



# ANC TODAY

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## Conversations *with the* President



# Reparations must help to address Africa's colonial legacy

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

**E**VERY May, we observe **Africa Month** to commemorate the founding of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963. Celebrating and affirming our identity as Africans is as integral to our national character as the ideals that anchor our democracy.

We are one people. Despite Africa's many languages and cultures, we take pride in a common identity, in our shared values and in a belonging that transcends geographical boundaries.

Even as we celebrate our continent's vibrancy and dynamism, we are mindful of the legacy of Africa's colonial past and how it continues to shape our continent's fortunes. While most Afri-

can countries achieved independence many decades ago, the effects of the colonial era are still evident in much of the inequality, economic exclusion, political instability and conflicts that persist in parts of Africa.

The most extreme form of dehumanisation was the transcontinental slave trade perpetrated by European empires and slave-trading networks across the Sahara and North Africa. For more than a hundred years, millions of African men, women and children were hunted down, captured and traded as if they were not people, but possessions.

The reality is that much of the wealth of former colonial powers today is the result of the depriva-

tion of Africa's people. Not only were millions of Africans enslaved, but colonial powers grew wealthy from the vast tracts of African land they forcibly occupied and the valuable resources they extracted.

Across Africa, our people were taken, both dead and alive, as human specimens to be displayed and studied in faraway capitals. African historical artefacts were looted and taken to European museums.

The colonial powers have largely avoided a deeper reckoning with the consequences of these acts. Some have apologised for specific atrocities, but in the main they have fallen short of full unqualified apologies for colonialism.

Reparations for Africa, which was the site of some of the worst forms of brutality in human history, has been a contested issue for decades.

Opponents of reparations argue that modern states differ from those of the colonial period. It has been argued that too much time has passed, that those directly harmed are no longer alive and that it would be unjust to hold to account individuals or governments for actions committed decades or centuries ago.

This would be to wilfully ignore the intergenerational trauma wrought by slavery that continues to hold back the development of entire societies in Africa.

As the Guyanese political activist and academic Walter Rodney writes in his seminal 1972 work *'How Europe underdeveloped Africa'*, *"when one tries to measure the effect of European slave trading on the African continent, it is essential to realise that one is measuring the effect of social violence rather than trade in any normal sense of the word."*

This issue has now been given renewed momentum. In March this year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the trafficking of enslaved Africans and the racialised enslavement of Africans as the gravest crime against humanity.

The resolution is anchored in acknowledgement of harm, reparatory justice and restitution. It calls for looted cultural property to be returned and for compensation and other forms of reparation to be considered.



The former colonial powers derived financial benefit from the display of our looted historical and cultural artefacts in their museums and institutions. Enslaved labour from Africa built farms, industries and infrastructure to enrich colonial powers, as the countries from which the slaves were taken remain underdeveloped even today.

The colonial enterprise was not merely about the deprivation of human rights. It was motivated by profit. As Walter Rodney writes, *"it was economics that determined that Europe should invest in Africa and control the continent's raw materials and labour"*.

Whatever form reparations ultimately take, they should be aligned with our continent's developmental objectives and assist African countries to tackle debt challenges, poverty alleviation, inequality and unemployment.

Just as the exploitation of Africa and the enslavement of millions of her people made the former

colonial powers wealthy, redress must take the form of sustained, direct, material investment in Africa's development.

This should include increased foreign direct investment and market access for the African countries affected by slavery. It should include skills and technology transfer. And it should include the return of historical artefacts to their countries of origin.

South Africa supports a unified, collaborative approach to the issue of reparations for Africa. This must include concrete measures to redress the lingering effects of the slave trade and colonialism that are forward looking.

Just as truth and reconciliation has been an integral part of our own journey towards nationhood, so too must the former colonial powers confront the historical injustice of colonialism with honesty and integrity. Beyond that, they must make a clear commitment to tangible measures of redress that support Africa's growth and development.

# Forward with working-class Unity!

REMARKS BY DEPUTY PRESIDENT PAUL MASHATILE

ON THE OCCASION OF WORKERS' DAY COMMEMORATION

**W**E bring you fraternal and revolutionary greetings on behalf of the African National Congress (ANC), the historic leader of our people and loyal ally of the working class.

Once again, we gather here in the Limpopo Province, a land rich in heritage, resilience, and natural beauty. We gather to commemorate, to honour, and to celebrate the proud and courageous history of worker struggle in South Africa and across the world.

Before we can even talk about the rest of the world, the province of Limpopo has experienced its fair share of labour struggles. This province beats the footprints of people who marched for dignity. Its valleys echo with the voices of those who demanded justice at every turn of our struggle for total liberation.

Among the giants of liberation struggle who hail from this province, we remember John Kgwana Nkadimeng. He is a significant figure in the South African liberation struggle, known for his leadership in both political and trade union movements. Nkadimeng recognised the connection between the struggle for fair wages and dignity and the broader fight for freedom and democracy.

It is in this province that we are reminded that the tale of workers is inextricably linked to the story of our country's success and our



future. From the mineral wealth beneath its soil to the fertile agricultural fields that feed the country, Limpopo Province is a powerful symbol of labour, and the enduring spirit of its people.

It is the same spirit carried by those who hardly see the light of day, deep in the mineshafts, extracting the riches that fuel our economy. It is the spirit of those who cook meals they may never eat and make hotel beds they can only dream of sleeping in. It is the spirit of workers who labour in silence, whose dignity must be recognised, and whose voices must be heard.

Today, as we commemorate Worker's Day, we affirm that their struggle is not forgotten. Their endurance and their courage is our call to action to build a South Africa where labour is honoured, where rights are protected, and

where every worker shares in the fruits of their labour.

It was workers who marched when marching was forbidden. It was workers who spoke when silence was demanded. It was workers who reminded the nation that freedom without justice, and democracy without dignity, could never be complete.

In those dark and difficult days, organised workers mobilised, resisted, and stood firm against unfair labour practices. They carried the banner of dignity and justice, and they stood at the forefront of the struggle for political and economic freedom.

These struggles found their organised voice in the launch of COSATU at Curries Fountain in Durban more than forty(40) years ago. With its now renowned slogan of **"An Injury to One, is an**

*Injury to All*”, COSATU became the living personification of worker unity, a federation that carried the demands of the shop floor into the corridors of power, that linked bread and butter struggles to the broader fight for liberation.

Workers, through COSATU, expressed that exploitation would not be accepted, apartheid would end, and the dignity of labour would be central to democracy.

Indeed, in 1994, South Africa underwent a significant transition to democracy, marking a major victory for labour. This victory not only established the right to vote but also affirmed the right to organise, the right to strike, and the right to seek dignity within the workplace.

Democracy empowered workers by providing a voice in shaping the nation’s future and emphasising labour rights within the constitutional framework. It underscores the notion that true democracy requires that all workers benefit from its promises, where freedom is knotted with justice, and citizenship is associated with the provision of decent work.

However, comrades and friends, in this democratic dispensation, workers are faced with challenges of unemployment, inequality, and the erosion of job security. The struggle has shifted from breaking the chains of apartheid to breaking the chains of poverty, corruption, and exploitation in new forms.

Moreover, the global landscape is marked by significant uncertainties, including slow economic growth, geopolitical tensions, and an uneven recovery from recent crises, such as disruptions in global supply chains and ris-



ing inflation. Developing nations, including South Africa, confront structural challenges such as inequality, debt burdens, and susceptibility to external shocks.

Domestically, while there has been progress in increasing access to housing, education, healthcare, and social protection over the past thirty-two years, the fundamental structure of the economy remains largely unchanged. It continues to have high unemployment rates of more than 31%, with over 7.8 million people unemployed for extended periods of time. Despite small gains, earnings are failing to keep up with living costs, notably in the mining industry, where job losses and terrible working conditions are common.

At the same time, workers’ continued fight for higher pay and better working conditions, as seen by ongoing discussions in important sectors of the economy, highlights the economic realities of inflation and rising living costs, which erode the real worth of earnings.

Therefore, this day is not just a celebration; it is a call to continued action. It is a reminder that the struggle for economic libera-

tion continues.

This year’s theme, **“Build Working-Class Unity for Economic Liberation Toward Socialism,”** speaks directly to the historic mission of the working class as the primary motive force of the National Democratic Revolution. A revolution aimed at dismantling the legacy of apartheid colonialism and building a just, equitable, and inclusive society.

The ANC has always recognised the working class as a key component of the constituency that stands to benefit from this revolution. COSATU affiliates, as part of this motive force for change, have carried the struggle into the labour sector.

Together, the ANC and COSATU have championed legislation from Occupational Health and Safety to Basic Conditions of Employment and to a number of now entrenched protections across industries, ensuring that the rights and dignity of workers are defended at all times.

The workers’ struggle for a living wage and better working conditions remains part of the ANC national transformation agenda. Together with COSATU, we share

the overview that whilst we have laid Constitutionalism as the bedrock of our democracy, that would be hollow without corresponding economic emancipation across race, gender, and class. That is why we declare today, with conviction, that the struggle continues.

### **Aluta Continua!**

The struggle to unite the working class, to advance economic liberation, and to ensure that every worker shares in the fruits of their labour.

In this regard, we must also acknowledge the efforts led by Government to grow the economy through a massive investment drive, an effort aimed at creating sustainable job opportunities, addressing poverty, and laying the foundation for a society where dignity is matched by opportunity.

South Africa is showing modest, consistent economic progress. Reforms in energy and logistics, combined with improved private sector investment, are driving this recovery. These investments are about restoring hope, building livelihoods, and ensuring that the promise of democracy is fulfilled in the daily lives of our people.

We must maintain our current trajectory by uniting the efforts of the government, labour, business, and civil society. This collaboration is essential for fostering an inclusive economy, developing capabilities, strengthening the state's capacity, and promoting accountability in leadership and partnerships across our society.

Comrade Zingisiwa Losi, workers are not only participants in the economy; they are its founda-

tion. It is the labour of workers that produces wealth, drives industrialisation, and sustains economic growth. From the mines to factories, farms, and service sectors, the working class remains the engine of production and the backbone of our society.

### **Without workers, there is no economy!**

It is for this reason that the National Democratic Revolution recognises the working class as its leading motive force, whose unity and organisation are essential for advancing transformation and ultimately achieving economic liberation.

I must state that the unity of the working class is not a luxury, but it is a necessity. The strength of our movement has always rested on the unity of the Tripartite Alliance, the African National Congress, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the South African Communist Party.

We are indeed concerned about the recent developments that may weakened this unity.

While we respect the decision of the SACP to contest coming local government elections, we must

do everything in our power to avoid fragmentation of the working class. Perceived differences gives rise to weakening the very forces required to advance the National Democratic Revolution. Now, more than ever, we must close ranks, deepen political education, and build a cohesive, disciplined, and united movement of workers.

The ANC continues to affirm that collective bargaining is the cornerstone of labour relations in our country. Collective bargaining is not only about wages and conditions; it is also about how allies in struggle work together to resolve on going socioeconomic challenges.

Fellow compatriots, as Government, we also remain committed to addressing the socio-economic challenges facing our people. Our priorities are focused on driving inclusive economic growth through industrialisation, localisation, and infrastructure development.

Our immediate task is to create the much-needed jobs at scale, particularly for young people, through targeted employment programmes and support for small businesses.



Furthermore, we are committed to strengthening the mining and manufacturing sectors while ensuring decent work and fair wages. We will expand social protection to cushion vulnerable households and invest in skills development to align the workforce with the needs of a modern economy. Government will continue to implement structural reforms to improve energy security, logistics, and economic competitiveness.

Comrades and friends, President Cyril Ramaphosa officially announced 4 November 2026 as the date for South Africa's local government elections. This sets the stage for a critical moment in our democracy, where communities will decide who leads at the most immediate level of governance.

As we move towards that date, the call for unity of purpose becomes paramount. Local government significantly impacts citizens' daily lives by providing essential services such as water, energy, and housing.

The success of the upcoming elections is crucial, and the ANC, which has carried the hopes and aspirations of the people from liberation to democracy, must emerge victorious.

It is through the ANC that the struggle for dignity, service delivery, and transformation continues to discover expression in the daily lives of our communities.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to the unity of the working class, to advance the National Democratic Revolution, and to building an inclusive and transformed economy so that we can achieve economic liberation for all.

Let us honour the sacrifices of those who came before us by intensifying the struggle for justice, equality, and dignity. The future of our country depends on the strength, unity, and determination of its working class.

**Long Live the Spirit of Elijah Barayi Long Live!**

**Forward with working-class Unity Forward!**

**Amandla!**



## The challenges facing the working class are immense

**ADDRESS BY COSATU PRESIDENT  
ZINGISWA LOSI ON THE OCCASION OF  
WORKERS' DAY COMMEMORATION**

**140** years ago today, workers in Chicago stood up and rejected some of the most horrendous forms of exploitation, including child labour, and in demand of an 8-hour day. Their struggles led to workers being killed. Their example has served as an inspiration to workers ever since from the cold streets of Chicago to the hot farms of ZZ2 in Tzaneen.

We celebrate **32 years of liberation** from the apartheid regime and the building of our internationally respected constitutional democracy and in defence of our transformation journey. These victories are the product of countless giants of the labour movement led by the then SAC-TU and today COSATU, from John Nkadimeng to Ray Alexander, and ordinary citizens from mineworkers in Thabazimbi to municipal workers eThekweni.



We are proud of how far we have come as a nation from the dark days of apartheid when domestic and farm workers were treated little better than slave labour to today when workers' rights are enshrined in our progressive labour laws, from the right to strike to collective bargaining, from paid maternity and parental leave to the National Minimum Wage raising the salaries of six million retail, construction and other vulnerable workers.

Access to education, transport, healthcare and jobs must include persons with disabilities.

**Whilst we are proud of these many advances**, we dare not be complacent when the challenges facing the working class are immense.

We cannot celebrate 32 years of Freedom but keep quiet when four out of ten South Africans cannot find work. What hope is there for the matriculant in Phalaborwa or the disabled bus driver in Makhado when jobs are scarce? When we are battling this single greatest threat facing the nation, we must condemn those employers in both the public and private sectors who see nothing wrong with retrenching workers in this

economy.

Our unemployment crisis must be treated as a national emergency and command the same collective response we mobilised against COVID-19, including a mass economic stimulus and job creation plan of action. All spheres of government and employers must be mobilised and held accountable for their contributions to crushing unemployment.

All of us, be it the teacher in Malmulele, the mining company in Rustenburg or the hospital in Mangaung, must buy locally produced goods. This is the most effective way to support local jobs and businesses and grow this economy.

It is in response to this and the cost-of-living crisis that is plunging millions of working-class families into debt and misery that COSATU is waging a mass campaign to provide relief and hope for workers. We must ensure that the price of fuel and electricity are slashed and that we invest in public transport, that we challenge GEMS and other medical aids who exploit workers and charge abusive prices, that government implement the next phase of the Two Pot Pension

Reforms and provide greater relief to struggling workers and reduce the tax burden upon working and middle class families, and defend the NHI.

We will never overcome our entrenched levels of poverty and inequality unless we can see unemployment falling by at least 1% each quarter.

We cannot celebrate 32 years of democracy when we are a nation scarred by horrific levels of crime and corruption. We cannot be proud when a young learner in Polokwane is harassed whilst walking to school, when the cashier eGqeberha is sexually abused by her employer, when members of the LQBQTI+ community are victimised in Khayelitsha. Parliament overhauled over criminal legislation to deal with this scourge, but we are failing collectively to defeat this cancer. This must end now.

We appreciate progress being made to remove the cancer of corruption across the state, in particular SARS. But more must be done. The police require working vehicles, the NPA requires skilled prosecutors, the courts require magistrates. This is a war that we dare not lose.

Politicians, employers and tenderpreneurs who steal, must go to prison.

The rebuilding of the Department of Home Affairs, the Border Management Authority and law enforcement and the cracking down on illegal migration must be ramped up. Our state organs must have the resources needed to enforce our immigration laws and ensure that all persons here comply with the law. We must never tolerate lawlessness.

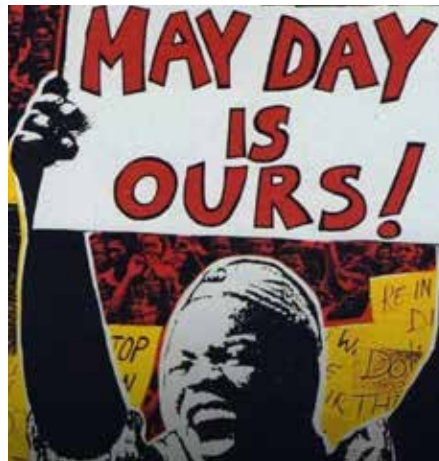
We need more labour inspectors to go to all workplaces, from the farms of Mussina to the clothing factories of Newcastle. Employers who break the law must be held accountable.

If we are to deliver this Better Life for All, then government must abandon the tried and failed policies of neo-liberalism and austerity. Only a well-resourced state can provide the frontline public and municipal services that the working class and the economy depend upon to survive and thrive.

Letaba Hospital needs doctors and nurses, schools in Mankweng need teachers and classrooms, police stations on the Cape Flats need modern computers and forensic databases. There are no short cuts to fixing the state and delivering public services.

Urgent action is needed to fix local government. We cannot sit idle whilst Ditsobotla and Matjhabeng Municipalities fail to provide basic services and pay their employees.

COSATU is a product of workers' struggles and the beneficiary of international solidarity during the darkest days of apartheid, from



Angola to Mozambique and beyond. We are firm in our solidarity today with the people of Cuba and Venezuela, Western Sahara, Palestine, Zimbabwe and eSwatini. We are resolute in our condemnation of all wars of aggression from Sudan to Lebanon and Iran.

Whilst we have far to go, we have won many victories since the founding of COSATU in 1985. We have secured these gains because of this historic and revolutionary Alliance with the ANC, SACP, SANCO and the broader mass democratic movement. COSATU remains the shield of workers at the workplace, the SACP the vanguard of the working class, and the ANC leader of the liberation movement, with each having a unique role.

This is an Alliance forged through stay aways, strikes, prison, exile and funerals. It is an Alliance built by such giants as OR Tambo, Joe Slovo, Chris Hani, Elijah Barayi and Helen Joseph.

As we head to the most contested local elections since the dawn of democracy, this Alliance must be united. We are allies and not opponents. We must work hand in glove as we engage and mobilise voters and ensure that on election day, this Alliance emerg-

es victorious from Thohoyandou to Tshwane.

This Federation of Mark Shope and Nana Abrahams will unapologetically defend its unity. The Alliance must be radically reconfigured, lead the state and remain biased towards the working class and rural poor. We must never allow our differences to divide workers. We make this appeal to our Alliance Partners. This leadership of the Alliance, you dare not fail Collins Chabane, Joyce Mashamba, Ruth First and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

The challenges facing the working class from the unemployed mother in Mitchell's Plain to the petrol attendant in Kimberley and the taxi driver in Jane Furse, require COSATU and its Affiliates, be on the ground, at the workplace, united and vibrant, defending workers, securing wage increases and servicing members.

COSATU was founded upon the principles of socialism and the call for one industry, one union, one federation, one country. We extend our hand in comradeship to all federations and unions. We must work as one in defence of workers irrespective of our differences.

We have come from that day in 1985 when this militant giant COSATU was launched in Durban. We have won massive victories in defence of the working class. We have far still to go. To win these battles, we must be united and on the ground. We dare not fail. We are confident that this Federation and the Alliance will continue to lead these struggles.

**Amandla, Matimba, Matla, Maanda!**



## The African National Congress takes **Service Delivery Fight to Every Metro and Community**

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

**T**HE African National Congress (ANC) has concluded its National Working Committee (NWC) visit to Nelson Mandela Bay this week, where leadership engaged directly with communities and assessed the real impact of service delivery on the ground. This visit marks the beginning of a national rollout of similar interventions across all metros and secondary cities, aimed at ensuring that service delivery is not only planned, but experienced by communities through reliable infrastructure, improved services, and tangible improvements in daily life. This programme represents a decisive shift from reporting to direct intervention, placing leadership

at the centre of service delivery oversight, community engagement, and accountability.

This intervention forms part of the ANC's declaration of 2026 as the Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy, and is directly linked to the implementation of the Local Government Action Plan (LGAP), adopted as a short-term war plan to stabilise municipalities, restore service delivery, and rebuild public confidence. The NWC visit follows the six-month LGAP scorecard presented to the public, and advances the next phase of work; taking leadership physically to communities, infrastructure sites, and

service delivery points to assess progress, identify blockages, and drive implementation.

The NWC programme in Nelson Mandela Bay was structured as a comprehensive, full-day intervention, including a courtesy engagement with the Bantu Church of Christ in New Brighton, extensive service delivery oversight visits across multiple sites, and a structured engagement with ANC leadership and structures at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium.

These engagements ensured a combination of community interface, infrastructure inspection, and organisational consolidation, reflecting the ANC's integrated

approach to governance and political leadership.

During the service delivery oversight phase, NWC deployees were assigned across multiple teams to assess critical infrastructure and development projects spanning housing, water and sanitation, energy, economic infrastructure, and community services. The visits covered key sites including housing developments in New Brighton and Kariega, wastewater treatment infrastructure serving approximately 70% of the metro, logistics and industrial development hubs attracting over R2 billion in investment, and energy infrastructure upgrades including substations, powerlines, and renewable lighting systems.

These site visits confirmed both the scale of ongoing interventions and the urgency of accelerating delivery. In human settlements, projects such as Kwa Langa in Kariega demonstrate measurable progress, with the majority of planned housing units completed, while bulk serviced sites

in Booyens Park are laying the foundation for expanded housing delivery. In economic infrastructure, the Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park stands as a critical node for industrialisation and job creation, employing over 1,000 people and positioning the metro as a manufacturing hub.

In the energy sector, upgrades to substations, the repair of damaged transmission infrastructure, and the introduction of solar-powered public lighting reflect ongoing efforts to stabilise electricity supply, improve safety, and support local economic development. Similarly, interventions at wastewater treatment facilities and network infrastructure highlight both the challenges posed by vandalism and the importance of restoring core municipal services that directly affect communities.

The NWC also received detailed reports from deployees and local leadership, including governance updates from the Executive Mayor and organisational reports from ANC structures. These en-

agements provided a consolidated view of the municipality's performance, confirming that while progress is being made in specific projects, systemic challenges remain in infrastructure maintenance, financial management, and service delivery consistency.

Importantly, the Nelson Mandela Bay visit reaffirmed the central political objective of the programme; to reconnect leadership with the lived experiences of communities. The ANC recognises that service delivery challenges in areas such as water, sanitation, roads, electricity, and housing are not abstract issues, but daily realities affecting the dignity and livelihoods of residents. The presence of national leadership on the ground is therefore both a governance intervention and a political commitment to accountability.

This programme also serves to strengthen coordination between national, provincial, and local spheres of government, ensuring that interventions are



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not fragmented but aligned with the LGAP pillars of core service delivery, infrastructure development, capable governance, and inclusive economic growth. It further reinforces the role of ANC deployees as agents of implementation, tasked not only with oversight but with driving measurable outcomes.

The ANC emphasises that this programme is not a once-off event, but the beginning of a continuous cycle of monitoring, intervention, and follow-through. Findings from Nelson Mandela Bay will be consolidated into the NWC's national oversight framework, with clear directives issued to address identified gaps, unblock stalled projects, and accelerate delivery.

As part of the ANC Mondays on the Ground programme, similar visits will now be undertaken across all metropolitan municipalities and extended to secondary cities, ensuring that no area is left behind in the drive to fix local government. This nationwide rollout will be accompanied by regular public reporting, community engagement, and structured

feedback mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability.

The ANC calls on communities, civil society, and all stakeholders to actively participate in this process, working alongside government to identify challenges, protect infrastructure, and contribute to sustainable local development.

The success of this programme depends not only on government

action, but on collective effort. The visit to Nelson Mandela Bay marks a decisive step in translating policy into practice. It reflects a movement that is present, responsive, and committed to delivery.

The ANC will continue to lead from the front, on the ground, in communities, and at the centre of rebuilding capable, developmental local government across South Africa.



# ANC Statement in Defence of the National Health Insurance Act

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

**T**HE African National Congress (ANC) notes the proceedings before the Constitutional Court concerning legal challenges to the National Health Insurance (NHI) Act.

These proceedings take place at a historic moment in the life of our democracy, as South Africa prepares to commemorate 30 years since the adoption of the Constitution on 8 May. This milestone calls on our people to reflect on the gains of democratic transformation, while confronting the enduring legacy of apartheid that continues to shape access to basic services, including healthcare.

At the heart of this matter lies a fundamental constitutional question: whether the right of access to healthcare, as enshrined in Section 27 of the Constitution, should remain dependent on income, or whether it must be progressively realised as a universal entitlement for all. Section 27 is unequivocal that everyone has the right to access healthcare services, and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.

The NHI Act represents a decisive and revolutionary step in giving practical expression to this constitutional mandate. It affirms a society in which healthcare is



not a commodity for sale to the highest bidder, but a public good anchored in equality, solidarity and human dignity.

In this context, the ANC views the NHI as a historic instrument to dismantle the entrenched inequalities that continue to define South Africa's health system. More than three decades into democracy, access to quality healthcare remains structurally determined by socio-economic status. This dual system, one for the affluent and another for the majority, stands in direct contradiction to the values of equality and dignity that the Constitution seeks to entrench. The NHI seeks to correct this historical distortion by pooling

the nation's resources to ensure universal and equitable access to quality healthcare services.

The ANC approached the current challenge against the NHI Act with the full knowledge, from extensive consultations with communities and organisations, that the people of South Africa support its efforts to make the NHI a reality. It is further encouraged by its confidence in the Constitution of the Republic and the South African legal system, as these provide adequate and robust remedies, namely constitutional, parliamentary, administrative, civil and criminal, that protects the integrity of policymaking and lawmaking.

The ANC holds the conviction, based on the democracy that has been built from 1994 to date, that any individual, organisation, business sector, political party, or interest group that obstructs, manipulates, or distorts constitutional processes of policymaking and lawmaking commits a constitutional and legal transgression.

Those who oppose the NHI, including through legal challenges before the Constitutional Court, are in effect seeking to preserve a system that reproduces inequality and delays the full realisation of constitutional rights. While often presented in technical or legal terms, such opposition has profound social consequences. It risks entrenching a reality in which dignity is conditional and access to healthcare is determined by wealth rather than need.

The ANC holds the view that this position of using various means to oppose this noble law, the NHI Act, is inconsistent with both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, particularly its founding values of equality, human dignity and freedom.

Beneath these objections lies a deeper material reality. NHI challenges entrenched privilege. It disrupts a system in which quality healthcare is effectively rationed by income, where private hospital groups and medical aid schemes thrive alongside a chronically under-resourced public health system that serves the majority. Resistance to the NHI is therefore not only about constitutional interpretation, but also about the defence of privilege, structural advantage and historic inequality.

The NHI is grounded in the principle of solidarity, recognising that the health of one is inseparable from the health of all. It gives concrete meaning to the constitutional commitment to redress historical injustices and to build a society based on social justice.

Far from undermining the Constitution, the NHI is one of its most transformative expressions in practice.

As we mark 30 years of constitutional democracy, we are reminded that the Constitution is not a static document, but a living instrument of transformation.

It obliges the democratic state to take deliberate and progressive steps towards substantive equality.

The ANC remains confident that the Constitutional Court will uphold the constitutionality of the NHI and affirm the state's obligation to progressively realise the right to healthcare.

The ANC reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the NHI as a necessary, just and constitutionally grounded step towards a more equal, dignified and humane South Africa.

The ANC is encouraged by the spirit of unity and collaboration that has been demonstrated in the long journey and joint meetings of the Congress Alliance and in the support for the NHI that civil society organisations and most citizens have demonstrated over the years.

Together we will deliver the National Health Insurance to the people who need it most, towards equitable access to healthcare for all and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in our country.



# The Strategic Position of the Youth League in Regaining the Confidence of the People

**PRESENTATION** by **REV FRANK CHIKANE, NEC member of the ANC Veterans League** at the **ANCYL NEC Lekgotla, 2026**

Imvelo Safari, Mangaung



**I**N his book, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), the Martiniquan psychiatrist, philosopher, and revolutionary, Frantz Fanon, said:

*Each generation must, out of relative obscurity (opacity), discover its mission, fulfil it, or betray it.*

(Other versions of this quote use the word, 'opacity,' which mean 'quality of being difficult to see through or understand, acting as the opposite of transparency').

I must declare from the onset that I am not qualified to determine whether the Youth League has discovered its mission, whether it has fulfilled it, whether it is working towards fulfilling it, whether

it has betrayed it, as I have not been working closely with you (the Youth League). I would like though to speak about what I consider as the **"Strategic Position of the Youth League in Regaining the Confidence of the People"** in our organisation, that is, the African National Congress (ANC).

No one can contest the fact that the ANC led the struggle for liberation against an apartheid regime nor can anyone contest that the ANC worked on, and towards the transformation of the country from an apartheid system to a non-racial, non-sexist, just, democratic and equitable society. It is for this reason that the ANC was called *"the leader of society."* But

about mid-flight over the past 32 years or so it began to decline. People began to lose confidence in the ANC.

For the purposes of this Youth League Lekgotla we do not need to elaborate on this matter. It should suffice to use the election results of the past 32 years since 1994 to make the point about the people's loss of confidence in the ANC. We started from 1994 with 62.65% votes under heavy and severe propaganda against the ANC, and 'no-go' areas where results could not be verified. (I can say this because I was part of the first Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) that was responsible for that first democratic elections). But we still won the elections because of sheer numbers that voted for the ANC.

From there on we began to climb up to 66.35% in 1999 and reached about 70% (69.69%) by 2004 when support and confidence in the ANC was at its highest, notwithstanding the unrelenting propaganda against it. We maintained this upward trend through hard work to restructure the State from an apartheid system to a democratic State which focused on 'services to the people' as opposed to 'control' of the oppressed masses of the people.

Our decline, which was tragic, started from 2009. From about 70% in 2004 we went down to 65.90%, and then further down to 62.15% in 2014, 57.50% in 2019, and ultimately 40.18% in 2024. It felt like passengers in an uncontrolled rudderless plane that was descending fast like it was going to crash.

For our purposes we also do not need to detail of what got us to where we are. It should suffice to say that the 2007 Polokwane Conference signalled the beginning of the decline of the confidence in the ANC. The ANC was captured and it was used to capture the State and retool it to serve the interests of individuals and those of interest groups rather than the masses of the people who loved the ANC. This included capture of key state entities, starting with the intelligence services, critical departments and state-owned-enterprises (SOEs).

Our political leaders and civil servant were compromised; the capacity of the State was hollowed to allow for corrupt acts, and this culminated in its failure to deliver basic services to the people. This is what led to the people's loss of confidence in their liberation movement.

Interestingly, the people withdrew their votes. They did not, in the main give their vote, or move, to other parties. Those who are in other parties are in the main those who hived off from the ANC. New voters, especially younger voters have not moved in significant numbers to other parties. This is the area the ANC and the Youth League should focus on.

Efforts have been made since 2015 to arrest and reverse this decline of the ANC.



ANC Conferences adopted resolutions on this matter, although most were not fully implemented. Some were not implemented at all. One of these resolutions stated clearly that we must '*renew or perish.*' Veterans of the movement also made huge efforts since 2015 to turn the tide around. At a government level various commissions (Zondo, Nugent, etc.) were established to expose the rot that set in during this period and to deal with it. There is a hard push to get government to improve its capacity to offer services the state should offer to the people.

As you would know there has been huge resistance in this regard, which is natural, as it exposes the beneficiaries of this rot, who could end up in yellow overalls.

Following the '*Roll Call*' of Councillors in September last year and the adoption and announcement of the Plan of Action for Accelerated Service Delivery and Community Engagement and Infrastructure Development in Local Government, we set out to ensure that Service Delivery Monitoring Mechanisms, Rapid Response Intervention Teams,

and War-rooms on Service Delivery were in place at national, provincial, regional and branch levels countrywide, including a toll free number (080 030 1912) where service delivery failures and corruption can be reported. Six months later, through these structures we are able to deal with any service delivery challenge, including pressurising those who are in government to deliver what they are required and expected to deliver in all municipalities irrespective of the party or parties that are in charge.

Our seemingly intractable challenges now are service delivery issues occasioned by lack of capacity to deliver, historical infrastructure maintenance failures, budget constraints, corruption, and extortion. We are seized with these challenges by deploying special technical intervention teams to find solutions to such challenges.

What I am missing in this fierce battle we are engaged in is the Youth League. We need the Youth League to lead in the renewal of the ANC, end the capture of the State, and deliver services to the people. The Veterans League has been at the frontline

of this battle, especially after it had renewed itself and weaned itself of the factional tendencies within the ANC. By the end of March the Veterans League had at least a Branch in every Region of the ANC countrywide. In densely populated areas, like in cities, the Veterans League has Branches at Zonal levels and in other places, even at a Branch level of the ANC.

In our strategy to reposition the ANC to regain the confidence of the people we proposed that the Youth League take leadership in developing strategies to mobilise the youth who are about one third of the South African population and more than 20 million eligible voters. These youth, who are mainly unemployed, are found in rural and urban areas, high schools and universities, and other centres of higher learning.

But for the Youth Leagues to do this it must first be renewed to be able to bring the youth to the League and the ANC that are renewed. In one of the meetings I attended in our Branch in Midrand where we discussed the state of our organisation, one of the young people said something telling. When he joined the ANC in 2011, he said, *"I realised that I joined a faction of the ANC and I was brought up politically within that faction."* I would think that most of your generation here today, who are 14 years to 35 years of age, would have joined a faction of the ANC and not the ANC as we knew it during the struggle for liberation. You would have been brought up believing that conferences get bought, votes are bought, corruption and extortionist tendencies are acceptable, and so on. Looking inward (within the ANC) rather than outward (to the people) became normalised

thus alienating the people. This is precisely what is killing the ANC. What we need from your generation is what I call *"the Lembede Youth League"* of the 1940s which saved the ANC when it was at its worst state of decline.

First, you must decouple yourself from the very counter-revolutionary culture of the repurposed members of the ANC who are in the ANC for their own benefits rather than that of the people. You need to inoculate yourselves from the rot you found yourselves in as you developed within the organisation. Some of you need an antidote that is able to counteract, neutralise or limit the harmful effects of the rot within the movement. We need to decontaminate the young members of the movement to be able to rebuild the ANC and turn it into the people's organisation it used to be.

You must be in the forefront of saying, *"NO,"* to buying of conferences and votes because this just intrenches corruption within the organisation and compromises the leaders who emerge from such corrupted systems of elections.

You must say, *"NO,"* to factionalism which helps to weaken the organisation further and lumps it with

the kind of leaders who bring the organisation into disrepute and for whom the people cannot vote.

You need to say, *"NO,"* to corruption as it robs the people of resources that should improve their quality of life in a new South Africa. Any leader or public servant who engages in such activities is counter-revolutionary. Such leaders expose the people to national and foreign counter-revolutionary forces that want to reverse the gains we made since 1994.

The cohort of your age (14-35 years) is a strategic one historically. It is this cohort that was involved in the liberation struggle. In the 1940s it was the Lembede's, Sisulu's, Tambo's, Mandela's and the (Govan) Mbeki's that saved the ANC. In the 1970s it was the Biko's, Mapetla's, and so forth that took on the apartheid regime. In the 1980s it was the Solomon Mahlangu's and so forth. Even Jesus was crucified at his early 30's.

I call on you on behalf of the Veterans of this people's movement: Please lead rather than lament about constraints young people are facing within and outside the movement. Shed the rotten part of the baggage of the ANC that is responsible for the decline of



the organisation and take on the armour of renewal of the organisation and renew it.

We now need a strategy of the Youth League as our ultimate strategic arsenal of weapons to regain the confidence of the young people of South Africa and restore the position of the ANC as a “leader of society.”

On the upcoming local government elections, we ask the Youth League to develop a strategy on how you are going to get the 11 to 20 million young people, first, to a higher level of consciousness about what is at stake here at home and globally and the huge risk of being colonised again; second, to deal with and be seen to be dealing with all the challenges that impact negatively on young people; third, get them to register and vote for the ANC. This is the revolutionary mission of your generation.

It is a mission you cannot fail to fulfil, because failure to fulfil it will mean that you will be surrendering to the backward, racists, imperial and Zionists reactionary forces to govern us. I call on you not to betray those who made huge sacrifices, including the ultimate sacrifice of death to gain our freedom. I call on you not to fail our people or worse to betray them for a morsel of bread.

You are the critical generation of our time that has a possibility to make history that will be remembered by generations to come. Be like David of the Judeo-Christian scriptures who is said to have “served the purpose of God in his own generation. Please do it.

I call on you, please do not fail; do not betray your mission. Having discovered it, fulfil it!



## The Anatomy of Collapse and the Politics of Promise: A Call to Political Organisations Ahead of 2029

■ By **G. NYONGANE**

**S**OUTH Africa does not suffer from a shortage of laws. It suffers from a shortage of enforcement, accountability, and political courage.

Local government—once envisioned under the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 as the closest and most responsive sphere of governance—has, in many communities, become the most distrusted. From Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality to Emfuleni Local Municipality and Sol Plaatje Local Municipality, citizens are not just protesting poor services; they are protesting a system that no longer listens.

Let us be honest: this is not simply a “service delivery crisis.” It is a governance crisis – a collapse

of institutional integrity, ethical leadership, and constitutional compliance.

Political organisations must stop pretending otherwise.

The legal framework is clear.

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 establish strict rules for accountability, financial discipline, and community participation. The Auditor-General of South Africa has repeatedly exposed irregular expenditure and governance failures.

Yet nothing changes.

Why?

Because the problem is not legal – it is political.

The jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court of South Africa has already told us what must be done. In *Government of the Republic of South Africa v Grootboom*, the Court made it clear that the state must take reasonable measures to realise socio-economic rights. In *Joseph v City of Johannesburg*, it reinforced the dignity of residents in municipal decision-making.

Still, communities wait for water. Still, they wait for housing. Still, they wait for accountability.

Even in municipalities considered functional, cracks are showing. The 2026 High Court ruling against the City of Cape Town – which declared parts of its tariff structure unlawful – proves a critical point: no municipality is beyond scrutiny, and no governance model is immune from constitutional limits.

This should be a wake-up call to all political formations.

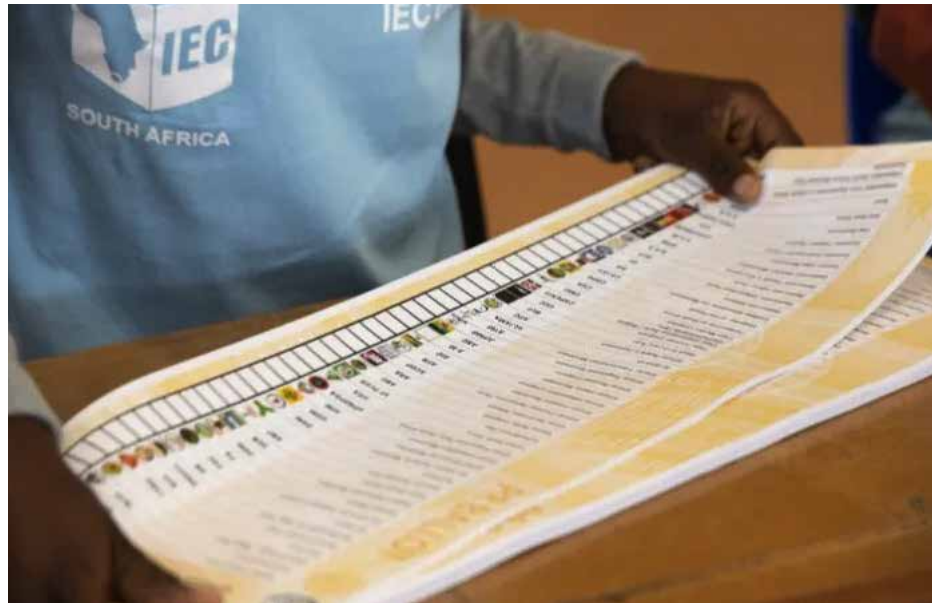
Because the truth is uncomfortable:

Municipalities in South Africa are either collapsing under mismanagement – or stretching the law to survive financially.

Neither is acceptable.

As we move toward the 2029 South African general election, political organisations are already shifting their language. We hear promises of reform, anti-corruption campaigns, and commitments to professionalisation.

But South Africans have heard promises before.



What they now demand is proof.

Proof that:

- Cadre deployment will give way to competence
- Corruption will lead to prosecution, not redeployment
- Councillors will represent communities, not factions
- Budgets will serve the public, not political networks

The era of narrative is over. The era of accountability must begin.

If political organisations are serious about reclaiming local government, then the path forward is not complicated – it is simply uncomfortable:

- Enforce existing laws.
- Depoliticise municipal administration.
- Professionalise local government.
- Empower communities with real oversight.

Anything less is not reform. It is repositioning.

And South Africans can see the difference.

The danger is not just failing municipalities. The danger is a pop-

ulation that begins to lose faith in democracy itself. When courts become the only institutions capable of enforcing accountability, it signals not strength – but systemic failure.

Political organisations must therefore answer a fundamental question: *Are you preparing to govern differently – or simply preparing to win?*

Because 2029 will not be decided by manifestos. It will be decided by lived experience.

And if that experience does not change, neither will the outcome – no matter how well the narrative is managed.

South Africa stands at a crossroads.

On one path lies reform rooted in accountability, legality, and community trust. On the other lies managed decline, disguised through political messaging.

The choice is no longer abstract. It is immediate.

And the time for excuses has run out.

# The Financialisation of Black Economic Empowerment: **How Industrial Democracy Became Extractive Compliance**

A former insider's reflection on what was built, what was lost, and what can be reclaimed

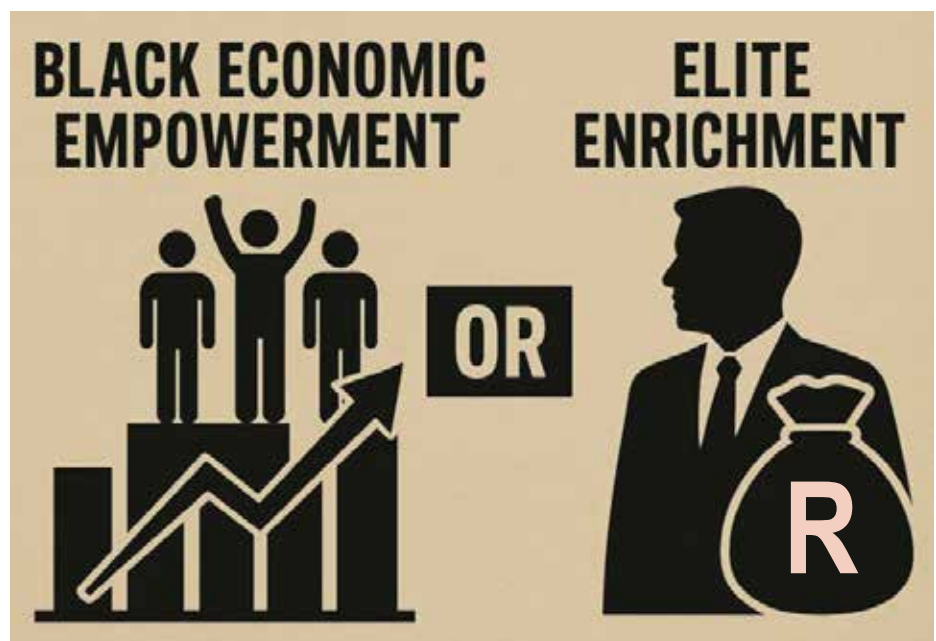
■ By **SIKHUMBUZO THOMO**

## I. The Promise

There was a moment, not long ago, when Black Economic Empowerment meant something different from what it has become. I was there. I helped build it. And I remember what we were trying to do.

Under Minister Rob Davies at the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, the architecture was clear: Black Economic Empowerment was not primarily about ownership percentages on company registers. It was about industrial capacity. It was about building factories, not buying shares. It was about communities owning productive assets, not trusts holding paper claims on assets they would never control.

The 100 Black Industrialists programme was the advanced phase of this vision. These were not randomly selected politically connected individuals, as some have claimed. They were programmatic targets: manufacturers, producers, people who were meant to build industrial capacity in sectors where black ownership had been systematically excluded. The metric was output. Jobs created. Supply chains deep-



ened. Communities with stakes in actual production, not passive beneficiaries of financial engineering.

We designed this because we understood a simple truth: economic power without productive capacity is not power at all. It is dependency dressed in ownership clothing. A worker who holds shares in a company she does not control is not empowered. She is compliant so too a community that owns a trust managed by lawyers and consultants is not liberated. It is administered.

That was the promise. And for a time, the policy architecture matched the intent.

## II. The Capture

What happened next was not a single betrayal. It was a thousand small migrations. Each one defensible in isolation, each one cumulatively destructive. The policy did not fail because it was abandoned. It failed because it was captured by the very structures it was meant to transform.

The **first** migration was from

industrial metrics to financial metrics. Instead of measuring factories built, we began measuring scorecard points. Instead of tracking jobs created in manufacturing, we tracked ownership percentages in holding companies. The B-BBEE scorecard originally a tool for measuring transformation became the transformation itself. Compliance replaced capacity.

The **second** migration was the rise of the B-BBEE consultancy industry. A new class of professionals emerged whose entire business model was engineering compliance without building capacity. They knew the codes better than the industrialists. They could structure transactions that ticked every box while creating nothing of productive value. Companies paid them not to transform, but to appear transformed.

The verification industry compounded this. Private agencies, paid by the very companies they verified, became the arbiters of whether transformation had occurred. The conflict of interest was structural, not incidental. A verification agency that consistently failed its clients would lose

those clients. The incentive was to pass, not to scrutinise.

The **third** migration was the 3% Transformation Fund. What began as an incentive for enterprise and supplier development became a mandatory extraction 3% of Net Profit After Tax directed to a state-controlled Special Purpose Vehicle. The intention may have been to concentrate resources for broad-based impact. The effect was to create a pool of capital controlled by political appointees, with opaque disbursement criteria and minimal transparent industrial output requirements.

The **fourth** migration was the conflation of ownership with control. Workers received shares through Employee Share Ownership Plans. Communities were placed in trusts. On paper, ownership was broad. In practice, control remained concentrated. Voting rights rested with principals. Dividend policies were determined by boards. Asset disposal decisions were made by lawyers. The beneficiaries owned the paper. The principals owned the power.

The **fifth** migration, less visible

but equally consequential, concerned the institutional architecture of empowerment finance. The National Empowerment Fund and the Industrial Development Corporation were designed to operate as complementary pillars. The NEF focused on empowerment-aligned financing, the IDC on industrial project finance. Alongside these, the DTIC administered a range of industrial grants intended to support productive capacity across sectors. Together, this architecture was meant to channel capital toward building, not buying.

What shifted was not the institutional design but the mandate emphasis. The NEF's empowerment financing, originally directed toward industrial capacity-building gradually migrated toward B-BBEE transaction support. Ownership restructuring deals, compliance-driven lending, and scorecard-adjacent financing began to occupy the space that was meant for factory construction, equipment acquisition, and supply chain development. The IDC's industrial project finance expertise remained robust, but the interface between empowerment and industrial lending increasingly prioritised ownership metrics over output metrics. The grants administered by the

DTIC, designed for productive capacity, found themselves competing with compliance-oriented incentives that offered clearer, faster pathways to procurement access.

This was not a failure of institutional design. It was a failure of mandate discipline. The institutions existed. Their complementary roles were sound. But the policy environment increasingly rewarded financialized compliance over industrial production,



and the institutional architecture responded to the incentives it was given.

### III. The Debate We Are Not Having

The current public debate about B-BBEE suffers from a fundamental category error that serves the interests of those who benefit from the confusion.

Some critics, like Professor William Gumede, have claimed that B-BBEE has benefited only a small number of politically connected individuals to the tune of vast sums.

There is a kernel of truth in this critique, but it is aimed at the wrong target. The 100 individuals Gumede references were not B-BBEE beneficiaries in the scorecard sense. They were the Black Industrialists target a policy goal set during the industrial policy phase, not evidence of capture during the financialized phase. To conflate them is to mistake the architect's blueprint for the speculator's portfolio.

This conflation, however, serves a purpose for those who defend the current system. The Commissioner of the B-BBEE Commission has responded to Gumede with statistics showing hundreds of thousands of black shareholders, billions in ownership transactions, and broad-based participation. These numbers are not false. But they are misleading in what they omit.

What is omitted is the distinction between ownership and control. Between holding shares and directing investment. Between being a beneficiary of a trust and being a trustee. Between productive industrial assets and finan-



cial compliance instruments.

The Commissioner presents ownership transactions worth R615 billion as evidence of broad-based success. But how much of this represents actual productive capacity? How much is paper restructuring to meet compliance thresholds? How much represents worker shares with no voting rights? How much flows to collective ownership vehicles controlled by small groups of principals?

These are not questions that the current data can answer. And that is the omission not a deception, but a structural gap in what is measured and what is disclosed.

The Commission monitors scorecards, ownership transactions, and enterprise development spend. It does not systematically track whether ownership translates to control, whether transactions build capacity, or whether the 3% Fund generates industrial output rather than compliance activity.

The debate we are not having is therefore not about whether B-BBEE has created black shareholders. It has. The debate we are not having is whether it has created black economic power.

Whether the 870,000 shareholders the Commissioner cites have any meaningful voice in the companies they nominally own. Whether the communities in trusts have any say in what those trusts invest in. Whether the workers in ESOPs can influence the decisions that affect their jobs.

Without this debate, we are left with a policy that measures inclusion by counting share certificates rather than counting power.

### IV. What Is To Be Done

Reclaiming B-BBEE for its original purpose requires structural reform, not abandonment. The policy was not wrong in intent. It was wronged in implementation. The task is to fix what was broken, not to discard what was built.

**First, separate B-BBEE scorecard compliance from industrial policy achievement.** The Commission should not be allowed to use industrial policy statistics, factories built, jobs created, output generated to defend scorecard compliance metrics. These are different categories serving different purposes. Conflating them protects the financialised system by borrowing the legitimacy of the industrial system.



**Second, restore mandate discipline to empowerment finance.** The NEF and IDC remain complementary institutional pillars with distinct but aligned purposes. What requires attention is the lending criteria and output metrics that determine how empowerment finance is deployed. If the NEF finances a transaction, the primary question should be: does this build productive capacity? Does it create jobs? Does it deepen supply chains? Ownership restructuring should be scored as a means, not an end.

**Third, democratise the 3% Fund.** If corporations must contribute 3% of NPAT to transformation, the governance of that contribution must be transparent and representative. Worker and community representatives should sit on SPV boards. Investment criteria should be publicly disclosed. Output metrics, jobs created, supply chains developed, industrial capacity built should be mandatory reporting requirements, not optional narratives.

**Fourth, end the verification consultancy conflict.** Private agencies paid by the companies they verify cannot be independent arbiters. The state must build internal verification capacity, or establish truly independent audit mechanisms with no financial relationship to the entities audited. The cost of independence

is less than the cost of captured compliance.

**Fifth, restore industrial metrics to primacy.** The B-BBEE scorecard should weight productive capacity above ownership percentage. A company that builds a factory employing 500 workers in a depressed area should score higher than a company that restructures its share register to place 51% black ownership with no change in operations. The policy must incentivize building, not buying.

**Sixth, mandate control transparency.** Every ownership transaction reported to the Commission should disclose voting rights structures, dividend policy control, and board representation. Beneficiaries should know not just what they own, but what they can decide. If ownership does not include control, it should be scored differently as passive participation, not active empowerment.

**Seventh, reinvigorate the DTIC grant architecture.** The industrial grants that exist alongside the NEF and IDC are not redundant. They serve different purposes non-repayable support for early-stage capacity, risk-sharing for new entrants, sector-specific development. These instruments should be protected from migration toward compliance-oriented

disbursement. Their purpose is production, not scorecard points.

## V. The Reckoning

I believed in this policy. I still do. But belief without honesty is complicity. B-BBEE has been captured by financialisation, and the capture is visible to anyone who knows what to look for. The question is not whether to abandon transformation. The question is whether we have the courage to transform transformation itself.

The left has a particular responsibility here. We cannot defend B-BBEE simply because it is called transformation. We must ask: transformation into what? For whom? Controlled by whom? If the answer is share certificates without voice, trusts without power, and funds without transparency, then we are not defending liberation. We are defending administration.

The 100 Black Industrialists were a target, not a scandal. They were meant to build. The scandal is what happened after when building became compliance, when compliance became extraction, and when extraction became the system we are now asked to celebrate. That system can be changed. But only if we are honest about what it has become, and only if we are willing to reclaim what it was meant to be.

# When we pray for rain, we must be ready for the mud

■ By **GODFREY NKOSI**

I began writing this piece a few days ago. It was prompted by a growing unease about the direction of our political discourse and the character of those who are increasingly occupying positions of leadership. Yet, as is often the case, other commitments intervened, and the piece remained unfinished. In time, I had moved on from it, placing it among those reflections that never quite find their way to completion.

This week, the arrest of Fadiel Adams brought me back to it. I spent a better part of this morning completing what I had left undone. It is important to state, at the outset, that I do not intend to pass judgement on his guilt or otherwise. That is a matter for the courts to determine. However, the nature of the charges, taken together with his public record, reinforces a broader concern about the kind of individuals who are finding their way into positions of political authority in our country.

There is a growing sentiment across South Africa, expressed in different tones and from different quarters, that the African National Congress is under increasing scrutiny from the electorate. This is neither unusual nor unhealthy in a democracy. It reflects a citizenry that is engaged, attentive, and prepared to demand better from those who lead.

To recognise this is not to advocate for the removal of the ANC, nor is it to diminish its historic and ongoing role in shaping our democracy. Rather, it is to acknowledge that political organisations, like all institutions, must continuously earn the confidence of the people they serve. This is a principle that strengthens democracy, not one that weakens it.

It is precisely at this moment of heightened scrutiny that we must exercise the greatest political caution.

For history teaches us that when political contestation intensifies, the space for leadership expands. The question is not simply who participates in that space, but what qualities they bring into it, and what consequences may follow.

In recent times, we have ob-

served a troubling phenomenon, one that must be raised with sobriety and seriousness. A variety of new actors have begun to occupy the political space. Among them are individuals whose primary claim to leadership is neither rooted in a history of public service nor in a demonstrated understanding of governance, but rather in wealth accumulation, notoriety, or the ability to mobilise anger. Some have emerged from the margins of legality, others from the fringes of political life, and still others from sectors whose relationship with the state has been defined more by extraction than by service.

In a democracy such as ours, the right of citizens to elect leaders of their choice is beyond question. That right is sacred and must be protected. It is neither for any individual nor any organisation to prescribe to the electorate who they must support.



However, democracy does not end with the act of voting. It demands something more exacting, that those who are entrusted with public office possess the capacity, integrity, and discipline to exercise that power in the interests of the people.

It is this requirement that now compels our collective reflection.

For what we are beginning to witness is not merely political competition, but the gradual lowering of the standard of leadership itself. The entry into public office of individuals who have neither the experience nor the disposition to navigate the complexities of governance risks transforming our democratic institutions into arenas of improvisation, rather than instruments of service.

Governance is not an instinctive craft. It requires an understanding of budgets and procurement systems, of legislative frameworks and oversight mechanisms, of intergovernmental relations and public accountability. It demands an appreciation of the delicate balance between political authority and administrative competence. Above all, it requires a commitment to ethical conduct, without which the machinery of the state becomes vulnerable to capture.

Where these attributes are absent, the consequences are neither abstract nor distant. They manifest in the collapse of service delivery, the misallocation of public resources, and the erosion of public trust.

It is in this context that one is reminded of a simple yet profound observation. When you pray for rain, you must be prepared to deal with the mud. In our pres-



ent circumstances, the rain is the legitimate expectation that governance must improve, that accountability must deepen, and that leadership must rise to meet the demands of our time. The mud is the unintended consequence that may arise when this expectation is not matched by careful judgement about who is entrusted with power.

This is not an argument for political displacement. It is an argument for political responsibility.

There is a tendency, in moments such as these, to reduce politics to a binary choice, for or against a particular organisation. Such a reduction obscures a more fundamental question, which is not merely who leads, but how leadership is exercised, and with what level of competence and integrity.

It is therefore not incidental that this reflection is made in the year in which, on 04 November 2026, South Africans will once again go to the polls in the local government elections. These elections will not merely determine who governs our municipalities. They will serve as a test of how seriously we take the responsibility of choosing leadership that is capable, ethical, and grounded in the demands of governance.

The trends we are beginning to observe are likely to intensify

in this electoral moment. The fragmentation of the political landscape, the rise of smaller formations, and the increasing prominence of independent actors will create conditions in which the question of leadership quality becomes even more urgent.

In municipalities where no single party commands a majority, coalition arrangements will become the norm. In such circumstances, the elevation of individuals with limited experience or questionable backgrounds into positions of influence is not a distant possibility. It is an emerging reality.

These developments should give us pause.

For if public dissatisfaction is not accompanied by a corresponding insistence on quality, integrity, and competence across the political spectrum, we may find ourselves in a situation where the outcomes fall short of the very aspirations that drive our democratic participation.

It must also be said that the infiltration of criminal elements into the political space represents a particularly grave concern.

Where individuals with questionable backgrounds are able to secure positions of influence, the line between governance and illegality becomes dangerously blurred. Public office, in such cases, risks becoming not a platform for service, but a shield for private interests.

This is a matter that concerns all of us.

What, then, is required?

Firstly, we must insist, collectively, that the standard of leadership

is not negotiable. Whether in the ANC or in any other political formation, those who seek public office must be subjected to scrutiny. Their backgrounds, their qualifications, their conduct, and their understanding of governance must all be open to examination.

Secondly, political parties must place principle alongside electoral strategy. The pursuit of numbers must not come at the expense of institutional integrity.

Thirdly, citizens must exercise their democratic rights with a heightened sense of responsibility. The vote is not merely an instrument of protest, it is an instrument of construction. It shapes the character of the state.

Finally, those entrusted with leadership today must act with a clear awareness that their conduct does not only affect their own organisations, but the broader political environment in which alternatives emerge.

In the end, the future of our democracy will not be determined by the fate of any single party alone. It will be determined by the quality of leadership that we, as a society, are prepared to accept and to demand.

To pray for rain is understandable. It is, indeed, necessary. But if we are not equally prepared to manage the mud that comes with it, we may find that in our pursuit of improvement, we have not sufficiently considered its consequences.

The challenge before us is therefore not simply to seek better outcomes, but to ensure that the choices we make strengthen, rather than weaken, the foundations of our democracy.



## Cape Town's affordability crisis is pushing the middle-class out of the City

■ By **FYONELA DIKO**

**C**APE Town is experiencing a severe affordability crisis, which is making the city out of reach, particularly for professionals and the middle class, who are now being pushed hundreds of kilometres away from the city centre and the Atlantic seaboard.

Cape Town's cost of living today, according to Numbeos Data, is 11.4% higher than a comparable city like Johannesburg. This is driven largely by rent prices which are 36.2% higher than in Johannesburg. Everything in Cape Town is comparatively expensive, from Restaurant Prices to Groceries Prices.

At the same time, the Purchasing

Power of Cape Town residents is 12.3% lower than residents in Johannesburg.

So how do we explain this affordability crisis of Cape Town if Johannesburg residents are richer.

This affordability crisis is driven largely by the influx of foreigner wealth using Cape Town's property market to store their wealth in the city's prime neighbourhoods and then leaving these properties largely unoccupied for much of the year.

According to BusinessTech, "In the first five months of 2025 alone, international buyers spent over R1 billion on property in Cape Town".

The result of this surge of foreign property buyers in Cape Town is an unfair competition for property with locals who are obviously struggling to compete with foreign wealth in stronger currencies.

Buyers are said to come from more than 40 countries and are invested in property across the Cape. The wealthy buyers predominantly come from European countries, with Germany leading the pack, followed by the UK, Netherlands, Switzerland, and other countries.

How do we solve this problem

Cape Town is not the only world city that has had this affordability's crisis and many cities have put measures in place to curb this runaway surge in property prices due to wealth of foreign buyers.

Several countries have decided to restrict foreign property ownership to curb speculation in order to manage housing shortages and to protect affordability.

Prime examples include Canada, which has extended its ban on foreign buyers until 2027, and Australia, which has also ban foreign buying of established dwellings until 2027. New Zealand Switzerland, Thailand, and Saudi Arabia also restricts foreign buying of property to various degrees.

South Africa on the other hand has no restrictions on property ownership by foreigners. Foreigners have the same access to property as a South African without the financial advantages of currency and historical wealth that other countries possess.

Even more puzzling is that for-

eigners can also access the same credit from local banks as locals. It's not unthinkable that local banks would prioritise rich foreign nationals with historical wealth and a better wealth track record than locals.

National Treasury seems to be digging deep in encouraging foreign ownership of South African properties. In the last budgetary year, they have increase the tax-free threshold applicable to rental income earned in South Africa,



meaning foreigners will pay less tax on their rental income. National Treasury has also decided to increase the annual Capital Gains Tax exclusion, again benefiting foreigners who own property in the country. The budget also raised the primary residence exclusion to R3 million, meaning it encourages foreigners to own more South African property and treat them as their primary residence.

### **Semigration and Airbnbs driving rental prices up**

Cape Town's Atlantic Seaboard and City Bowl are the primary target for foreign wealth with a quarter of all property, in arguably South Africa's most expensive residential area, sold to foreign nationals. In 2024, the government went further and set up a digital nomad visa with the purpose of securing

foreign remote workers who are not even employed in the country but employed abroad to use South Africa as their home base for longer than the normal visa. The idea was to attract more working tourists and investments

Naturally, this step has put further strain on locals as remote workers with stronger foreign currencies are taking up local accommodation and pushing rental prices higher for short term rentals.

According to AirDNA, *"some short-term rentals in central Cape Town generate more than 400,000 rand (\$24,000) a year – almost triple the traditional rentals cost in the city"*.

If you compare this amount to normal rental accommodation which is usually around 12000 a month, which amounts to 144 000,

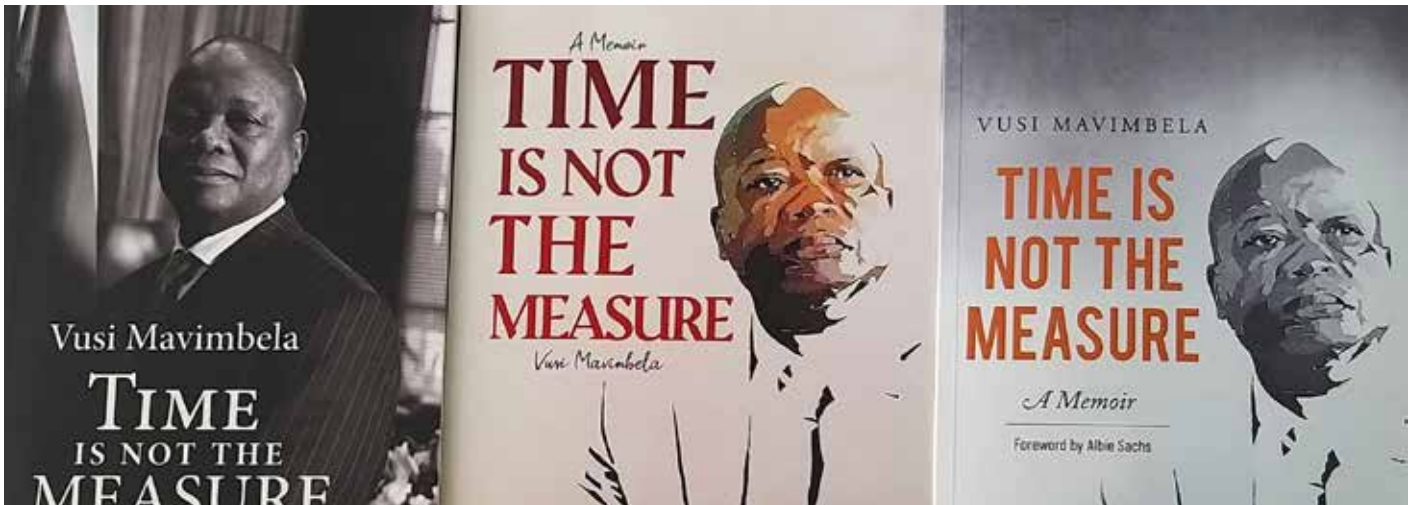
it's very clear why many accommodation owners have converted their normal monthly rentals into short term Air bnb rentals.

The advocacy group Ndifuna Ukwazi says *"many low- and middle-income workers are increasingly being priced out of the inner city, despite holding full-time jobs"*.

The group warns that the "widening gap between wages and housing costs is contributing to a growing class of the so-called *"working homeless"* – people who are employed but still unable to secure stable housing".

Something has to give!

**Yonela Diko is the Author of "Ramaphosa – The long game".**



# TIME IS NOT THE MEASURE

BY VUSI MAVIMBELA

2020. Reach Publishers

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*Extract posted by the author on **Facebook**, in response to the March to March attacks on African immigrants.*

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**A**NOTHER overriding lesson I learnt when I was at the National Intelligence Agency (NIA) was that there is a constant tension between the policy and practice of politicians and the state craft of state intelligence practitioners. That tension arises from the designation of responsibilities and mandates. Policymakers and politicians make laws and regulations. They assign intelligence and security services to ensure that laws and regulations are upheld and their integrity protected. However, politicians often disregard the mandate they have given the intelligence agencies by ignoring what comes from them. The mandate of the intelligence services, however, does not fall

away simply because politicians disregard their advice. The only time the mandate changes or ceases to exist is when a new law and a different intelligence dispensation are put in place.

The executive in government ought to see the intelligence they receive as a mirror of what they do and a way of evaluating their actions. Of course, the time-honoured challenge of governance is deciding how seriously the executive should take intelligence. But what is clear is that the primary role of intelligence is to forewarn government, including alerting the executive about the likely unintended consequences of their policies and practices – their commissions and omissions.

When we set up the Directorate for Economic Intelligence at the NIA, we were bolstering our capacity to play a meaningful role in advising on socio-economic issues. For example, we made presentations to the executive advising that policy was needed to restrict the purchase of productive agricultural land by non-South Africans. We said that it did not make sense for a government that was elected to correct the 1913 Land Act to allow the uncontrolled sale of prime land in the hands of the white minority to non-South Africans who resided in capitals around the world. Wealthy immigrants sometimes bought land purely for personal accumulation, speculation and personal investment.

A minister in the economic cluster intervened to say that what the NIA was advocating would discourage foreign direct investment and threaten property rights. Therefore, the advice from our Economic Intelligence Directorate was summarily killed. Almost 15 years later, President Zuma in his State of the Nation Address announced that such restrictions would be brought about by the Land Holdings Bill. It was the announcement by the same government led by the same party – fifteen years is a long time for such policy disjuncture and uncertainty to obtain and much prime land had been lost to different personalities around the world.

We also strongly advocated the protection of border integrity, entry points and the border in general. Among other things, we were worried about terrorist sleeper cells, especially those linked to Al Qaeda and other similar groups, setting up bases in South Africa. The NIA had evidence that some of those who had exploded bombs elsewhere in the world were taking refuge in our country. Some of them had already been picked up and deported. There was also evidence that South Africa had become a haven where terror networks were raising resources and forging travel documents. We forecast that a time would come when terrorists and international criminal networks would violently revolt against the state and its citizens by hitting targets within our borders. Our example with Pagad had taught us the kind of damage to life and limb, to the psyche of society, and to tourism and the economy if terrorism took root on our shores.

There was a debilitating policy struggle about to which arm of the State was responsible for se-



curing the border. We argued that the SANDF needed to assist the SAPS, as the latter was woefully under-capacitated for the task. The SANDF protested that it was not its mandate and that it lacked the budget, arguing that its mandate was to protect South African territory against military invasion. The result was that the border was not properly guarded, and the infrastructure not adequately maintained, including the border fence that was violated with impunity.

Alarming numbers of people were being smuggled through our borders – minibuses and kombis used to drive from further north in Africa to the South African border where they offloaded people they were smuggling. Those people walked through the border unchecked, sometimes in broad daylight, in groups of five or even twenty at a time. The media photographed and filmed those unhindered crossings and broadcast them.

We went back to the executive and raised the alarm again. One government minister found it necessary to remind us that Africa's borders were created by colonial powers, not by Africans,

and were designed to keep Africa divided. Why did we want to stop fellow Africans who were looking for better economic opportunities? She asked us. However, apart from her question, illegal immigration was not confined to fellow Africans: it involved a range of nationalities, including a sizeable number of Eastern Europeans and people from Asia and the Far East.

We were taken aback by the suggestion that illegal immigration could be overlooked because the borders were created by colonialists, and that all those who were seeking economic opportunities could be condoned and be allowed to stay in the country even if they had come into the country illegally and had violated the integrity of our borderline. We felt under attack for doing work that our constitutional mandate enjoined us to do. We were simply drawing attention to the fact that the government was falling short in its statutory mandate to protect the integrity of the border line.

We warned that the failure to manage the borderline had the potential to affect the country negatively in the years to come. We warned that the unchecked influx of illegal and undocumented migrants, no matter their origin, had the potential, in the medium to long term, to gravely compound the state of lawlessness in the country, that it will seriously overstretch the resources and the infrastructure of the state, that the influx of those who have no legitimate means of making a living, would result in the escalation of all manner of crimes. We were saddened to realise that we were met with nonchalance and our audience seemed hardly moved by the alarm we were raising with them. It was only in

the 2009 State of the Nation Address, almost nine years from the time state intelligence agencies raised the alarm with cabinet, that President Zuma announced the intention to establish a Border Management Agency (BMA). It would take another thirteen years from Zuma's announcement to the actual establishment in 2023. Thirteen years is a long time for such a policy disjuncture and uncertainty to prevail, allowing much of the horse to bolt.

The immensity of the challenge became more evident to me many years later. As South Africa's ambassador to Zimbabwe, I attended monthly meetings of envoys to that country from the SADC region. One of those meetings took place after violent attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa. One ambassador said that he felt sorry for me:

*"When refugees enter our poor countries, they tell our police and immigration officials that their destination is South Africa. Therefore, we let them pass through without much questioning. All of your neighbouring countries do it. We do it because it is easier for us to wave them through to South Africa than to try to deal with their illegal status and their welfare in our countries. 'There is a thinking among many of our countries that South Africa has better resources to deal with the matter and presents greater economic opportunities for refugees.'"*

What compounded the situation was that South African immigration policy resembled Swiss cheese – it was full of holes and inconsistencies. It also changed every time a new minister was appointed, with dire consequences for certainty in economic migration patterns. That had been the situation since 1994 when

Mandela appointed Mangosuthu Buthelezi as Minister of Home Affairs. Buthelezi, the leader of the opposition IFP, had a different ideological and political approach to immigration. His worldview on immigration was still coloured by apartheid and Bantustan isolationist philosophy. For example, he caused a lot of consternation in the ANC when he characterised immigrants as 'aliens'. That terminology conjured up images of strange characters from outer space.

It was our intelligence services that motivated that the Department of Home Affairs should be classified as a security Department and must belong to the Security Cluster.

The smuggling of illegal weapons from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and other countries to the north that were or had been at war was another lucrative trade through the unmanned borderline. The legacy of the armed struggle in South Africa had also left arms that continued to change hands illegally. Illegal weapons fed the circle of crime and violence in the country.

Large quantities of contraband also crossed the porous borders,



including stolen and hijacked vehicles that were driven into neighbouring countries in alarming numbers. It was not just the economy that was undermined: car owners were hijacked, traumatised and sometimes killed. So, the smuggling of cars because of ineffective and sometimes non-existent border controls was fanning crime, violence and deaths.

Curiously enough, some of our political leaders denied that our country was facing a crisis of crime and violence. The refrain was to blame 'unpatriotic South Africans' and the 'unpatriotic media' for bad-mouthing the country. That is not to gainsay that there were those who took advantage of the situation to insinuate that rising crime was proof that Africans could not govern themselves. That is what seemed to irritate the political leadership the most. But the problem with denying the existence of the crime scourge is that, rightly or wrongly, it feeds the perception that no appropriate effort is made to address the challenge. We all accept that the causes of crime are multifaceted and include socio-economic factors, but you cannot fix it by ignoring or denying it.

The recommended approach would be, first, to admit the existence of a scourge and make it one of the foremost priorities to combat. Second, would be to take direct ownership and leadership of the concerted campaign by society as a whole, not only to fight crime but also to infuse a public psyche geared at pre-empting and removing conditions that breed crime. In that way, the government would endear itself to society's readiness to join the fight.

South Africans of all races and classes are fearful of the scourge of crime in their homes and streets. It is not just the white elite ensconced behind high security walls who are complaining – so is the Black middle classes and ordinary people in the townships, informal settlements and rural communities. That is their daily, lived experience. When I left the NIA at the end of 2004, the first comments a South African travelling abroad would hear were about the greatness of Mandela, the beauty of South Africa and its high levels of crime.

The compromised borderline combined with the unplanned settlement of those moving from South Africa's poor rural communities and those migrating from across the border create a social powder keg. It results in rapidly mushrooming informal settlements, decaying inner cities, hijacked and degraded buildings, growing human and drug smuggling, sex worker dens, and general crime and wanton lawlessness. The main reason for 'xenophobic' upheavals is not an inherent hatred of immigrants: it is sagging infrastructure, overburdened social services, competition for scarce economic resources and opportunities, ineffective migration and immigration policies, and unregulated urban settlement.

It is often correctly said that urban migration and immigration across national borders is good for social and economic integration and growth. However, the failure to regulate cross-border movement also imposes a disastrous burden on governance and the promise of a better life for all. The integration of the region and the continent is a cornerstone long-term policy of our government and Africa. But

the road to that goal has to be planned and organised. It must be multifaceted and applied across the continent. It cannot happen unsupported by laws and regulation and the orderly movement of people and planned settlement of communities.

In the context of the challenge of violent crime in South Africa, one must also ask why a transformative and developmental state protects a system where firearms are allowed to proliferate in private hands. The safety and security of citizens cannot be achieved by making gun acquisition an attractive option. We need to enact laws that will act as a serious deterrent to the acquisition, carrying and use of illegal weapons. We need a regime that will limit the legal acquisition and sale of guns to private citizens. Our laws have been unduly liberal in dealing with the abundance of guns in private hands.

Citizens have come to accept that acquiring firearms is normal because the government is perceived as failing to provide a safe environment. That creates a vicious circle that entrenches the idea that gun ownership equals personal safety. The government must move towards the creation, in the medium- to long-term, of a

society free from the gun-siege mentality. Guns in private hands should be the extreme exception rather than the rule. A gun-free society should ideally be the ultimate goal of a society that has achieved comprehensive social security.

In many countries around the world, it is unthinkable for a private citizen to display a gun in public: in South Africa it hardly raises an eyebrow. Indeed, sporting a weapon has become a badge of the macho and heroic. A dreaded time might soon come where, as in America, the culture of private gun ownership buoys the electoral strategies of political parties.

Many guns in illegal circulation also started out in the hands of policemen or security guards. I have sometimes watched in utter amazement as a single policeman, with his pistol jutting invitingly from his belt, saunters in a leisurely way along a crowded pavement or through a crime-infested neighbourhood. It takes two or three men to overpower a lone policeman; it takes one gunman to shoot him and take his weapon. Both scenarios are common in South Africa.

*(Extracted from 'Time Is Not The Measure')*



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

9–15 May 2026

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

### 9 May 1950

#### **Bhawani Sannyassi Dayal passed on**

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

### 9 May 1966

#### **Bram Fischer sentenced to life imprisonment**



Bram Fischer, was arrested in 1964 for being a member of the banned Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA). After released on bail, he went underground until re-captured in Johannesburg on 11 November 1965. On 23 March 1966 his trial began in Pretoria. Fischer was convicted of conspiring with Umkhonto weSizwe to commit sabotage and violating the Suppression of Communism Act. On 9 May 1966 he was sentenced to

life imprisonment for his political activities and 24 years for being a member of the CPSA.

### 9 May 1995

#### **Kinshasa under Ebola quarantine**

Kinshasa, capital of Zaire (now DRC) is placed under quarantine after a deadly Ebola virus outbreak.

### 9 May 2004

#### **Brenda Fassie, Queen of Afropop passed away**



Brenda Fassie, beloved music icon and diva passed away in hospital in Johannesburg. Fassie with her unique voice and personality dominated South African music scene since the 1980s until her untimely death, with such hits as *Weekend Special*, *No-makanjani*, *Black President*, *Vul'indlela*, and *Amagents*, to name but a few. A book of reflections on her life, *I'm not Your Weekend Special*, by Bongani Madondo was published in 2014, a decade after her passing.

### 10 May 1920

#### **Tennis champ Eric Sturgess born**

South Africa's most successful male tennis player is born on this day in Johannesburg. Sturgess won 6 Grand Slam doubles titles and was men's single champion eleven times between 1939 and 1957.

### 10 May 1952

#### **Artist Ruben Xulu born**

South African artist Ruben Xulu was born in Hlabisa, Natal. Xulu, born deaf, began carving with Bernard Gcwensa at Hlabisa mission station and embarked on a life-long career of producing religious sculptures in both stone and wood. He exhibited in 1965 and 1978 in the Bantu Inter Faith Art Exhibition and Mariannhill Art Centre, Natal. A book about his life, *Bernard Gcwensa and Ruben Xulu: Christian artists of Natal* by Dina Cormick, was published in 1993. Xulu passed away in 1985.

### 10 May 1988

#### **New Nation and South newspapers banned**

New Nation and South newspapers, leaders of the alternative press during the 1980s, were banned by the apartheid regime. In protest, twenty six English-language newspaper editors handed petitions to government, protesting against these restrictions on the press.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**10 May 1994**

### **Nelson Mandela inaugurated as President**

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was inaugurated at the Union Buildings as South Africa's first democratic president, a position he held for one term until the second elections in 1999.

**10 May 1996**

### **First African to summit Kilimanjaro passes on**

Tanzanian Yohani Kinyala Lauwo (107), the guide and porter who accompanied the first Europeans to summit Mt Kilimanjaro in 1889 passed on. Born in 1871, the 18 year-old was barefoot when he made the climb. He is also regarded as the first African man to summit Uhuru Peak, Mt Kilimanjaro, after nine previous attempts.

**10 May 1998**

### **Dr Louis Luyt resigns as SARFU president**

Luyt was requested to resign by the SARFU board, after accusations of racism, mismanagement and nepotism. A rugby player in his youth, he became president of the Transvaal Rugby Union, manager of Ellis Park Stadium and rose to the position of SARFU president. He was SARFU president when the Springboks won the 1995 Rugby World Cup, but his insulting remarks at a dinner during the tournament caused a walk out by the All Blacks from the dinner. Luyt passed away in 2013.

**10 May 2021**

### **Kazungula Bridge opens**

The long planned Kazungula bridge, connecting Botswana and Zambia over the Zambezi River opens. The borders of Zimbabwe and Namibia also meet at



**10 May 1994**  
**Nelson Mandela inaugurated as President**

this spot, and the bridge curves to avoid their territories.

**11 May 1987**

### **Kick-box champ Kamara Usman born**

Nigerian kick-box and mixed martial arts champion, known as *'The Nigerian Nightmare'* was born in Auchu on this day.

**12 May 1929**

### **President Sam Nujoma born**

Freedom fighter, revolutionary and first President of Namibia (1990-2005) was born on this day in Ogandjera. Cde Nujoma was also co-founder of SWAPO.

**12 May 1930**

### **Professor Mazisi Kunene born**

Mazisi Kunene was born on 12 May 1930 in Amahlongwa, Kwa-Zulu-Natal. He studied Zulu Literature at the University of Natal and won a scholarship to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University. Kunene was an ANC member

and later became ANC representative at the United Nations (UN). He was appointed professor of African Literature and Languages at the University of California in Los Angeles. Banned by the apartheid government in 1966, he spent 30 years in exile, returning in 1993. Upon his return, he was appointed Professor of Zulu language and Literature at the University of Natal. Kunene has published several books including poems and several articles on Zulu Philosophy and cosmology. UNESCO made him Africa's poet laureate in 1993 and in 2005 became South Africa's first poet laureate. He passed on in 2006 at the age of 76 in Durban.

**12 May 1968**

### **Professor ZK Matthews passed on**

On 12 May 1968, South African academic, ANC leader, lecturer at University of Fort Hare and Botswana's first ambassador to the United States and envoy to the UN, Zachariah Keodirelang Matthews died in Washington, in the US. He was buried in Gaborone, Botswana. Born in Kimberley, he



became one of the most influential intellectuals of this time, including championing the idea of the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter in 1956. His autobiography, *Freedom for My People*, was published posthumously in 1981.

### 12 May 1972 SASO adopts the Alice Declaration

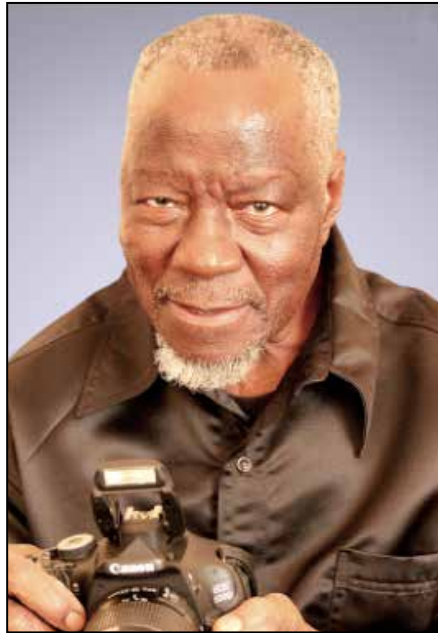
The South African Students' Organisation (SASO) adopted the "Alice Declaration" during a pre-arranged SASO meeting at the Federal Theological Seminary in Alice, Eastern Cape. The Declaration resolved that students nationwide should close down Black institutions of higher education through boycotts in support of the expelled Onkgopotse Tiro from the University of the North (now University of Limpopo). Tiro had been expelled because of a graduation ceremony speech in which he had attacked segregated education and White domination of Black institutions.

### 12 May 2010 Unity Bridge opens

The Unity Bridge which connects Mozambique and Tanzania over the Ruvuma River was first pro-

posed by Samora Machel and Julius Nyerere, 35 years earlier, finally opened.

### 12 May 2018 Legendary photographer Sam Nzima passed on



On 12 May 2018, legendary photographer, Sam Nzima passed away at the age of 83 in hospital in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga. Nzima was born in Lillydale, Bushbuck Ridge, growing up on a farm. Nzima's teacher had a camera, in-

spiring his interest and he bought himself a small Kodak Box Brownie. During school holidays, he went to the Kruger National Park and charged people to take their photographs. This legendary photographer is known for taking the iconic picture of Hector Pieterse during the Soweto uprising in 1976.

### 13 May 1953 Safe medicine advocate born

Ahmed Tijjani Mora is a Nigerian pharmacist and advocate for safe medicines was born in Zaria, Kaduna state. He chaired the Pharmacist Council of Nigeria, calling for licensing of street medicine sellers to ensure safety controls.

### 13 May 1983 Footballer Yaya Touré born

Touré, regarded as one of the greatest African footballers of all time, was born in Bouaké, Cote d'Ivoire. He was named CAF Footballer of the Year in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, captained the Ivorian team in four World

The iconic June 16 picture taken by Sam Nzima



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Cups and six AFCONs and winning the African Cup in 2015.

### 13 May 2004

#### **Katima Mulilo bridge opens**

The bridge spans the Zambezi river, connecting Namibia and Zambia, en route the TransCaprivi Highway right up to Walvis Bay. The route is a major feeder for trade from inland countries to move through this Namibian port.

### 14 May 1959

#### **Coloureds removed from voters roll**

Various attempts were made to cancel the franchise of Coloured people in the Cape Province, by removing them from the voters roll. On 14 May 1951, members of the cabinet finally voted for the removal of the Coloured people from the voters roll, through the Separate Representation Bill. Resistance in the community against this resulted in mass campaigns, including the formation of the Franchise Action Council in Cape Town, a march by over 15,000 Coloured people through the streets of the city and challenging the Bill in the Supreme Court.

### 14 May 1964

#### **Nasser and Khrushchev in ceremony to start building of Aswan High Dam**

Soviet premier Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev and Egyptian premier Gamal Abdel Nasser officiated at the ceremony to blow up a sand barrage and divert the Nile into a temporary canal – to allow the next stage of the construction of the Aswan High Dam. International appeals were made to save Egypt's ancient temples and

tombs, which will be flooded when the dam was finally completed. The dam was completed in 1970 and commissioned in 1971.

### 14 May 2018

#### **First countries ratify the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement**

Kenya and Ghana were the first countries whose parliaments ratified the AfCFTA agreement, which allows for the building of an African common market.

### 14 May 2019

#### **Tererai Trent statue in New York**



The Zimbabwean scholar and women's education advocate, Tererai Trent, was honoured by New York City with a statue. Denied an education as a girl, she managed to earn advanced degrees despite her lack of formal education. Dr Trent's story is told in a children's book *The Girl Who Buried Her Dreams in a Can* (2015).

### 14 May 2021

#### **Burna Boy albums reach 100 million streams**

Nigerian musician Burna Boy

becomes the first African musician to have three successive albums (African Giant, Outside, Twice as Tall) achieve 100 million streams each on the internet music streaming service, Spotify.

### 15 May 1787

#### **Freed slaves settle in Sierra Leone**

Granville Town, a settlement is established with the arrival of 400 former British slaves, as part of a resettlement movement.

### 15 May 1885

#### **Parliament in Cape Town in use**

The parliamentary building at the top of Adderley Street, Cape Town, is occupied for the first time. It remains the seat of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. A fire at the building in 2021 made it temporarily unusable.

### 15 May 1889

#### **Founder of Sofasonke Party born**

James Sofasonke (meaning 'We shall all die together') Mpanza, founder of the Sofasonke Party and a champion for better housing for Johannesburg's Blacks, is born in Geordedale, today part of Cato Ridge.

### 15 May 1948

#### **Egypt attacks newly proclaimed state of Israel**

The day after the new state of Israel is proclaimed, on Palestinian territory, the Royal Egyptian Air force attacks the capital Tel Aviv.

### 15 May 1950

#### **Father of Kenyan labour movement arrested**

Trade unionist and founder of its

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

first union, Makhan Singh, was arrested by the British for having spoken out against British colonial rule. Then Governor Phillip Mitchell ordered Singh's indefinite detention, and he was only released eleven years later, in October 1961.

### 15 May 1982

#### **New Ellis Park Stadium opens**

The new stadium opens in Johannesburg, replacing an earlier stadium built in 1928.

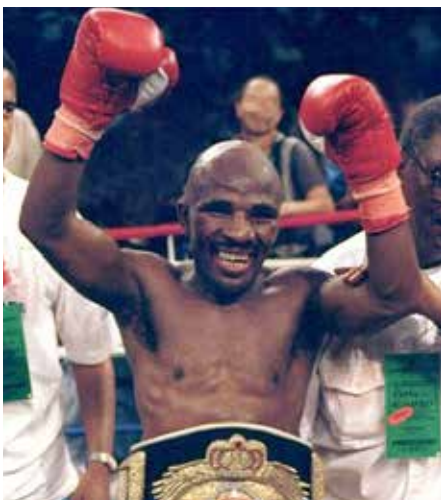
### 15 May 1991

#### **Malian writer Amadou Hampata Ba passed on**

One of the towering figures of 20th century African literature and oral story telling passed on at the age of 90. His famous quote: *"Whenever an old man dies, it is as though a library were burning down."*

### 15 May 1993

#### **Baby Jake World Boxing Champion**

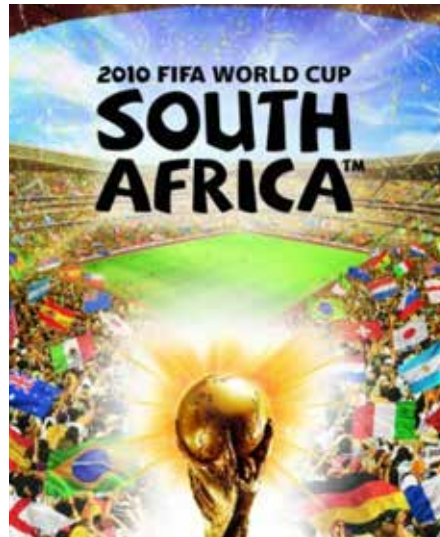


On 15 May 1993, Jacob "Baby Jake" Matlala, won the World Boxing Organisation (WBO) world champion title. Matlala had been introduced to boxing at a young age by his father, and turned professional in 1979. Un-

der the guidance of Theo Mthembu, Matlala won his first professional victory against Fraser Plaatjie in Port Elizabeth in 1980. Matlala went on to become South African Flyweight Champion, and later won the International Boxing Association (IBA) Flyweight title in 1997.

### 15 May 2004

#### **SA wins bid to host 2010 Soccer World Cup**



South Africa wins the bid to host the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, the first African country to host this global event.

### 15 May 2004

#### **Ousmane Sembene's Mooladé premiers at Cannes**

The film directed by the renowned Senegalese filmmaker focused on female genital mutilation, and was co-produced by Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Morocco, Tunisia and France and filmed in Burkina Faso.

### 15 May 2008

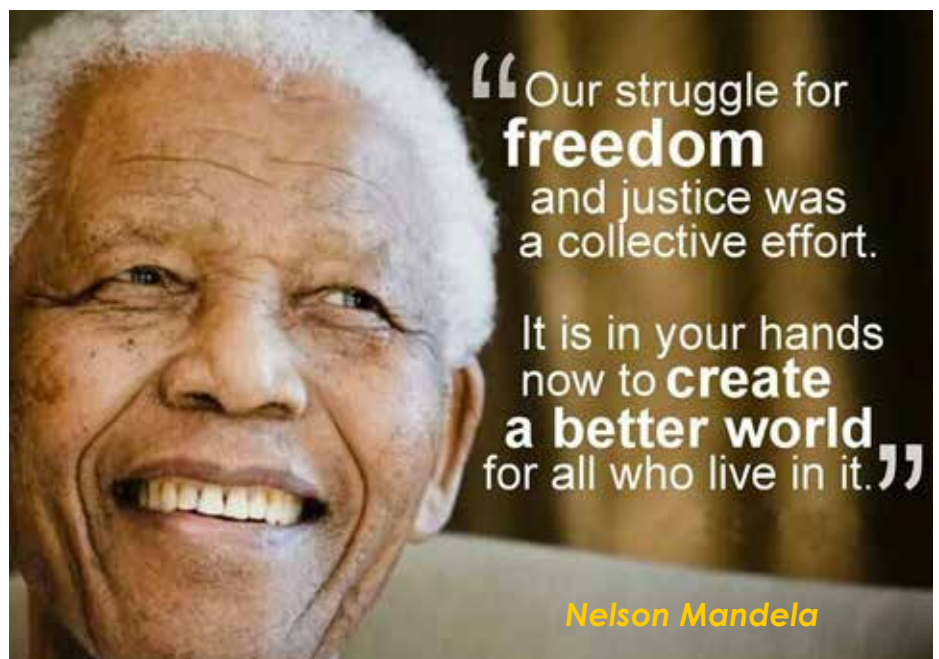
#### **Gambian leader Yahya Jammeh threatens to behead queer citizens**

The Gambian president told all gay men and women to leave the country or face execution, through beheading.

### 15 May 2019

#### **Walking on the Nile over Rod el Farag Axis Bridge**

Egypt President el-Sisi opens the world's widest cable-sway bridge, according to the Guinness Book of Record. The bridge offers pedestrian walk-ways with spectacular views of Cairo and with glass floors provides the sensation of 'walking on the Nile.'



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

9–15 May 2026

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

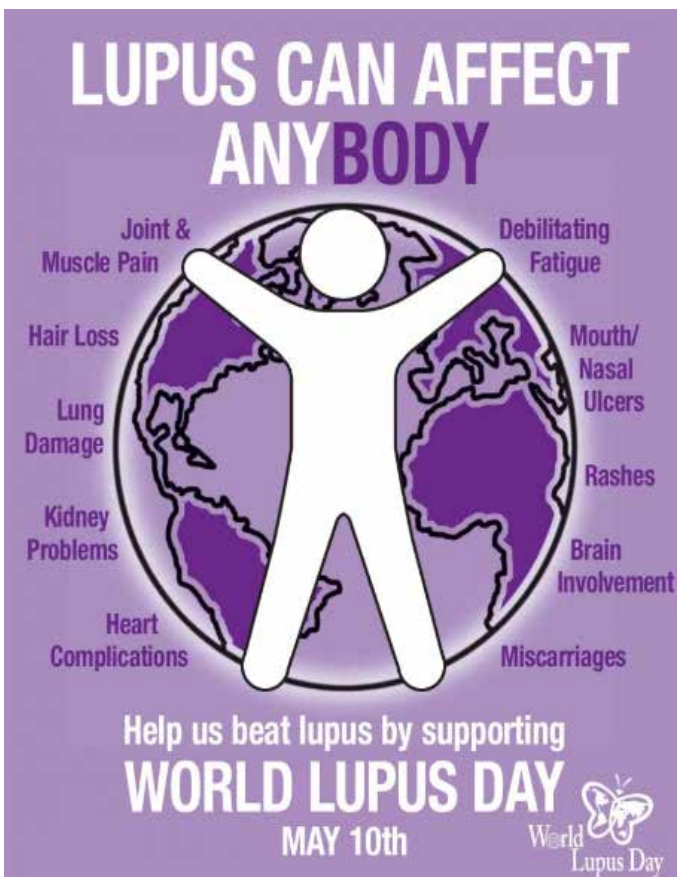
### 10 May

#### International Day of Argania

The argan tree (*Argania spinosa*) is a native species of Morocco, Algeria and Western Sahara, which grows in arid and semiarid areas. It is resilient to a harsh environment under water scarcity, risk of erosion and poor soils. Argan oil is one of the rarest oils in the world and is hailed as “liquid gold”, with multiple uses in cooking, medicines and cosmetics. Rural women lead the entire extraction process through knowledge transmitted from one generation to the next.

### 10 May

#### World Lupus Day



**LUPUS CAN AFFECT ANYBODY**

Joint & Muscle Pain      Debilitating Fatigue

Hair Loss      Mouth/ Nasal Ulcers

Lung Damage      Rashes

Kidney Problems      Brain Involvement

Heart Complications      Miscarriages

Help us beat lupus by supporting  
**WORLD LUPUS DAY**  
MAY 10th

World Lupus Day

Lupus is a serious, life-altering autoimmune disease that can affect any organ of the body. Lupus is a disease which remains under-recognized and under-appreciated. An autoimmune disease is one in which the immune system is unable to recognize the difference between healthy cells in the body and the foreign cells it fights to remove. A healthy immune system produces antibodies which attack and destroy foreign and invasive cells like viruses, bacteria and germs. However, in people with lupus, the immune system creates auto antibodies which destroys healthy tissue. This can lead to damage, inflammation and pain throughout the body. Lupus is a potentially fatal disease, affecting organs and other parts of the body such as the brain, heart, lungs, kidneys and skin. The theme for World Lupus Day 2026 is **Make Lupus Visible**. Too often, lupus remains unseen – its symptoms misunderstood and its impact overlooked. Which is why, this May 10, a call is made on the world to make lupus visible and ensure no one faces this disease in silence. ([www.whatthehealth.com/awareness/event/worldlupusday.html](http://www.whatthehealth.com/awareness/event/worldlupusday.html))

### 11 May

#### World Keffiyeh Day

World Keffiyeh Day is commemorated annually on May 11th as a visual way to raise awareness and show solidarity about the Palestinian cause through the use of the Keffiyeh – one of the most iconic symbols for Palestinians.

### 11 May

#### World Migratory Bird Day

Migratory birds fly hundreds and thousands of kilometres to find the best ecological conditions and habitats for feeding, breeding and raising their young. When conditions at breeding sites become unfavourable, it is time to fly to regions where conditions are better.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**12 May**

### International Plant Health Day



The health of our planet, as well as human health and nutrition, depend on plants. Plants make up 80% of the food we eat and 98% of the oxygen we breathe and yet they are under threat. We need to protect plants both for people and the planet, and all of us have a role to play. ([www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org))

**12 May**

### International Nurses Day

The day is celebrated on the date of birth of Florence Nightingale, regarded as the founder of modern nursing for the improvements she made in the practice of nursing during the Crimean War (1853-1856). Nurses are frontline workers in health care systems across the world. The theme for 2026 is **Empowered Nurses Save Lives**. This focus sends a clear message that to maximize the full life-saving impact of the nursing workforce, we must empower nurses with safe, fair work environments and full nursing practice, influence, and leadership. The theme comes at a critical time, as global health faces unprecedented challenges from workforce shortages, rising health care demands, and increasing effects of conflict and climate change. Nurses continue to sustain care, protect communities, and hold health systems together, often under immense strain, but their work is often not fully recognized or supported.

**15 May**

### International Day of Families

International Day of Families falls on 15 May every year and highlights the importance of families. Families – in all their diversities – form the basic units and building blocks of most societies, responsible for raising and socializing children. However trends, such as the changing nature of work,

education, urbanization, migration as well as new technologies and climate change have impacted on families.

**15 May**

### Nakba Day

Nakba Day is an annual day of commemoration that holds additional relevance this year amid the ongoing bombardment, displacement and blockade of Palestinians in Gaza. Nakba Day is commemorated annually on May 15. It marks the beginning of the destruction of the Palestinian homeland, and the mass displacement in 1948 of the majority of the Palestinian population. Nakba means ‘catastrophe’ in Arabic and is the word used by Palestinians and others to refer to this historic moment. For some, the term is also used to describe the subsequent and ongoing persecution of Palestinians and loss of territory. In 1998, Nakba Day was officially inaugurated by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, though the date had been marked with protests of remembrance and resistance since 1949. May 1948 saw the start of a mass displacement in which over 700,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes. Over the course of the 1948 Palestine War, which lasted until January 1949, Israeli forces destroyed more than 530 Palestinian villages and carried out several massacres, killing some 15,000 people. 78% of Palestine’s historic territory was captured and used to establish what is now Israel. The remaining land was divided into today’s Occupied Palestinian Territory – the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Following Israeli victory in the war, abandoned homes were given to Jewish settlers. The descendants of many of the Palestinians who fled in 1948 remain displaced to this day, both within Palestine and around the world. There are now some 6 million Palestine refugees.





# LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE PLAN PILLAR 1



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**Issues will be escalated to the relevant department, municipality, or province.**



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

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