



ANC TODAY

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Conversations *with the* **President**

Featuring the

Secretary General



STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, COMRADE FIKILE MBALULA

FOLLOWING THE EVENTS OF 30 JUNE

THE African National Congress (ANC) convened a media briefing to reflect on the events of 30 June 2026, provide the movement's assessment of recent national developments, clarify the ANC's position on a range of matters of public interest, and outline the organisation's programme of action as the country advances towards the 2026 Local Government Elections.

ON THE THIRTIETH OF JUNE, THE COUNTRY STOOD FIRM

The African National Congress expresses deep gratitude to South Africans. They called for a shutdown. South Africa did not shut down. Our children went to school. Our workers went to work. Our buses, our taxis and our trains ran. Our clinics and our shops stayed open. The economy



kept its feet, and we foresee no grave job losses from the action. For this we thank the overwhelming majority of South Africans, who refused to be conscripted into anarchy and we thank the men and women of the South African Police Service, the Border Management Authority and our security services, who stood

their ground with professionalism and restraint. Where there was violence, intimidation and looting, the law took its course, and it will continue to do so.

We have said it before and we say it again: the enforcement of immigration law is the work of the democratic State, and of the

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State alone. No mob, no march and no self-appointed commander may take that power into their own hands. The ANC salutes the calm and the courage of ordinary South Africans, of every origin, who chose peace over the petrol bomb.

But enforcement alone will never resolve what is, in truth, a continental question. No single country, acting on its own, can answer a movement of people that the whole of Africa is living through. Our continent carries the largest stock of intra-African migration in the world relative to its population, approximately 40.5 million African migrants, some 21 million of whom remain on the continent, and around 35 million displaced persons of concern.

The forces beneath these numbers are known to us all; the economic asymmetry between our economies; conflict, from the war in Sudan to the standing crises of the Sahel, the Horn and the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; the shocks of a changing climate, of which Cyclones Idai and Freddy were the cruelest reminders; and a youth population that will soon be the single largest contributor to the world's working-age growth. South Africa itself, on the 2022 Census, is home to some 3.95 million foreign-born residents, 6.5 per cent of our people, with all the pressure that places upon our clinics, our schools and our services.

It is for this reason that the Office of the Secretary General has prepared a Continental Compact on Migration in Africa, and the ANC urges our deployees in government to take it up and to place it before the African Union as the foundation for a lasting African answer.

The Compact asks African States, acting together through the African Union and supported by the United Nations, to move from a fragmented and reactive posture to a coherent framework of binding commitments: closing the gaps in our legal architecture through universal accession to the refugee, migrant-worker and statelessness conventions and the coming into force of the 2018 African Union Free Movement Protocol; building the operational machinery the continent has long lacked, from an African refugee responsibility- allocation mechanism to a continental migration data platform and an orderly prisoner-repatriation protocol.

We call on establishment of a continental burden- and responsibility-sharing fund, so that re-

ceiving States no longer carry the weight alone; addressing the drivers at source by accelerating the African Continental Free Trade Area, reinforcing our peace and security architecture, financing climate adaptation, and turning our demographic dividend into opportunity at home; and disciplining the language and political conduct around migration in the spirit of the Durban Declaration.

The ANC urges government to place this Compact on the agenda of the African Union's Mid-Year Coordination Meeting at El Alamein. It is not an instrument of exclusion, nor a retreat from the African inheritance of generosity to those in flight; it is a structural offering, rooted in Ubuntu and in the solidarity of the Frontline States that once sheltered our



MYTHBUSTER
CLAIM vs FACT

✗	MYTH / MISCONCEPTION
	South Africa's borders are open and uncontrolled.
✓	GOVERNMENT ACTION
	Government is investing in border infrastructure, surveillance technology, drones and additional Border Management Authority personnel to strengthen border security.

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own, a movement from accusation to understanding, from blame to shared responsibility, from crisis to compact.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT — TWO DECADES OF ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

A lie is circulating in our politics; that the ANC government has done nothing about undocumented immigration. The opportunists repeat it; too many swallow it. Today we place the facts on the table, and we let the people judge for themselves.

The numbers do not lie, the democratic State has legally deported hundreds of thousands of people who had no lawful right to remain in the Republic. Between January 2012 and December 2016 alone, some 370,000 people were deported, nearly nine in ten of them our neighbours from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho. And the pace has quickened, not slackened: from 39,000 removals in 2023/24 to 51,000 in 2024/25, a thirty per cent rise, and again to 57,000 in 2025/26, with tens of thousands more this year at our ports of entry and in our communities. This is not the record of a government that has done nothing. It is the record of a State that enforces its laws, year in, year out, firmly and lawfully.

This is not new, and it is not small. At its peak, in 2007, the democratic State legally deported some 312,700 people in a single year — the highest on record. And the work continues at our frontiers today: in a single festive season the Border Management Authority intercepted more than fifty thousand people at our ports and borderline, and attempted unlawful crossings have since



fallen sharply. This is a State that acts, and has acted, for two decades.

When the courts stayed our hand is the part the opportunists never tell you. Time and again, when this government has moved to enforce immigration law, it has been dragged to court, not to make it deport, but to stop it. When the government moved to end the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit dispensation, the Helen Suzman Foundation took the Minister of Home Affairs to court, and in June 2023 the High Court in Pretoria set that decision aside as unlawful, shielding some 178,000 Zimbabwean permit-holders from removal, a ruling the government then lost on appeal.

The Scalabrini Centre, Lawyers for Human Rights and others have, over many years, repeatedly and successfully approached our courts to constrain removals and to protect the rights of migrants and asylum-seekers. This is the truth the slogan hides: the ANC government has often been doing so much on immigration that the courts themselves have had to rein it in. You cannot, in the same breath, sue the government for deporting and then accuse it of doing nothing.

Let the record be specific. The courts ordered us to reopen the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office. In Ruta and in Abore, they barred the removal of those who wished to seek asylum. In Lawyers for Human Rights, the Constitutional Court struck down parts of our own detention regime. Time and again, the brake on enforcement came not from a want of will on the part of this government, but from the Bench.

And let us remember who built the shield. When the ANC brought the Border Management Authority to Parliament, the very agency that today hardens our borders, it was opposed by the Democratic Alliance and delayed by others in that House. It is an easy thing to shout about borders on a march. It is another thing entirely to vote to secure them. The ANC did the work; others stood in the way, and now pretend otherwise. And we are not standing still.

There is now a Bill before Parliament that will make the first safe country the proper jurisdiction in which to seek asylum, so that a person fleeing genuine persecution claims protection at the first safe border they reach, and not after crossing a dozen peaceful countries to arrive at ours. Let us

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be plain about what this is, and what it is not. It is not a closing of our doors: non-refoulement remains, and the genuinely persecuted will always find refuge in South Africa. It is the closing of a loophole, the abuse of our asylum system by those who are not refugees at all. It brings us into line with the settled practice of nations the world over, and it answers in law the very grievance that the mob answers with the petrol bomb. That is the difference between the ANC and the demagogue. We bring reform, not riot.

A WORD ON POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM, THE EFF AND THE RESTAURANT RAIDS

The ANC must now turn to the conduct of certain political parties, because in this, parties are not bystanders. Seeds sown in the soil of our people's frustration can grow into something deadly, and history remembers who sowed them. Let us jog the public memory, because they will deny it. In January 2022, the Economic Freedom Fighters and their leader, Mr Julius Malema, marched into restaurants, beginning at the Mall of Africa, to 'inspect' how many South Africans and how many foreigners were employed, demanding a sixty- forty quota of locals to migrants. At one establishment the owner was pressured until a staffing split was announced.

The Department of Employment and Labour condemned these unlawful, self-appointed inspections at the time. That theatre, the party posing as the enforcer, hauling the foreign worker into the spotlight, helped to normalise the very targeting of the vulnerable that we now see on our streets.

Today the same party wishes to wrap itself in the flag of pan-Africanism. The record says otherwise. You cannot light the match in 2022 and profess shock at the fire in 2026.

THE MK PARTY AND THE DEMAGOGUERY FROM NKANDLA

We must speak equally frankly about the uMkhonto weSizwe Party. On the evidence before the public, this formation has positioned itself as an agent provocateur on the immigration question, fanning the mobilisation around 30 June and giving license to those who would set our communities alight. The people of South Africa saw with their own eyes and heard with their own ears some of the most shocking demagogic utterances emanating from the Nkandla coterie.

And here the ANC must register a particular shame. Among those now screaming loudest against a weak, poor and defenceless immigrant community are men and women who themselves, in the darkest years of our struggle, found shelter and sanctuary in

the Frontline States, in Mozambique, in Angola, in Zambia, in Tanzania, in Lesotho and beyond. Those countries buried our cadres when the apartheid raiders came. To have eaten the bread of African solidarity, and now to turn upon the African neighbour, is a betrayal of the very struggle that made our freedom possible.

Let us be clear, and let no one twist our words; we do not condone unlawful immigration, and we do not pretend that the anxieties of our people are not real. But we will not answer hardship with cruelty, and we will not preach order while promoting anarchy. That is not who we are. We are the children of Nelson Mandela, Albertina Sisulu, Winnie Mandela, Joe Slovo, Langa Libalele Dube and Charlotte Maxeke and of those who still walk our streets, like Sophie de Bruyn. We are a people imbued with Ubuntu.

ON COMRADE DINA PULE

The ANC wishes to address, directly and candidly, the appointment of Cde Dina Pule to the National Executive as Minister of Social Development, and we



*"The spirit of Ubuntu
– that profound
African sense that
we are human only
through the humanity
of other human beings
– is not a parochial
phenomenon, but
has added globally to
our common search
for a better world"*

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

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commend the President for his decision to appoint this capable and knowledgeable Comrade.

We do not dismiss the concern this appointment has stirred, and we understand where it comes from. Ours is a movement in the midst of renewal, of its values, its ethical standing and the trust of the people, and in such a moment South Africans are right to hold their leaders to the highest bar. We hear that call, and we take it seriously. To answer it honestly, we must speak not only of a sanction served, but of the work of correction that has been done, and that continues.

The people of South Africa do not hand down life sentences, least of all where there has been accountability, redress and correction. Cde Pule faced a process more than a decade ago; she was sanctioned by that process; and she accepted the consequences; she stepped aside before we even made it policy. She did not want to be defined by a mistake in the time, she went back to the ground and worked to uplift thousands upon thousands away from the limelight.

That is what accountability looks like. But our movement, and our nation, believe in redemption and in the capacity of a human being to be rebuilt and to rebuild. In the years since, Cde Pule earned back the confidence of her peers through the most democratic tests our movement offers: she was elected by her comrades to the National Executive Committee, she was entrusted with senior responsibility in the Women's League, and she was returned to Parliament by the people through the ballot. A person who has answered for a mistake, served the sanction, and rebuilt trust through



the free choice of her peers and the electorate is not to be condemned in perpetuity. The ANC stands fully behind the person of Cde Dina Pule, behind her ability, and behind the President's prerogative to constitute his executive.

That work has been real, and it has been humbling. Cde Pule underwent internal ethics counselling within the movement; she consulted with our Veterans, whose wisdom and moral authority the ANC holds dear; and she engaged in deep and honest introspection about the harm that was done and the trust that had to be rebuilt. In that same spirit, she will seek a session with the Integrity Committee of the ANC, to place herself before that body and to receive its further counsel. Cde Pule does not take this second chance lightly. She knows, better than most, that it carries a heavy price and a heavy responsibility for the ANC in this very period of renewal; the renewal of our values, our ethical standing and the trust of the people. She carries that weight consciously, and she is determined to honour it in her service.

THE EASTERN CAPE: WHERE THE MATTER STANDS TODAY

On the Eastern Cape, here is where the matter stands today.

Following the judgment of the High Court in Makhanda on 18 June 2026, which set aside the appointment of our Provincial Task Team, the ANC has filed an application for leave to appeal the whole judgment to the Full Court, alternatively the Supreme Court of Appeal.

In addition, we have also brought an application under section 18(2) of the Superior Courts Act, seeking to suspend the operation and execution of that order pending the outcome of the appeal. Our firm position, on the advice of senior counsel, is that the order is final in its effect and is therefore already suspended by operation of law upon the filing of our appeal; the section 18(2) application is brought in the alternative, should the court hold the order to be interim.

We do this because it cannot be just that the affairs of a province of millions are thrown into limbo by a judgment that a higher court may well overturn. We hold the judiciary in the highest regard, and it is precisely because we respect the courts that we exercise every right the law affords us. The ANC's commitment is unshaken: the Eastern Cape will be whole, united and ready to contest the local government elections. We remain pained by this

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ill-conceived decision of the High Court.

THE SECTION 89 PARLIAMENTARY PROCESSES MATTER

On the Section 89 matter now before Parliament, so that the public is not misled by those who would dramatise an ordinary constitutional process. The ANC's posture on the Section 89 Matter is one of procedural neutrality: the process is proceeding in an orderly manner under the binding Constitutional Court judgment, with the Committee's draft Terms of Reference open for party submissions until Friday 10 July, and the work of Parliament continues, it must not be rushed but deliberated carefully. The ANC will participate, if at all, only as *amicus curiae*, confined to parliamentary process and sequencing, because our duty is to defend the integrity of a constitutional process, not to argue any party's merits.

On the Terms of Reference, the ANC will not support the admis-

sibility of untested hearsay: an inquiry of this gravity demands evidence under oath, properly tested, perjury on those who will think parliament is a playground to mislead or tell plain lies must also be applied. The question before parliament is whether the president committed high crimes and high misdemeanors and did so alive to it, knowingly. That is what parliament is to test but first, is the Panel Report itself a bona fide instrument, did it find correctly that high crimes and high misdemeanors occurred on the part of the president. What we know is that the Public Protector has said no, the SARB has said not so.

Then, should parliament proceed now or wait till September court case? We think it is wise and economical to wait because September court gives parliament itself finality and a foundation. That is it.

A NATION OF WINNERS; BAFANA BAFANA

Now, to something that lifted every South African heart. Our

beloved Bafana Bafana have written their names into history, advancing; for the first time ever; into the last 32 of the FIFA World Cup. We hail them. They are a bunch of winners, and they carry the pride of a nation.

But we ask South Africans to see in this something deeper than a football result. Life is made of ebbs and flows, of falls and of rising again. This is a step in the right direction, and it should be read as one. As Madiba taught us: *"Do not judge me by my successes, but by how many times I fell down and got back up again."* That is the spirit of our players, and it is the spirit of our people. We rise. We always rise. Our boys come home with their heads high; and hope, like courage, is contagious.

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORLD, THE POLITICS OF THE FIFA TOURNAMENT

And yet the ANC would not be true to its conscience, or to the internationalism that runs in the blood of this movement, if we cel-





celebrated the sport and said nothing of the setting. This World Cup is hosted, in the main, by a nation that in this very year launched military action in the Gulf that placed an entire region and the global economy in jeopardy and cost human lives, and that same power continues to shield and to enable the dehumanising onslaught against the people of Gaza and of Lebanon.

We noted, too, with deep disquiet, reports that a vetted and respected international match official from Somalia was subjected to racial profiling and turned away. And through all of this, the governing bodies of world football proceeded as though none of it were happening, as though these were matters of no consequence, unfolding somewhere off the field of play. This is an indictment against the conscience of the world.

We must ask ourselves the hard question, and we must ask it honestly: ought we to have participated at all, under these circumstances? Perhaps future generations will judge us harshly.

For the ANC's part, we hold to a principle that has never bent: we cannot negotiate away crimes against humanity, and we cannot dance at the party while fellow human beings are treated as though they were less than human. We raise our voice not to diminish our players, whom we celebrate, but because silence in the face of injustice is itself a choice — and it is not ours.

OUR ELECTION CAMPAIGN; CANDIDATES OF QUALITY, CONTESTING EVERYWHERE

Finally, to the work that consumes this movement: the road to 4 November. Our campaign is advancing with energy and with discipline. We are engaged in a wide and rigorous candidate-selection process; one in which our National Officials and members of the National Executive Committee are personally sitting in interviews across the country, searching, ward by ward and municipality by municipality, for the most capable, credible and committed comrades to carry the ANC's name onto the ballot. We

are contesting every municipality in this country, seriously and to win.

Let us single out one front. In the Western Cape, and in Cape Town in particular, the indications reaching us are that the governing party there may be heading for a far weaker result than its bluster suggests. Our task is to take the fight deep into the belly of that province, to deploy credible, capable candidates who can give the people of the Cape a real alternative. That work is well under way, and we are receiving outstanding nominees from the ground up. The ANC is on the move.

CONCLUSION

South Africa, we have come through a difficult week with our republic intact and our constitutional order standing. We will always enforce the law, firmly, humanely and without fear. We will never surrender our streets to the mob, nor our conscience to the demagogue. And we will keep our eyes fixed on the future our people deserve.

The ANC calls for a full investigation on alleged DA corruption and state capture

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress (ANC) has noted the perturbing damning public allegations made by former DA leader John Steenhuisen, regarding attempts to capture the state by Tony Leon, in cahoots with former DA's CEO Paul Bugey, through their PR Company Resolve Communications. He painted a picture of how they undertook lobbying activities on behalf of private interests, including matters relating to the government's response to the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak. Steenhuisen further alleged that DA Ministers were approached in connection with these lobbying efforts and suggested that tensions arising from these engagements contributed to the DA's call for him to be removed from the Cabinet.

These allegations raise important questions about ethical governance, accountability and the assault on the integrity of democratic institutions. These are matters that deserve to be addressed openly and transparently in the interests of maintaining public confidence in government.

For too long, the Democratic Alliance has sought to frame corruption as a phenomenon primarily associated with black-

led governments and institutions while projecting administrations under its control as inherently more ethical and accountable. This selective political narrative has contributed to the harmful perception that corruption is linked to race rather than to individual criminal conduct and systemic governance failures. Recent governance developments demonstrate that procurement irregularities, ethical lapses and governance weaknesses are not determined by race, geography or political affiliation, but are risks confronting every administration.

These allegations now before the public do not come from political opponents but from a former leader of the Democratic Alliance and a senior public representative. They therefore warrant the same level of scrutiny and accountability that the DA has consistently demanded of others. The ANC believes that no political party, public representative or sphere of government should be insulated from transparent public accountability whenever credible allegations arise.

The ANC has consistently maintained that corruption





has no race, no political home and no place in South Africa's constitutional democracy. Our programme of organisational renewal reaffirms our commitment to confronting corruption, strengthening oversight institutions, supporting law

enforcement agencies and ensuring that public office is exercised in accordance with the Constitution, the Executive Ethics Code and the rule of law.

The fight against corruption must be principled, impartial

and applied without fear or favour.

Accordingly, the ANC calls for a full and independent investigation into the allegations to establish all the facts and determine whether any laws, ethical obligations or governance standards have been breached.

All relevant institutions must be allowed to perform their constitutional responsibilities without interference or political favour.

There cannot be one standard of accountability for black-led organisations and another for the Democratic Alliance.

The Constitution guarantees equality before the law, and the integrity of South Africa's democracy depends on every public representative being held to the same ethical and constitutional standards, irrespective of political affiliation.

The ANC calls for a full and independent investigation into the allegations to establish all the facts and determine whether any laws, ethical obligations or governance standards have been breached.



Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Soweto Uprising

■ By **RONNIE KASRILS**

I was working for the ANC and SACP in exile fifty years ago when news of the Soweto uprising reached us. Whilst we were shocked at the initial killings of the protesting school students we were inspired by their bravery. Instead of fleeing in submission the rebellion spread like wildfire, involving students and later workers, black and mixed-race youth, countrywide. State pathology reports show that in the two months following the slaughter, 50 per cent killed were over 20 years of age, and 20 per cent over 30 years. By year's end more than 1,000 people were dead.

Some have questioned the ANC's role. The short answer is that the strategy of the Movement under the leadership of Oliver Tambo in exile was revitalised. Thousands were recruited, armed resistance and mass struggle grew, and in-

ternational solidarity intensified in isolating the regime. To understand the situation, it is necessary to recall the context.

There had been signs of mounting challenges. Our underground structures reported mounting opposition to the Bantu Education system designed to train Africans for servitude. The June 16 demonstration was called by the South African Schools Movement, influenced by a black consciousness ideology and SASO in the black universities. A significant coterie of activists, however, was already connected to the ANC, among them Kgalema Motlanthe, Sphiwe Nyanza, Tokyo Sexwale, Nkosazana Dhlamini, Snuki Zikalala and Joyce Sikakani. The latter two had been detained and charged with Winnie Mandela and others in 1969 for clandestine activity.

The rising ferment took place within the context of growing worker protests, dating from the strike wave of 1973. The increase in strikes reflected worsening economic conditions. An economic slump was underway, with a rise in inflation particularly affecting black households, a fall in the price of gold, and the rising defence budget. Inherent to the mood was the significance of the liberation of Mozambique and Angola in 1975. The retreat of the Defence Force (SADF) from Angola in January 1976, when Cuban forces came to Angola's assistance after an invasion to prevent the MPLA seizing power, heightened expectations. The defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam was an enormous inspiration. White power could be defeated.

Key inflexion points played their part in transforming South Africa.

The Freedom Charter, reflected aspirations of an oppressed people for a non-racist, democratic society. The Sharpeville massacre marked the turn to armed struggle. The defiance and imprisonment of the Mandela leadership, aroused a new generation. Umkhonto we Sizwe's (MK) military incursions with ZAPU into Rhodesia in 1967-68, and the strategy of the exiled ANC's 1969 Morogoro Conference, began the long process of recovery. The distance from the country and smashed internal organising structures were problems. It was the Soweto events that marked a sea change, swiftly raising the tide of struggle to unprecedented heights. The question arises why the vast majority of youth who left the country sought the ANC?

They were attracted by the ANC's organised presence in neighbouring states, safe houses, experienced cadres and its international connections. It had a training base in Angola. The Soviet Union had provided advanced training from the early 1960s, and it, Cuba and East Germany (GDR), could provide assistance on an increased scale.

The first request from new recruits was guns so they could return home to *"kill the Boers"*.

Our forthright response promised action, but with political education combined with military training. The enemy was a system that needed to be destroyed, not a skin colour. What was surprising was how quickly they cottoned on. There was impatience, but most readily adapted to the long haul. Some were earmarked for what we called *"crash courses"* – a swift turn around, to strike the enemy by acts of armed propaganda. Firing rockets into po-

lice stations, planting bombs and mines. Then came the bombing of the SASOL oil refinery, sabotage at the Koeberg nuclear plant, and missiles striking SADF headquarters.

Heroic military operations, albeit at a low level of capacity, developed over a decade into an almost insurrectionary mass uprising. It was that political factor, the masses, united and politically led, inspired by armed actions, a growing underground network and international solidarity, that constituted the four pillars of struggle. The emergence of the UDF and Cosatu, and a mass democratic movement mobilising the oppressed under ANC-SACP leadership, was the essence of that sociopolitical force for change. At the climax the SADF lost the war to Cuban-Angolan forces at Cuito Cuanavale, and Namibia became free. That interconnection compelled the regime into negotiations.

Victory was won because of the justice of the cause, the overwhelming involvement of the masses, international support, the unassailable leadership of the ANC and its firm alliance with the SACP and trade union movement.

Fifty years on has seen the Soweto generation occupying careers in politics, government, business, professions, the military, given the opportunities provided by a non-racial, non-sexist democracy.

Undoubtedly, they are a proud generation. They exhibited a remarkable esprit de corps. During the thirty years of MK's fighting existence (1961-1990) seven detachments graduated in training. Many regarded camp life as their halcyon days, whatever the detractors might say.

They are celebrated in freedom songs, poems, books, museums, street names, cultural activities. A centre of celebration is the Soweto statue of 13-year-old Hector Peterson, one of the first of the martyred children to die. Young Solomon Mahlangu, the first of the generation to be executed is a national icon. *"Tell my mother"*, he said to the priest from the gallows, *"that my blood will water the tree of freedom."*

Alarm bells

The veterans strive to protect the gains of the struggle and defence of democracy. The alarm bells



have been ringing. Corruption that has seeped into the organs of government, state and society, worsening socio-economic problems, the rise of right-wing extremism, reflect the deepening national crisis.

A battle over values has been underway in a world in turmoil.

Liberation heritage competes with the overwhelming commercialisation, commodification and neo-liberalism of a country under the hegemonic sway of capitalism, and western imperialist influence. Counter revolutionary forces are fermenting xenophobia and black division.

And as we commemorate the youth of June 16, we cannot hide from the cruel irony that it is our young people who bear the ruinous impact of all this. It is they who face mass unemployment and a future seemingly devoid of hope.

How can the rot be stopped?

Whilst there are those who declared they hadn't struggled to be poor, there are those who oppose greed and self-interest, striving to serve the people. That must be today's clarion call. It is vital that today's youth to whom the torch of freedom has been passed, are educated, motivated and mobilised for the challenge. As in 1976 bold leadership and broad, non-sectarian unity are required. Otherwise, catastrophe. The ANC and its allies must rise to the occasion.

Comrade Ronnie Kasrils (ANC Khumalo) is a struggle veteran and former government minister. This is a version modified from *Business Day*, 15 June, 2026.



The Sophie & Henry De Bruyn Foundation Commemorates the **50th Anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising**

ELDORADO PARK, 24 June 2026

THE Sophie & Henry De Bruyn Foundation (S&HDBF), in partnership with renowned struggle veteran Dr Khulu Mbatha, commemorated the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising during a special assembly held at Missouriiaan Secondary School in Eldorado Park on Wednesday, 24 June 2026.

The event brought together learners, educators, school leadership, and distinguished guests to reflect on the sacrifices of the

youth of 1976 and to inspire a new generation of South Africans to embrace education, leadership, and social responsibility.

Missourilaan Secondary School principal Mr Julius van Rensburg warmly welcomed the distinguished guests and expressed his sincere appreciation to both keynote speakers for sharing their experiences, wisdom, and valuable time with the school community. He praised their enduring legacies and the meaningful impact of their visit.



Deputy Principal Mr Kelvin Dams also conveyed his gratitude to the struggle veterans and expressed appreciation to the (S&HDBF) for investing in the learners and preserving the important history of the liberation struggle.

The assembly was addressed by esteemed struggle veteran and 1976 uprising participant Dr Khulu Mbatha, who delivered a powerful and thought-provoking reflection on the courage and resilience of the youth who participated in the Soweto Uprising. Drawing parallels between the challenges faced by the youth of 1976 and those confronting young people today, Dr Mbatha encouraged learners to value education, uphold democratic ideals, and become active contributors to society.

Struggle icon Ma Sophie De Bruyn delivered a deeply moving message of encouragement, reminding learners of the importance of perseverance, discipline,

and hope. Her presence served as a living reminder of South Africa's liberation history and the sacrifices made to secure the freedoms enjoyed today.

Serving as programme director, Lazanne Oliver, a Trustee of the (S&HDBF), celebrated the matric class of 2026 while paying tribute to the class of 1976. She reminded learners that the opportunities available to them today are the result of the sacrifices made by countless young people who fought against the injustices of apartheid.

Foundation coordinator Phelelisa Somana worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the successful execution of the event, contributing significantly to its smooth running and overall success.

The vote of thanks was delivered by (S&HDBF) board member Dipuo Headbush-Mde, who spoke words of encouragement

and inspiration to every matric learner present. Her heartfelt address challenged learners to pursue their dreams with determination and to recognise their potential to shape the future of their communities.

One of the most significant moments of the assembly came during the closing remarks by Ma Sophie De Bruyn. Upon learning that the school does not have a functional library, she committed herself and the Foundation to ensuring that a library is established at the school. Her pledge aims to provide learners with access to books and learning resources, recognising that literacy and education remain powerful tools for empowerment and social transformation.

As South Africa marks fifty years since the Soweto Uprising, the commemorative assembly at Missouriiaan Secondary School served as both a tribute to the brave youth of 1976 and a call to action for the youth of 2026. Through the voices of those who fought for freedom, learners were reminded that education remains one of the most powerful instruments for building a just, equal, and prosperous society.



The Generation of 1976 and the Responsibility of 2026:

Youth as a Revolutionary Force in the Renewal of Local Government

■ By **SASABONA MANGANYE**

THE 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising presented an important moment for reflection and action. The youth who took to the streets in June 1976 did not simply reject an unjust education system. They confronted the entire machinery of apartheid colonialism, racial capitalism, and oppression. Their struggle was part of a broader revolutionary movement aimed at securing national liberation, human dignity, and social justice for the black majority.

The generation of 1976 understood that freedom would not be handed to them. It had to be won through organisation, sacrifice, and collective struggle. Their courage helped to strengthen the liberation movement led by the African National Congress and accelerated the collapse of apartheid. Their blood nourished the democratic breakthrough of 1994 and laid the foundation for the ongoing National Democratic Revolution.

Today, fifty years later, a new generation faces a different but equally significant historic task.

The youth of 2026 do not confront apartheid laws, but they continue to confront the enduring legacy of apartheid spatial plan-



ning, economic exclusion, unemployment, poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment. These realities are not accidental. They are the consequences of centuries of colonial dispossession and the structural inequalities inherited from apartheid capitalism.

The central contradiction facing young people today is that political freedom has not yet been fully matched by economic emancipation. While democracy has opened opportunities that were denied to previous generations, millions of young South Africans remain excluded from meaningful participation in the economy. The struggle for social and economic transformation therefore remains

unfinished.

This is why the generation of 2026 must understand itself as a generation of builders, liberators and transformers. The responsibility of young people is not merely to observe political developments but to become active participants in shaping society.

The struggle for transformation must be carried into every sphere of social life, particularly local government, which remains the sphere closest to the people.

Municipalities are not simply administrative institutions. They are instruments through which democratic power must improve the

material conditions of the people. Access to water, sanitation, electricity, roads, housing, public transport, recreational facilities, and economic opportunities are all questions of social justice and human dignity. When local government functions effectively, it advances the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution by improving the lives of the working class and the poor.

However, many municipalities continue to face serious challenges, including weak governance, financial instability, infrastructure backlogs, corruption, and declining public confidence. These challenges undermine developmental local government and slow the pace of transformation.

The African National Congress recognises that the renewal and restoration of local government is a strategic priority hence the declaration of 2026 as the **“Year of Decisive Action to Fix Local Government and Transform the Economy”**. The task before the movement is to build capable, ethical, developmental, and people-centred municipalities that are responsive to the needs of communities. This requires strengthening accountability, professionalising the public service, combating corruption, improving service de-

livery, and deepening community participation in governance.

The ANC’s renewal programme is therefore inseparable from the project of rebuilding local government. The movement must continue to place communities at the centre of development and ensure that municipalities become effective vehicles for economic transformation and social progress.

For this project to succeed, young people must occupy a leading position.

The history of the liberation struggle demonstrates that youth have always been a revolutionary force for change. From the ANC Youth League generation of Anton Lembede, Mxolisi Majombozi, William Nkomo, Ashley Mda, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela, to the students of 1976 and the democratic activists of subsequent generations, young people have consistently provided energy, vision, militancy, and innovation to the struggle for liberation.

Today, young people must once again assume their historic responsibility.

This begins with voter registration and participation in elections.

Registering to vote is not merely a constitutional right; it is a revolutionary act of democratic participation. Every young person who registers strengthens the democratic power of the people and contributes to the ongoing struggle for transformation. Every vote cast in defence of democratic governance is a continuation of the long march from resistance to liberation and from liberation to social and economic emancipation.

But participation must go beyond voting.

Young people must become activists in their communities, leaders in civic organisations, innovators in local economic development, and participants in structures of democratic governance.

They must champion clean governance, fight corruption, support service delivery initiatives, and help build social cohesion. They must bring new ideas, technological innovation, and developmental solutions to the challenges facing municipalities.

The ANC, as the leader of society and the principal agent of transformation, must continue to create opportunities for youth leadership in government,



communities, and the economy. The movement must invest in developing a new generation of ethical, capable, and disciplined cadres who are committed to serving the people and advancing the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution.

As we commemorate the heroes and heroines of June 1976, we must draw inspiration from their courage and commitment. They did not retreat from the challenges of their time. They organised, mobilised, and fought for a better future.

The responsibility of the generation of 2026 is to do the same.

The struggle today is to defeat unemployment, inequality, poverty, corruption, underdevelopment, and voter apathy. It is to restore the capacity of local government, deepen democracy, and advance the cause of social and economic transformation. It is to ensure that the promise of freedom reaches every community, every household, and every young person.

The generation of 1976 gave us freedom. The generation of 2026 must use that freedom to build a developmental state, strengthen local government, and advance the National Democratic Revolution towards a more just, equal, and prosperous South Africa.

The future of local government, and indeed the future of our democracy, depends on the active participation of young people. The time to organise, participate, lead, and transform is now.

Comrade Sasabona Manganye
is ANC Greater Joburg Regional Secretary.



MANDELA MONTH:

Reflecting on the Legacy of a Revolutionary and Global Icon

■ By **CORNELIUS MONAMA**

EVERY July, millions across the globe honour the life, sacrifices and legacy of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Few figures in modern history have commanded the moral authority, global respect and enduring admiration that Mandela continues to enjoy. Fewer still have faced such persistent efforts at misrepresentation. This article seeks to defend historical truth against the distortions of revisionism and political opportunism.

In recent years, a small chorus

of young pseudo-revolutionaries has emerged, portraying Nelson Mandela as a traitor and dismissing the 1994 democratic breakthrough as an act of surrender. Not only are these criticisms historically inaccurate, they are also conceptually and intellectually flawed. At best, they represent expressions of political adolescence and youthful exuberance, animated by rhetorical bravado, yet completely detached from the harsh realities that shaped the liberation struggle and South Africa's democratic transition.

They reduce one of the most complex political transitions of the twentieth century to simplistic slogans, while displaying a profound inability to appreciate the material conditions, strategic constraints and limited options that confronted the liberation movement at the time.

Ironically, many of Mandela's loudest critics are beneficiaries of the very freedom for which he and his generation sacrificed so much. Armed with social media accounts, free data and the luxury of hindsight, our TikTok revolutionaries pass judgment on choices made under conditions they neither experienced nor sought to understand. They speak casually of revolution without ever having known detention without trial, imprisonment, torture, exile or the profound sacrifices demanded by the struggle against apartheid.

As the saying goes, talk is cheap. History is not made by those who comment comfortably from the sidelines long after the outcome is known. It is made by those who enter the arena when the risks are greatest and the consequences are most severe.

Peace-time heroes and Gucci revolutionaries, who know neither the burdens of leadership nor the true costs of struggle, seek to lecture those who carried the burden of liberation about what they should have done. They fail to appreciate that history is not made under ideal conditions. Leaders must navigate real constraints, complex circumstances and genuine dangers.

Indeed, there is wisdom in the observation that a coward is someone who steps forward after the battles have been fought



and won, after the sacrifices have been made, and then seeks to lecture those who carried the burden of struggle on what they should have done differently. Such criticism often mistakes hindsight for insight and rhetoric for courage.

By the early 1990s, South Africa stood on the edge of a precipice. The apartheid state remained heavily armed. Political violence was escalating and the possibility of a prolonged civil war was real. The regional and international balance of forces was shifting dramatically. The Soviet Union had collapsed. The leadership of the liberation movement was therefore confronted with a narrow and difficult set of choices. Their responsibility was not to satisfy future pseudo-revolutionaries or social media commentators. Their responsibility was to secure freedom, preserve lives and lay the foundation for a democratic and prosperous future.

The negotiated settlement was a significant victory. It delivered a constitutional democracy, which created space for the reconstruction and development of our nation. Those who dismiss the

negotiated transition often fail to answer a simple question: what realistic alternative existed at the time? Would they have preferred a full-scale civil war? History demands serious answers, not slogans.

Defending Mandela's legacy does not require us to construct a myth of infallibility. Mandela himself would have rejected such an exercise. He neither sought nor claimed messianic stature. Throughout his life, he acknowledged his own imperfections. His oft-quoted observation that he was "not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying" was not an expression of false modesty. It was a profound statement of political humility. It reflected a leader who recognised that history is shaped not by flawless individuals, but by men and women who, despite their imperfections, remain steadfast in the pursuit of justice.

The true measure of Mandela's greatness, therefore, lies not in the fiction of perfection, but in his moral courage and unwavering commitment to the liberation struggle. The greatest tribute we can pay to Mandela is not to place him on a pedestal. Like all leaders, he made decisions that future historians will subject to critical scrutiny. But this scrutiny must be grounded in evidence, context and historical understanding, not cheap slogans. Mandela's legacy deserves neither blind veneration nor reckless denigration.

It is easy to be brave on social media, but more difficult to be brave on the actual battlefield. Real struggles are not fought on Facebook, podcasts and comment sections. They are fought in the trenches, underground

structures, bushes, on picket lines and in the streets of our cities, townships and villages. Let us reject historical amnesia and the temptation to tear down those whose sacrifices made our freedom possible. Fortunately, South Africans know the difference between those who fought for freedom and those who merely comment on it.

As Theodore Roosevelt famously observed: *"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena..."* Mandela and his generation were in the arena. They carried the torch of freedom through the darkness of oppression and bore responsibilities that their critics have never had to carry. They made decisions under difficult conditions that their critics have never experienced.

Yes, South Africa of today is far from perfect. Poverty, unemployment, inequality and corruption remain formidable challenges. None of these challenges, however, should obscure the achievements of our democracy. Millions now enjoy access to housing, basic services, healthcare, education and human rights once denied under apartheid. These gains rest on the foundations laid by Mandela and his generation.

Perhaps the greatest disservice done to Nelson Mandela's legacy has not come only from those who label him a "sell-out," but also from those who seek to sanitise him into a harmless global icon. There is a disturbing tendency in some quarters to celebrate Mandela the reconciler while erasing Mandela the revolutionary. In their selective retelling, we are permit-



ted to remember the statesman who preached reconciliation, donned the Springbok jersey and championed nation-building, but not the Madiba who served as Commander-in-Chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe, nor the internationalist who counted Fidel Castro and Yasser Arafat as comrades-in-arms in the global struggle against oppression.

In this selective reconstruction of history, Mandela is reduced to a mere symbol of forgiveness, stripped of his revolutionary convictions. Predictably, many companies that will be celebrating Mandela Month this year will once again choose to focus exclusively on this sanitised image. This is a subtle, but deliberate attempt to programme the nation into forgetting Mandela the revolutionary.

This is not a new phenomenon. Lenin observed that during the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the ruling classes "hound them with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaigns of lies and slander." Yet after their deaths, he wrote, attempts are made "to convert them into harmless icons... to hallow their names... while robbing the revolutionary theory of its substance, blunting its revolutionary edge and vulgarising it." Lenin's obser-

vation remains strikingly relevant, reminding us that societies often commemorate great revolutionaries only after emptying their ideas of their original revolutionary content. Mandela's life resists such simplification.

Mandela's commitment to peace and reconciliation was never a negation of his revolutionary convictions. The reconciler and the revolutionary were two sides of the same coin. Reconciliation was part of the struggle for a non-racial society. He was a leader who, when history demanded, displayed both the courage to confront oppression and the wisdom to build peace.

The long walk to freedom did not end in 1994. Let us continue to walk this journey with courage and determination. Let future generations remember us not as people who merely celebrated Mandela's birthday each July, but as those who also carried forward his revolutionary ideals. Let history record that ours was the generation that refused to mistake commemoration for revolutionary commitment.

Comrade Cornelius Monama is former National Communication Manager of the African National Congress. He writes in his personal capacity.

VETERANS' Voices



Comrade Hezekiel Mpiko
Shoti "Baba" Lukhele:

A Quiet Giant of the Liberation Struggle

■ By **SIVA NAIDOO**

THE African National Congress Veterans League mourns the passing of Comrade Shoti "Baba" Lukhele, a dedicated freedom fighter, trusted underground operative, diplomat and patriot whose life was devoted to the liberation of South Africa. He passed away last week.

Comrade Lukhele belonged to a generation of revolutionaries who served without seeking recognition or reward. He was one of the hidden architects of our freedom, a cadre who carried the weight of the struggle with humility, courage and unwavering discipline.

Born into a period of racial oppression and injustice, Baba Lukhele committed himself to the cause of national liberation and became an invaluable asset of the African National Congress in the Kingdom of Eswatini. Through his work and relationships, he played a crucial role in sustaining the ANC's underground operations during some of the most difficult years of the struggle.

Veteran leader Comrade Mashaye Mngadi who first met Baba Lukhele in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1984, remembers him as a man of exceptional character.

"The biggest lessons I learned from my interactions with Baba are humility, respect and integrity in the face of hardship and adversity. As much as he was a comrade, you could not mistake his fatherly nature in your engagement with him."

These qualities defined Baba Lukhele's life. He was a man of wisdom and calm disposition, deeply knowledgeable about African culture, traditions and history. A respected herbalist from KwaZulu-Natal, he understood that the struggle for liberation was not only political but also a struggle to reclaim the dignity and identity of African people.

His unique position within the Kingdom of Eswatini, including his close ties to the royal family and his relationship with King Sobhu-

za II, enabled him to build bridges of trust between the ANC and the Swazi leadership. During the difficult period following the Nkomati and Komati Accords, when many ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres faced arrest and deportation, Baba Lukhele's diplomatic skills proved invaluable.

Comrade Mashaye observed: *"Baba Lukhele was respected for his diplomatic ability in building close relationships between our movement, its leaders and the Swaziland Kingdom and its leaders. His presence saved a potentially catastrophic situation between our movement and the Swaziland Kingdom."*

Without holding any formal designation, he became a respected voice of reason and a trusted adviser whose counsel helped the movement navigate a period of great uncertainty.

Comrade Teddy Coleman described him as: *"A hidden asset of the African National Congress"*

in the Kingdom of Eswatini.”

He further noted: *“The surname Lukhele in the ANC underground was a strategic asset. He stands among comrades who operated in Eswatini... names that carried the weight of the struggle in silence.”*

Baba Lukhele’s contribution to the liberation struggle extended beyond diplomacy. As a businessman and owner of grocery stores, he used his resources to support the underground movement, purchasing food in bulk to sustain cadres moving through ANC transit routes. He also assisted the ANC’s Ordnance Department and contributed to the safe-keeping of arms and logistics necessary for the struggle.



Because of the trust he commanded across political and traditional structures, he served as an intermediary between the ANC and the Eswatini government, conveying sensitive messages and helping maintain critical lines of communication.

Comrade Coleman wrote: *“He remained in the Kingdom after the Nkomati/Ngwavuma Accord, and in that time became an even greater asset. A man of action, he kept the ANC alive when conditions were hardest.”*

Despite his proximity to privilege and status as a son-in-law of the King, Baba Lukhele chose a different path. He chose the difficult

road of struggle and sacrifice.

As Comrade Mashaye reflected: *“Baba Lukhele chose a life of struggle for the liberation of our country instead of luxury which he was exposed to as a son-in-law to the King.”*

His commitment to the struggle was shared by his family. His daughter, Ntombikayise Carneson, served at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania, helping feed thousands of students and ANC members in exile, while his son, Lloyd, joined the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe and later served in the democratic South African Police Service.

The Lukhele family exemplified the spirit of sacrifice that characterised so many families of the liberation movement. Perhaps the greatest lesson from Baba Lukhele’s life is that true leadership is not measured by titles or positions. It is measured by service, humility and impact.

In the words of Comrade Mashaye: “Baba Lukhele led behind the scenes, quietly and without claiming any victories.”

As we bid farewell to this remarkable son of Africa, we honour a patriot whose contribution to the liberation of our country far exceeded the recognition he received. He was a bridge-builder, a strategist, a father figure and a steadfast servant of the people.

The ANC Veterans League dips its banner in honour of Comrade Shoti “Baba” Lukhele and extends its heartfelt condolences to the Lukhele family, his comrades, friends and all who were touched by his life of service.

May his name forever be inscribed among the heroes and heroines of our liberation struggle.

Phumula ngoxolo, Baba Shoti Lukhele.

Your contribution to a free and democratic South Africa will never be forgotten.

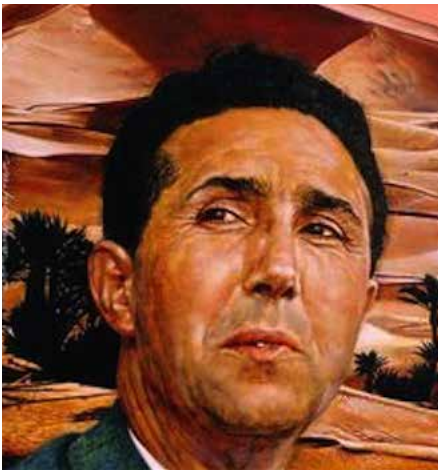
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

4–10 July 2026

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

4 July 1979

Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella released from prison



Algerian liberation icon, socialist and former President Ahmed Ben Bella is released from prison after 14 years. He was Algeria's first prime minister after independence in 1962 and elected president in 1963. Along with Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Mobido Keita (Mali) and Sekou Toure (Guinea), he supported liberation and anti-colonial movements in the rest of the continent, including South Africa. He was at the founding conference of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. He was deposed in a coup in 1965 and arrested, until his release in 1979.

4 July 1994

Rwanda Patriotic Front enters Kigali

After the Rwanda Genocide that started in April 1994, the RFP enters Kigali, ending the Tutsi led genocide, which saw in the space

of less than two months nearly a million Rwandese, mainly Hutus and moderate Tutsis, being massacred.

4 July 2019

Advocacy for Kiswahili

The African Academy of Language joins the advocacy for Kiswahili to become the official Pan-African language. On the basis of this recommendation, the East African Community announced a partnership with the African Union to promote kiSwahili as "a language of wider communication."

5 July 1937

Publisher and Author

Asenath Bole Odaga born

Kenyan publisher, Asenath Bole Odaga was born on this day in Raneda. Odaga founded Lake Publishers, the first woman-owned publishing company. Lake Publishing issues work of Kenyan publishers in book forms



as well as through audio and visual story telling. She wrote several children's books herself, so that African children could "read about their own background and know real African heroes with whom they can identify."

5 July 1954

TANU formed

The Tanganyika African Association, formed in 1921 by Ali Saidi to advocate for African interests against British colonialism, is transformed into the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. TANU became the principle organisation in the achievement of independence.

5 July 1957

Afro-Shirazi Party of Zanzibar formed

The future ruling party of Zanzibar, the Afro-Shirazi Party is formed from a merger of the Afro Party (mainly African members) and the Shirazi Party (mainly Islamic members). TANU and Afro-Shirazi Party merged on 5 February 1977 to form Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)

5 July 1975

Cabo Verde gains independence

One of the African island states, Cabo Verde, which consists of 10 volcanic islands in the Atlantic oceans on the west coast of

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



Africa, gains independence from Portugal. The capital of Cabo Verde is Praia, which is on the most populous island in the country, Santiago

5 July 1991 ANC Conference elects Nelson Mandela as President

The 48th National Conference of the ANC held in Durban elects Comrade Nelson Mandela unopposed as its new President and Comrade Walter Sisulu as its Deputy President. Comrade Oliver Tambo becomes National Chairman, Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa Secretary General and Comrade Jacob Zuma Deputy Secretary General. Comrade Thomas Nkobi retains his post as



Treasurer General. This was the first conference in South Africa of the ANC since the banning in 1960.

5 July 2000 Blood diamonds ban

The UN Security Council imposed a ban on Sierra Leone "blood diamonds", as part of efforts to end the civil war, which started in 1991 and only ended in 2000. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) occupied diamond mines and used diamonds to fund its insurgency. The civil war saw over 50,000 casualties, and countless rapes, mutilations, torture and the abduction of children forced to become soldiers. The Kimberley Process Certification scheme came into effect in 2000, adopted by the World Diamond Congress in order for the industry to police conflict/blood diamonds.

6 July 1937 Author and Historian Bessie Head born

Bessie Amelia Emery was born in Pietermaritzburg on this day, as a child to mixed parents. Her mother was sent to a mental hos-

pital when pregnant and Head given up for adoption. Her love for books manifested early, and she went on to train as a teacher in Durban. Bessie soon resigned from teaching and took the train to Cape Town to work as a journalist, and later worked in Johannesburg where she interacted with notable writers such as Can Temba, Lewis Nkosi and Dennis Brutus, and where she met Robert Sobukwe and joined the PAC. She immigrated to Botswana in the 1960s, where her career as an author took off, with three novels **When Rain Clouds Gather** (1968), **Maru** (1971), and **A Question of Power** (1973).



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

6 July 1967

Biafra war starts in Nigeria

Nigeria with its many ethnic groups, a product of British colonialism and the forced integration of the three major groups, the Yoruba, Igbos and Fulani-Hausa that always had their own administration, culture and religion, into a unitary state. In 1966, a coup by Igbo army officers was followed by reprisals against the Igbo population and unilateral declaration of independence of Biafra in the eastern region by Emeka Odu-megwu Ojukwu. On 6 July 1967, the Nigerian army sought to re-an-nex Biafra, leading to a 30 month civil war, that saw over a million people perish.

7 July 1889

Celebrated Nurse

Constance Nothard born

Constance Annie Nothard, nursing sister and recipient of the Florence Nightingale Medal from the International Red Cross Society, was born in the Eastern Cape. Nothard rendered outstanding service in the South African Military Service in Europe during the First World War and was awarded the Croix de Recompense for distinguished service in France. She received the first Gold Medal of the South African Nursing Association on 12 May 1961 in recognition of exceptional service in times of war and peace. The Library at the South African Nursing Association headquarters in Pretoria was named the C.A. Nothard Library in her honour.

7 July 1988

Five Cape anti-apartheid leaders released

Five prominent anti-apartheid activists were released in Cape Town after being detained for up to two years under the Internal Security



Act. The five were Trevor Manuel, Ebrahim Rasool, Mountrain Qumbela and Hilda Ndude, all officials of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the Western Cape region, and Mzonke Jacobs, president of the Cape Youth Congress (CAYCO). Three of them, Manuel, Rasool, and Jacobs, were immediately served with restriction orders limiting their movements and activities and barring them from speaking to the press.

7 July 2017

Ghana launches its first nano-satellite

The satellite, GhanaSat-1 is launched from the International Space Station. The device will monitor the environment of Ghana's coastline, taking images and collecting atmospheric and other data.

8 July 1658

Khoisan leader imprisoned on Robben Island



Harry die Strandloper, also known as Autshumato, is banished to Robben Island with two of his followers. Autshumato was a chief of the Khoikhoi Gorinhaikonas who worked as an interpreter for the Europeans in present-day, Cape Town, South Africa prior and during the establishment of the Dutch settlement on the Cape of Good Hope in 1652.

8 July 1946

Stella Chiweshe born

The Zimbabwean musician was born in Mujumi village, Mhondoro. When she turned 20, she mastered the Shona instrument mbira dzavagdzimu, which few women played. When recording companies were not interested in mbira music, she formed her own record company. Stella Chiweshe performed internationally and recorded 12 albums between 1987 and 2021.

8 July 1949

Mixed Marriages Act passed

1949: The Mixed Marriages Act made it illegal for Whites to marry Natives (Blacks) or Coloureds.



The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, Act No 55 of 1949 that banned marriage or a sexual relationship between White people and people of other race groups in South Africa is passed. The law was introduced as part of the apartheid government's separate development policy and also nullified mix marriages between South Africans that took place abroad.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

8 July 2003

Sudan plane crash

A Sudan Airways passenger jet lost power shortly after takeoff from Port Sudan, due to an engine failure. The plane returned to the airport, missed the runway and hit the ground killing all 117 people on board.

8 July 2004

South Africa to host Pan African Parliament



The third conference of the African Union (AU) meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, selected South Africa as the seat of the future Pan African Parliament (PAP). President Thabo Mbeki announced that it would be erected on the site of the Gallagar Estate, Midrand.

9 July 1860

Last African slave ship arrives in Alabama

The last ship carrying enslaved Africans across the Atlantic ocean – from the Dahomey kingdom of Benin – arrives at the port of Mobile in Alabama, US.

9 July 1893

Durban's first mayor passed on

George Christopher Cato, first mayor of Durban, dies in the city

on 9 July 1893. Cato was born in London, England in 1814 and came to South Africa as a trader. He was asked to plan Durban while it was still under the Natalia Republic Government and when Durban achieved municipal status in 1845 he was elected as the first Mayor. In 1865 Cato was granted an area of land behind the current day Natal University, which became the densely urban township of Cato Manor.

9 July 1992

Fidel Castro honoured by Africa



Cuba President Fidel Castro received Angola's Order of Agostinho Neto, the highest national order. Castro is later decorated with national orders by Ghana, Mali and South Africa in 1998, Algeria in 2001, Guinea-Bissau in 2007, Namibia in 2008 and Zambia in 2009, for Cuba's contribution to the liberation struggle in Africa.

9 July 1995

FW De Klerk implicated in Third Force violence by Police Commissioner

Ex-Police Commissioner General Johan van der Merwe and ex-Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok, implicated former state President and Deputy President of the Government of National Unity, F.W. de Klerk, of knowing and condoning a 'dirty tricks' campaign that was

waged against the African National Congress (ANC) between 1990 and the 1994 election in a bid to destabilise the organisation. Van der Merwe further testified that the entire National party (NP) leadership knew about this operation and at times instructed the police to carry out these brutalities against its opponents.

9 July 2002

African Union launched

The African Union, which replaced the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), is launched at a Summit in Durban. With fifty-five member states, the AU seeks to build an Africa that is united, peaceful, democratic and prosperous.

9 July 2011

South Sudan independence



After five decades of unrest and civil war, South Sudan was granted independence on 9 July 2011 with the town of Juba as a capital. The declaration of independence marked "the end" of intermittent clashes with the north. Salva Kiir became the first President of the newly born African state.

10 July 1924

Cairo Qur'an Published

The King Fuad I Edition of the Qur'an is published at Egypt's Al-Azhar University. Work started on the work, also called the "Cairo Qur'an" in 1907. This edition of

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

the Holy Book became immensely popular, easy to recite and accepted by both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims.

10 July 1956

Solomon Mahlangu born

Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu, a soldier of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), who was executed by hanging in Pretoria Central Prison, was born on 10 July 1956 in Mamelodi, east of Pretoria. Mahlangu left the country to join the ANC's military wing in exile in October 1976 after the student demonstrations of 1976. He received his military training in Angola and Mozambique. He returned to South Africa in 1977 on a mission to help students commemorate the 1976 demonstrations. En route to Soweto, his group was accosted by the police and a gunfight ensued. Mahlangu was captured along with Monty Motloutse who was beaten to the point of severe brain damage. The

third member of the group, George Mahlangu, managed to escape. Kalushi was sentenced to death, and he went to the gallows singing early morning of 6 April 1976. His final words were, *"Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the fight, my blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom, Aluta continua."*

10 July 1970

King of Kwaito Arthur Mafokate born

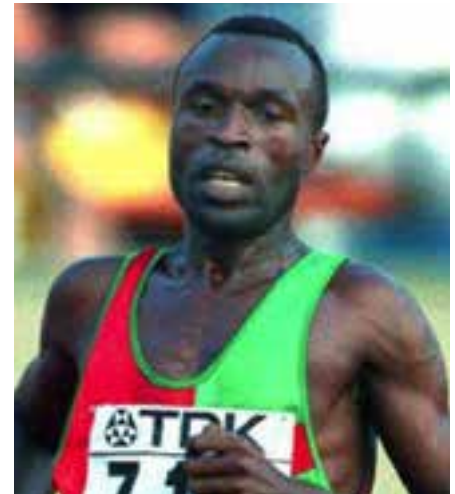


The musician and producer was born in Soweto. His first kwaito

hit, **Kaffir** in 1995, sold more than half a million copies, establishing The King of Kwaito as a major force in South African music.

10 July 1993

Kenyan Yobes Ondieki makes History



Kenyan runner Yobes Ondieki surprised the world when he became the first man to run 10000 Meters in less than 27 minutes. Ondieki was taking part in the Bislett Games in Oslo, Norway, when he made history. This achievement saw him ranked number one in the world in the 10 000 meters. Prior to the record in Oslo, Ondieki participated in the Olympic Games in 1988 and 1992 but failed to win medals. In 1991 he won the World Championships gold medal in Tokyo and set a Kenyan 5000 meter record of 13:01.82 in Zurich.

10 July 2000

OAU Summit adopts Lomé Declaration on Democracy

In an address to the OAU Summit in Togo, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan raised concerns about the number of coups d'état destabilizing African countries. The summit adopted the Lomé Declaration that calls for a shared set of democratic values.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

4–10 July 2026

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



JULY

- Plastic-Free July
- Nelson Mandela month
- Moral Regeneration month

5 July

International Day of Cooperatives



The theme for the United Nations International Day of Cooperatives (#CoopsDay) 2026 has been officially announced as ***“Cooperatives for a peaceful***

world!”, highlighting the vital role of cooperative enterprises in advancing social justice, inclusion and solidarity worldwide. Celebrated annually on the first Saturday of July, the International Day of Cooperatives will take place on **4 July 2026**, bringing together cooperative movements, governments and partners across the globe. The observance aims to raise awareness of the contributions of cooperatives to sustainable development and to strengthen collaboration between the United Nations and the international cooperative movement. This year’s theme underscores how cooperatives contribute to building peaceful societies by fostering democratic participation, economic inclusion and community resilience. Rooted in shared ownership and people-centred values, cooperatives enable individuals from all sectors of society to participate in economic and social life, helping to reduce inequalities and strengthen social cohesion. The theme also resonates strongly with the long-standing principle that lasting peace must be grounded in social justice. Cooperatives, as inclusive and democratic institutions, continue to play a key role in promoting equitable development and supporting communities in addressing global challenges. In South Africa, coops are governed by the Cooperatives Act, no.14 of 2015, and provides incentive grants to cooperatives of R350,000.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



7 July

African Integration Day

African Integration Day highlights progress with the integration of the continent, seen as key to its social and economic development, and shared prosperity. The economic integration plan is set out in the Abuja Treaty of 1991, ultimately to have a fully-fledged African common market. The operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area at the beginning of 2021 was one important step towards integration. The African Union Agenda 2063 highlights other areas of integration, such as integration through infrastructure, political integration including an African passport and harmonization of university qualifications.

7 July

World Kiswahili Day

Swahili is amongst the official languages of the African Union (AU) and United Nations, and is spoken by over 200 million people in the world. Kiswahili originated in East Africa, and is spoken in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Comoros, and as far as Oman and Yemen in the Middle East. South Africa and Botswana have introduced it in schools, while Namibia and others are considering doing so.

10 July

Don't Step on a Bee Day

Bees play an important role in our ecosystems, as pollinators they support the growth of trees and other plants, and therefore the food we eat. According to the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), *"in tropical forests, savannah woodlands, mangrove, and in temperate deciduous forests, many species of plants and animals would not survive if bees were missing. This is because the production of seeds, nuts, berries and fruits are highly dependent on insect pollination, and among the pollinating insects, bees are the major pollinators."* Despite the critical role they play, the number of bees are drastically declining in different regions of the world, because of pesticides and other forms of human pollution and activities.



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