tempo passed away

Annie Tempo, known as Sister Nannie, was born of a slave mother and father who were kidnapped as children off the coast of Mozambique. She was born in the late 1870s and grew up in Worcester.

She dedicated her life to helping the downtrodden and destitute in Cape Town, especially women sex workers. Her work resulted in the establishment of a formal 'Rescue House'. In 1937 Sister Nannie was honoured with one of King George's Coronation Medals.

30 May 1956

Louis Armstrong visits Ghana

On this day the legendary US trumpeter arrived in Accra, Ghana on a goodwill visit, leading his band and local trumpeters on the tarmac to When the Saints Go Marching In.

30 May 1960

Union of South Africa officially ceased to exist

In March 1961, at a Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London, the South African Prime Minister, H.F. Verwoerd formally announced that South Africa was changing from a Constitutional Monarchy to a Republic. The Union of South Africa of 1910 ceased to exist at midnight on 30 May 1961, changing to the Republic of South Africa.

30 May 1967

Biafra secedes from Nigeria

The Eastern region of Nigeria, Biafra, secedes from the country, which led to the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafra



War (1967–1970), resulting in over 100,000 military casualties and between half a million to two million civilian casualties, mainly due to starvation. Though the war ended with a united federal Nigeria, the underlying ethnic and economic causes of the Biafra War continue to be part of the fault lines of Africa's largest country. A number of books by prominent Nigerian authors and others have been written about the war, including *Destination Biafra* by Buchi Emecheta (1982), *Never Again* by Flora Nwapa (1975), *Survive the Peace* by Cyprian Ekwensi (1976), *Sunset in Biafra* by Elechi Amadi (1973), *The Nigerian Revolution and the Biafra War* by Alexandra Madiebo (1980); and more recently *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimanda Adichie Ngozi (2006), *In Biafra Africa Died* by Emifiana Eziani (2012) and *There was a Country* by Chinua Achebe (2012).

30 May 1974
Former Madagascar
President Rajoelina born



The former President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina was born in Antsirabe. A DJ by profession, he was installed by the junta as president after a military coup in 2009, serving until 2014. In 2019 he was elected as President in a democratic election and served until 2025.

30 May 2012
President Charles Taylor
sentenced

Liberian President from 1997 to 2003, Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor, was sentenced to 50 years in prison, after a conviction for war crimes in the Sierra Leone. He was leader of the Patriotic Liberation Front of Liberia, a rebel group which overthrew the government of Samuel Doe in 1989, starting the First Liberian Civil War (1989–1996), and was elected President after a peace agreement in 1997. In 2003, he was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, judicial body established by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations, to prosecute persons responsible for serious violations of international and Sierra Leone law during the country's civil war. Taylor was found guilty on all 11 charges, and on 30 May 2012 sentenced to 50 years imprisonment, serving his sentence in the United Kingdom.

31 May 1901
King Dinuzulu refused to
join Anglo Boer War



King Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo of the Zulu Kingdom, refused to follow British instructions to take up arms against the Boer Republics during the Anglo Boer War.

31 May 1904
Rhodes University
founded in Grahamstown

The university to this day named after British Imperialist Cecil John Rhodes, was founded after a gift from the Rhodes Foundation. It became fully-fledge university in 1951, and remains one of South Africa's public universities.

31 May 1919
Die Stem composed by
CJ Langenhoven

The poem *Die Stem van Suid Afrika* is composed by poet CJ Langenhoven, becoming lyrics to the song in 1921. It served as the dual anthem with *God Save the Queen of the Union of South African* from 1938–1957, and the sole anthem from 1957–1994. After 1997, it is incorporated into a hybrid anthem with *Nkosi Sikele 'iAfrika*.

31 May 1945
Laurent Gbagbo born
Second president of Cote d'Ivoire (2000–2011), a former trade union

activist and founder of the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) was born on this day. He was arrested in 2011 by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity, and acquitted and released on all charges by the ICC 8 years later in 2019.

31 May 1958
Potato boycott launched

The boycott of potatoes is launched to protest the harsh treatment of farmworkers on potato farms in Mpumalanga.

31 May 1989
Samuel Tshabalala first
black athlete to win
Comrades marathon



The first Comrades took place in 1921, with only 34 entrants. In 1989, Sam Tshabalala made history when he became the first black athlete to win the Comrades. Initially, black athletes were barred from participating in the race, the ban only lifted in 1975. This historic victory would go on to inspire Black runners for decades to come. Many future winners have attributed their passion for running to Sam Tshabalala. He was involved in a horrific car accident in 1991 that left him in months of recovery, and extensive injuries. Undaunted, Sam would return to run a sub 6h30 in 1992. Throughout his Comrades career,

he managed to attain 13 finishes, with one Gold and a staggering 12 Silver medals. Sam passed away on 2 October 2022.

1 June 1937

Ezrom Kgobokanyo Sebata Legae is born



Ezrom Kgobokanyo Sebata Legae, South African artist, was born in Vrededorp, Johannesburg. He studied at the Polly Street Art Center and Jubilee Art Centre under Cecil Skotnes and Sydney Kumalo. When Kumalo retired in 1964, Legae became the art instructor at Jubilee Art Centre. In 1970 he was awarded a travel scholarship sponsored by United States/South Africa Leadership Exchange Programme and visited the United States America. From 1972 to 1974 he was director of the art programme at African Music and Drama Association. In 1980 and 1981 he was instructor at FUBA. Between 1966 and 1987 he exhibited numerous in SA and abroad.

1 June 1989

Ferdi Barnard found guilty of assassination of academic David Webster

On 1 June 1998, Ferdi Barnard was convicted for the murder of Wits University academic, anti-Apartheid activist and Detainees Parent Support Committee

founder, David Webster. Barnard shot Webster in 1989, in front of his home. Barnard was also found guilty of the attempted murder of another activist, Dullar Omar. Barnard was a former agent of the Civil Co-Operation Bureau. He was arrested on 25 charges including two of murder, two of attempted murder and various charges relating to fraudulent transactions and the illegal possession of firearms and ammunition. He was acquitted on a further nine charges, because of a lack of evidence.

1 June 2001

Nkosi Johnson passed on



Nkosi Johnson, an HIV-positive pupil and subsequent activist for those living with the virus, passed away. South Africa's famous child Aids activist was born with HIV and died at the age of 12 in 2001. At the time of his death, he was the longest-surviving child born with HIV in the country. Nkosi rose to international prominence in July 2000 when he delivered his self-written address, televised worldwide, to 10 000 delegates at the 13th International Aids Conference in Durban. "Hi, my name is Nkosi Johnson," he began. "I am 11 years old and I have full-blown Aids. I was born HIV-positive."

2 June 1989

Last woman executed in South Africa

On 2 June, 24 year old Coloured woman, Sandra Smith, was executed by hanging at Pretoria Central Prison, the last woman to be executed in South Africa. Smith had been convicted alongside her boyfriend Yassiem Harris for the robbery and murder of Jermaine Abrahams. Smith was tried and sentenced for her part in Abrahams' murder and was hanged alongside Harris and two others. Out of nearly 3 000 hangings between 1959 and 1989, only 14 were women. Many women were executed for the murder of their husbands, including infamous serial killer Daisy de Melker. The Apartheid years saw a steady increase in the number of people executed in South Africa. In the 1980s particularly, more people were executed per year than anywhere else in the world. In 1990, during the interregnum, FW de Klerk ordered a stay on all scheduled executions. Under the democratic dispensation, the death penalty was completely abolished, bringing an end to a system that saw 3 500 people hanged at Pretoria Central Prison.

2 June 2011

Mama Albertina Sisulu passed on

ANC stalwart, Albertina Sisulu died at her home in Johannesburg at the age of 92. Often referred to as the 'Mother of the Nation', she was a nurse and one of the most important leaders of anti-Apartheid resistance in South Africa. It was with husband Walter that she attended the first conference of the ANC Youth League where Albertina Sisulu was the only woman present. In 1948 she joined the ANC Women's League and in the 1950s she began to



assume a leadership role – both in the ANC and in the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW). The second of five children of Bonilizwe and Monikazi Tetiwe, Albertina was born on 21 October 1918 at Xolobeni, Tsomo in Transkei (now Eastern Cape). She and her husband Walter were jailed and banned several times for their political activities and she was constantly harassed by the Security Police. She was buried next to her husband, Walter at Newclare Cemetery, Johannesburg on 11 June 2011.

3 June 1946 NIC calls for Passive Resistance against Ghetto Act



Natal Indian Congress (NIC) led by Dr. G. M. Naicker, met in an emergency session in Durban and decided on a hartal on 13 June, which was designated “Resistance Day” to mark the beginning of Passive Resistance against the

Ghetto Act or The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act no 28 of 1946, which was passed the previous day.

4 June 1978 Benjamin Tyamzashe passed on

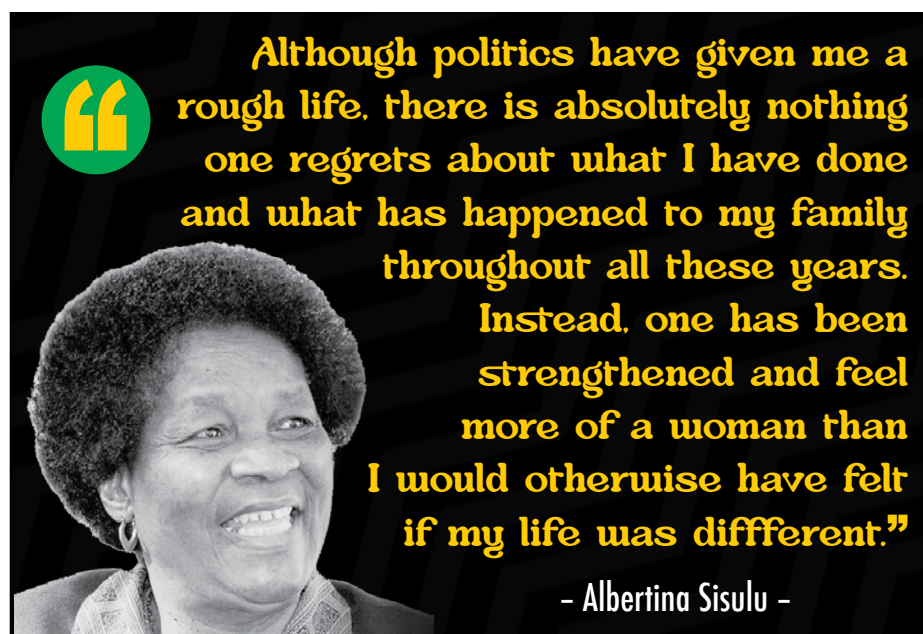
On 4 June 1978, Benjamin John Peter Tyamzashe, Xhosa composer, choir conductor and organist, died in East London. Tyamzashe was born in Kimberley on 5 September 1890, trained and worked as a teacher in the Eastern Cape, where he also directed choirs and composed. Two years before his death, Tyamzashe was awarded an honorary Masters of Arts degree from the University of Fort

Hare in recognition of his contribution to the music industry. He died due to cardiac failure at Free Hospital, East London and was buried on his farm, Zinyoka, King William’s Town.



4 June 1980 Apartheid forces bomb houses in Manzini, Swaziland

In response to attacks on the Sasol oil refinery in Secunda, the South African security police bombed two houses in Manzini, Swaziland. The attacks claimed the lives of Umkhonto we Sizwe member Patrick Makau and seven-year-old Patrick Nkosi, the son of an active ANC member, Mr Mawick Nkosi.



4 June 1986 First Legal Photo of Mandela released



On 4 June 1986, the first photograph of Mandela was released since 1964, when he was convicted and jailed on Robben Island after the Rivonia Trial. The name of Nelson Mandela was well known, but most people had never seen him as after 1964 it was illegal to have his photographs or to photograph him for the 22 years that he had been in prison. Mandela's reproduced photograph appeared on a Booklet titled *'Talking to the ANC'*. The booklet was produced by the Bureau of information, revealing all the political prisoners and the banned African National Congress literature. The photograph was published by *The Weekly Mail* two days later, on 6

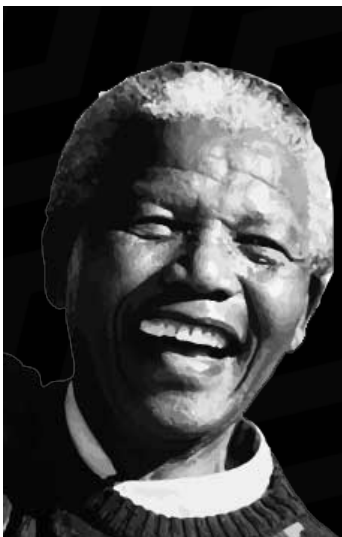
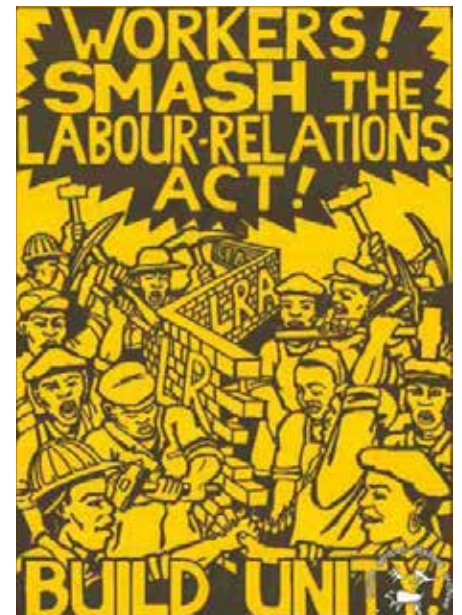
June 1986. Up to that point, it was illegal to publish a photograph of South Africa's and the world's most famous political prisoner.

5 June 1981 First recognized cases of AIDS reported in USA

On 5 June 1981, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (USA) reported that 5 gay men in California were suffering from a rare pneumonia (Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia or PCP). This strain of pneumonia was found in patients with weakened immune systems. These were the first 'recognised' cases of what became known as AIDS. Therefore, 1981 is often referred to as the beginning of the HIV/Aids epidemic in the USA, and at this stage doctors believed that the disease only affected gay men. Later in the 1980s, a blood sample taken in the Democratic Republic of Congo back in 1959 was tested to reveal the HIV virus. This suggested that HIV/AIDS might have been introduced to humans in the 1940s or early 1950s. However, in 2000 the results of a new study presented at the **7th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections**, suggested that the first case of HIV infection occurred as early as 1930.

5 June 1988 COSATU stay-away against the Labour Relations Act

At its Special Congress in May, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) called for three days of national protest against the Labour Relations Amendment Bill (LRA) and restrictions on political organisations. The bill sought to curb the growing union movement and undermine gains made by workers since the 1970s. Cosatu's call led to the largest stay-away (5–7 June) up to that time in South African labour history and exceeded all expectations. On the first day, between 2.5 and three million workers stayed away.



“You provided leadership and exercised power with quiet dignity. Through your selflessness and dedication, through your moral authority and sincere humanity, during and after the struggle you rightly earned to be the mother of all our people.”

Tata Nelson Mandela, in his message at the funeral of Mama Albertina Sisulu





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THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

30 May–5 June 2026

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

31 May

World No-Tobacco Day

World Tobacco Day was declared by the World Health Organization in 1987. The day is observed by abstaining from tobacco for a period of 24 hours around the World. The objective is to encourage smokers to stop smoking altogether. World No Tobacco Day takes place on Sunday, May 31, 2026, with the theme *“Unmasking the appeal – countering nicotine and tobacco addiction.”* The global campaign focuses on exposing how the tobacco and nicotine industries use deceptive marketing, appealing flavors, and sleek packaging to hook young people.



The World Health Organization (WHO) and global health partners are highlighting alarming statistics: approximately 15 million adolescents (aged 13–15) already use e-cigarettes, and 40 million use tobacco. To combat this, the 2026 campaign is focusing on several actionable goals:

- **Expose Industry Tactics:** Raising awareness about evolving industry strategies, including the use of synthetic nicotine, nicotine salts, and additives designed to heighten addiction while appearing “technologically advanced.”
- **Advocate for Policy Changes:** Pushing for strict policy action to protect youth, including banning flavors, restricting advertising (especially on digital media), and implementing plain packaging to reduce overall product appeal.
- **Support Cessation:** Empowering the public with the knowledge and tools necessary to resist industry manipulation and access evidence-based support to overcome addiction.

Statistics show that a third of South Africans are heavy smokers, with the average smoker spending over R400 a month on cigarettes. The country therefore has amongst the most progressive anti-smoking laws in the world.

1 June

International Childrens Day

Every year, on June 1st, many countries around the world celebrate International Children’s Day. It is a global observance dedicated to promoting the rights and well-being of children around the world. This day serves as a reminder of the need to address the challenges that children face, including poverty, lack of access to education, and exposure to violence or exploitation. It also celebrates the potential of children to shape a better future and calls for actions that ensure they grow up in safe, healthy, and supportive environments.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

1 June

Global Day of Parents

Since the 1980s, the important role of the family has increasingly come to the attention of the international community. It recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children, and that children should grow up in a family environment and atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Global Day of Parents appreciates all parents for their *“selfless commitment to children and their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship.”*

1 June

Global Running Day

Global Running Day is a worldwide celebration of running that encourages people of all ages and abilities to get moving. This day plays an important role, reminding us of the positives that running can offer and the power of unification. During the past two years, many people have turned to running as a solution to help release anxiety, gain perspective, cope with cabin fever, and keep up wellbeing. This year let's run together on Global Running Day to reflect upon the challenges we've faced and how our communities have endured (globalrunningday.org).

3 June

World Bicycle Day

Regular physical activity, such as walking, cycling, or doing sports, has significant benefits for the health of persons of all ages. For the poorest, who often cannot afford private vehicles, walking and cycling can provide a form of transport while reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, diabetes, and even death. Accordingly, improved active transport is not only healthy; it is also equitable and cost-effective. The bicycle is a simple, affordable, reliable, clean and environmentally fit sustainable transport and it can serve as a tool for development and as a means not just of transportation but also of access to education, health care and sport.



4 June

International Day of Child Victims of Aggression

It is a sad reality that in situations where armed conflict breaks out, it is the most vulnerable members of societies – namely children, who are most affected by the consequences of war. The six most common violations are recruitment and use of children in war, killing, sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. The purpose of the day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. This day affirms the UN's commitment to protect the rights of children. Its work is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most rapidly and widely ratified international human rights treaty in history.

5 June

World Environment Day

World Environment Day 2026, under the theme **A GLOBAL CALL FOR CLIMATE ACTION**, will rally the world around the urgency of climate action. With rising temperatures, collapsing ecosystems, and disruptive weather extremes, humanity stands at a tipping point. But we are not powerless. The 2026 theme underscores that climate action is not just about reducing carbon emissions – it is about rethinking the systems that power our economies and repairing our relationship with the climate. By doing so, we can secure a safer, healthier, and more just future for all.



5 June

International Day against Illegal Fishing

Fish and seafood are important sources of protein for local communities in the 34 coastal and island African states. Illegal fishing, mainly by nations outside of Africa, has decimated African fish stocks, impacting on the livelihoods of coastal and island communities. The AU Pan-African Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Framework and Reform Strategy, aims to get countries to work together to discourage and lobby against this practice.



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

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