



ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

4–10 September 2026

Conversations *with the* **President**



Transforming our energy system to ensure reliable and affordable electricity for all

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

A reliable electricity supply is the backbone of our economy. It is essential for development and growth.

Not long ago, South Africans planned their lives around load shedding. Businesses and households that could afford to had to buy generators and diesel to keep operating. Factories lost production. Small businesses struggled to survive. Hospitals, schools and households had to cope with hours without power.

The electricity crisis, with severe load shedding almost every day, undermined investment and disrupted daily life. As we saw, an unreliable electricity supply has a devastating impact across society. So too does the high cost

of electricity.

As a result of the Energy Action Plan and the steps we took to improve Eskom's performance, we have made significant progress in restoring a reliable supply of electricity.

This is an important achievement which we should recognise and acknowledge. But overcoming load shedding was never the end of our work.

We must now confront another challenge that affects millions of South Africans: the rising cost of electricity. The cost of electricity has gone up significantly over the past two decades. For families trying to make ends meet, having to contend with the cost of food, transport and other ne-

cessities, high electricity costs cause real hardship.

For businesses, high electricity costs make it more expensive to produce goods and provide services. They make South African companies less competitive and discourage investment in industries that can create jobs.

Our task, therefore, is not simply to produce enough electricity. We need electricity that is reliable, affordable and increasingly clean.

For more than a century, Eskom has been at the centre of South Africa's electricity system, responsible for generating, transmitting and supplying most of the country's electricity. This model served South Africa for many decades. But the electricity



crisis demonstrated the danger of relying overwhelmingly on a single company to meet the energy needs of an entire economy. This model is no longer sustainable if we want reliable and cheap electricity.

When Eskom's performance deteriorated, the country had few alternatives.

That is why we are focused on modernising and transforming our energy system to ensure energy security, provide cheap, clean power for all South Africans and reduce the high cost of living.

The enormous cost overruns associated with projects such as the Medupi and Kusile power stations also contributed to Eskom's financial difficulties and ultimately to higher costs for consumers and taxpayers. We have learned from this experience.

Today, thanks to the hard work of Eskom's management and workers, its performance has turned around. Eskom's latest results show important signs of stabilisation and improvement.

But we cannot become complacent. Now is the time to complete the reform process that we began in response to load shedding to ensure that we never experience the same crisis again.

We need an electricity system in which Eskom is strong, but in which it does not have to carry the entire burden of investing in and supplying the country's electricity while it continues to carry a huge debt.

That is why we are fundamentally transforming the structure of our electricity sector.

Over the past few weeks, we have made important progress.

A new Electricity Pricing Policy has been published to ensure transparent electricity tariffs, prevent inefficiencies from being passed on to consumers, expand access to electricity for the poor, and enable competition in electricity generation.

The energy regulator, NERSA, is finalising a range of new regulations that will form the architec-

ture for a competitive wholesale electricity market. This will enable multiple generators – both public and private – to compete to supply electricity.

This competition can drive greater efficiency, encourage investment and put downward pressure on the cost of electricity.

It will also enable South Africa to take advantage of some of our greatest natural resources. We have some of the best solar and wind resources in the world. With the right infrastructure, regulation and investment, we have the potential to become one of the world's most competitive producers of clean electricity.

Over time, cheaper, greener and more reliable electricity will lift our economy's competitiveness and help industries to grow and create jobs.

Cheap and abundant electricity could become a source of competitive advantage for South Africa. It could support the expansion of industry, enable new industries such as green hydrogen and electric vehicle production, support small businesses and create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

But for competition to work, every electricity producer must be able to access the national grid on fair and equal terms. That is why one of the most important parts of our electricity reform is the establishment of an independent, state-owned Transmission System Operator.

The Transmission System Operator (TSO) will manage the

national electricity grid and electricity market independently and impartially. The TSO will ensure that Eskom and other electricity producers compete on a level playing field. It will act as a referee amongst all producers. It will also help mobilise the enormous investment required to expand our transmission network so that new generation projects can be connected to the grid.

We have seen how the restructuring of the electricity architecture in other countries has ensured energy security and has in some countries brought prices down.

The Eskom Restructuring Task Team that I appointed at the beginning of the year is focused on implementing this important reform. The task team includes the Presidency, National Treasury, Department of Electricity and Energy, Eskom and the National Transmission Company South Africa.

There are several principles that will guide this process.

First, Eskom will remain state-owned and must get into the renewable energy market to compete effectively with new power generators.

Second, the Transmission System Operator will be state-owned. The national transmission grid is a strategic national asset and will continue to be held in the public interest.

Third, the Transmission System Operator must be genuinely independent. It must be able to operate the grid and electricity



market impartially, without favouring one electricity producer over another.

Fourth, the reform must strengthen rather than weaken Eskom. The transfer of transmission assets will therefore be undertaken in a way that protects Eskom's financial position, ensures the financial sustainability of the new operator and respects the legitimate interests of Eskom's lenders.

Fifth, workers will not carry the cost of reform. Government is committed to ensuring that no jobs are lost as a direct result of establishing the Transmission System Operator and that organised labour is properly consulted throughout the process.

This is why I have recently engaged both the Chairperson of the Eskom Board and the National Office Bearers of the National Union of Mineworkers, one of the unions that represents

workers at Eskom.

In my engagement with the Chairperson representing the Eskom Board, I reaffirmed government's commitment to the electricity reform programme and emphasised that it will be implemented carefully and responsibly. The Eskom Board confirmed its support for the policy direction determined by government and its commitment to working with the shareholder to implement these reforms.

In my discussions with the National Union of Mineworkers, I emphasised that Eskom and the Transmission System Operator will remain state-owned and that the interests of workers will be protected throughout the restructuring process.

These engagements are important because a transformation of this scale can only succeed if it is undertaken transparently and in consultation with those who

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will be affected by it. Government will hold engagements with key stakeholders who are part of the Eskom ecosystem.

We have seen before in South Africa how opening a sector to competition and investment can transform an entire industry and make a significant contribution to the development and growth of the economy.

There was a time when telecommunications in South Africa was dominated by a single fixed-line operator. A telephone connection was expensive, access was limited and millions of South Africans, particularly in poorer and rural communities, were effectively excluded.

The opening of the telecommunications sector to new operators fundamentally changed this picture. Competition brought massive new investment. New technologies were introduced. Mobile networks expanded across the country. The cost of communicating fell dramatically and services that were once available only to a relatively small number of people became accessible to millions.

Today, South Africans can choose between different networks and service providers. These companies compete on price, coverage, technology and quality of service. At the same time, government continues to regulate the sector and the infrastructure on which our communications depend remains subject to strong public oversight.

There is an important lesson in this experience for the trans-

formation of our electricity sector. Electricity is not the same as telecommunications. It is an essential public service with its own particular requirements, and the national electricity grid is a strategic national asset that must remain firmly under public control.

But the principle is similar.

We do not need to choose between a strong Eskom and other competitors. We can have both. We can have a strong, state-owned Eskom producing elec-

tricity alongside independent producers. We intend to have a state-owned transmission system that provides fair access to the grid, while different generators compete to supply electricity at the lowest possible cost.

Just as the transformation of telecommunications unleashed investment and expanded access to services, reform of the electricity sector can unlock billions of rands of investment in new generation and transmission infrastructure. The transformation in the telecommunications



Eskom remaining 100% state-owned and returning to a R30.3 billion profit proves that public entities can be both commercially viable and serve the developmental state.

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sector gave ordinary consumers choice. They continue to choose the operator who offers the best service at the lowest price. And quite often a number of people use more than one operator.

The purpose of the electricity reform is therefore not to privatise Eskom. It is to build a better electricity system. It is to move from a system in which one company has to carry almost the entire responsibility for generating electricity to one in which many producers can invest, innovate and compete – while the state continues to safeguard the public interest through regulation and full ownership of transmission.

The ultimate beneficiary must be the South African consumer. A household should benefit from more affordable electricity. A small business should be able to operate without the burden of excessive energy costs. A factory should be able to expand production knowing that it has access to reliable and competitively priced power.

That is the transformation we are seeking.

There will inevitably be different views about how our electricity system should be structured. But there should be no disagreement about what South Africans need.

They need electricity when they switch on the lights. They need electricity they can afford. Businesses need electricity that enables them to invest, expand and employ more people. And our country needs an electric-



Over 460 Days of Uninterrupted Power:

The end of load shedding is a tangible victory for every South African household and business, demonstrating that the ANC keeps its promises to secure energy reliability.

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ity system capable of powering economic growth for generations to come.

We have already shown what determined reform can achieve.

A few years ago, many believed that load shedding would be with us indefinitely. Through decisive action, investment and the hard work of thousands of people across the electricity sector, we have changed that trajectory.

We must now complete the work we started.

The next phase of our energy transformation must ensure that South Africa never again faces an electricity crisis of the scale

we experienced, while progressively reducing the cost of power and ensuring that every household has access to electricity.

Our objective is straightforward. We want an electricity system that provides abundant, affordable and reliable power to every South African. We want an electricity system that supports industrialisation, attracts investment and creates jobs. And we want an electricity system that uses the abundant sun and wind with which our country is blessed to build a cleaner and more prosperous economy.

That is the energy future we are building. And we will not slow down until it is achieved.

ANC CONFIRMS ITS CANDIDATES AND ITS READINESS FOR THE 2026 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL FIKILE MBALULA**

THE African National Congress is contesting the 2026 Local Government Elections across the length and breadth of our country. Our candidates were nominated by our branches and communities, vetted, and lodged with the Independent Electoral Commission, and we intend to be on the ballot in every ward and every municipality. The movement did not miss the Commission's deadline.

All nine provinces completed the work allocated to them. Every Provincial Secretary, working with the provincial list committees and under the direction of the ANC Electoral Committee, uploaded the candidates nominated by our branches and regions onto the Commission's Online Candidate Nomination System. That upload was one hundred per cent complete before 17h00 on 28 August. This was a collective undertaking of the whole movement, from the branch to the National Executive Committee, and it was carried out.

What did not close was the system's final electronic confirmation step, on a portion of those lists. The difficulty emerged in the closing hours of the window and was reported to the Commission as it arose. The records of the affected candidates were already captured and held on the OCNS before 17h00. We are address-



ing these system failures with the Commission through the proper channels.

This was not confined to one party or one municipality. The Commission has itself reported that 2 274 candidates, across forty-five political parties, were captured on its system but not recorded as finally submitted. That is the measure of the matter.

The ANC is not asking the Commission to condone a late nomination. We seek to add no name that was not on the OCNS by 17h00, and no amendment or re-ordering of any list. We ask only that the Commission recognise and process what its own system received and stored before the deadline, rather than treat it as never having been submitted because of technical failures that

prevented the final confirmation.

The Chairperson of the ANC Electoral Committee, Comrade Kgalema Motlanthe, has declared the candidate nomination and submission process a resounding success, and has expressed his confidence that a solution will be found – one that expands, and does not constrain, the participation of our people in this democracy.

To our members, our supporters and to the voters of South Africa: be assured. The ANC is ready and our candidates are ready.

We retain our confidence in the Electoral Commission and in its constitutional duty to deliver free, fair and credible elections, and we shall keep our people informed as this engagement proceeds.

The Names Are In

Now We Must Earn the People's Trust

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THE ANC has lodged its candidates. The national manifesto has been launched. Regional manifestos are taking its commitments into communities.

Now the movement must move and gather momentum.

For weeks, attention has been fixed on names. Who was nominated? Who survived the interviews? Who made the list? Who was left out? Disappointment, relief and lobbying follow.

Outside our meetings, South Africans are asking harder questions.

Why should I vote for the ANC? Why should I give it another chance? Is its history enough? With so many choices, why should I return? Is the ANC still a home for people like me? Do I see my community and hopes reflected in it? Are these promises real? Can I trust those on the ballot?

We must answer honestly. With humility, courage, urgency and visible action.

A place on the list is not a prize. It is a promise to serve. It does not make anyone the hero of a municipality. Local government is collective government. Councils decide together. Administrations implement. Workers maintain



systems. Communities participate. Businesses invest. Civic and faith organisations hold society together. A candidate's first duty is therefore not to build a personality. It is to build collective capacity in the place they serve.

This is where the campaign must change.

Provincial and regional manifesto launches cannot become stages for personalities, repeated speeches and photographs. They must be gatherings of truth and local purpose.

Each launch must name the municipality's condition. What works? What has failed? Why did it fail? What will be corrected? What comes first? Who must help?

It must also be an invitation. The

ANC does not possess all wisdom or ability. We must call on residents, professionals, workers, young people, businesses, community organisations and people who are not ANC members but share the vision of a capable, caring municipality. Let them shape, monitor and strengthen the programme.

The ANC must speak about its record with confidence. Democratic government brought water, electricity, sanitation, housing, education, healthcare and social protection to millions deliberately excluded by apartheid. We opened institutions, expanded rights and made citizenship real for the majority.

We must also say clearly that more remains to be done. Services are unreliable in communities. Infrastructure is failing.



Unemployment is stealing hope. Corruption has stolen development money. Arrogance has pushed people away. Factionalism has consumed energy that belonged to the people. Some representatives remembered who deployed them but forgot whom they were deployed to serve.

We cannot ask people to deny what they experience. We must change it.

Our history is not enough. It is a responsibility handed to us by generations who sacrificed so that South Africans could live with freedom and dignity. We honour them by protecting those gains, correcting our failures and carrying transformation forward.

This week, every ANC candidate should receive seven marching orders.

First, end the internal contest. Reach out to those who were not selected. No victory laps. No revenge. No camps. Bring their skills, networks and experience into one municipal mission. Nobody who can serve should be wasted.

Second, return to the ward and listen without defending. Sit in homes. Walk the streets. Visit taxi ranks, clinics, schools, farms, informal settlements and trading areas. Ask people what keeps them awake, what they no longer believe and what could restore hope.

Third, build a ward book of truth. Record broken services, stalled projects, vulnerable households, unsafe spaces, local enterprises, organisations and young people seeking opportunity. Know the ward's pain, assets and possibilities.

Fourth, choose three commitments for the next thirty days. Unblock one service problem. Build one community partnership. Open one opportunity for young people or local enterprise. Give every task an owner and reporting date. Begin before asking for the vote.

Fifth, prepare a thirty-second message. Every candidate must explain who they are, what their ward needs, what they will do first and why residents can hold them accountable. No inflated biographies. No slogans without

substance. Speak simply. Speak honestly. Speak to the lives people are living.

Sixth, organise capability. Bring engineers, teachers, nurses, artisans, entrepreneurs, officials, workers, students, elders and activists into the campaign. The ANC must become a conductor of society's ability, not a gatekeeper deciding who may contribute.

Seventh, return and report. Tell people what was resolved, what remains blocked, who is responsible and what happens next. Trust grows when people see that their voices entered the system and produced action.

The President is our principal campaigner and carries the national vision. Around that voice must rise thousands of credible local voices, speaking isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, Setswana, Afrikaans, English and the languages of our people.

Many voices. One clear message. A better life built together

Online communication must

support real organisation. A thirty-second video beside a broken pump can explain the problem, the action and the deadline. WhatsApp groups must recruit volunteers, collect knowledge and report progress. Candidates should show work, not manufacture importance through endless photographs of themselves.

South Africa is crowded with noise, anger and division. The ANC must not compete to shout the loudest. We must become the clearest voice: courageous without cruelty, confident without arrogance, honest about failure and hopeful about what people can build together.

We must again become a political home where every race, language, faith and generation can belong. A movement that sees people, listens deeply, welcomes contribution and turns care into organised action.

The names are in. Now let the people in

Masibambisane. Ha re aheng mmoho. Kom ons bou saam.

Let every manifesto carry a local mission. Let every candidate become an organiser. Let every deployee bring skill, resources and urgency.

Let every branch become useful. Let every citizen who shares our hopes find an open door.

The ANC must now earn trust, one conversation, one action and one community at a time.

That is how we honour our history. That is how we renew our movement. That is how we earn the vote. Together.



From Research to Action: Lessons from my Doctoral Study for Stronger Local Government

■ By **DR ANDISWA MOSAI**

The African National Congress (ANC) has consistently affirmed that capable, ethical and accountable local government is fundamental to building a developmental state and improving the lives of communities. It is therefore important that research identifying the structural challenges confronting municipalities is translated into practical interventions that strengthen governance, accountability and service delivery.

It is against this backdrop that the Doctoral Research of Dr Andiswa Mosai offers valuable lessons for municipalities, councillors, public representatives, administrators and communities.

What Municipalities Can Learn

One of the central findings of the research is the persistent gap between governance policies and their implementation. Municipalities may have policies, structures and legislative frameworks in place, but these instruments are of limited value if they are not consistently implemented, monitored and enforced.

The research identifies several factors contributing to weak municipal performance, including political administrative interference, ineffective performance management systems, inadequate institutional capacity, poor planning, financial irregularities, weakened oversight structures and weaknesses in ethical leadership.

These findings are particularly important because municipal failures rarely arise from a single problem. They are often the result of interconnected institutional weaknesses.

Poor planning can contribute to ineffective budgeting, inadequate capacity can undermine implementation, weak oversight can allow problems to persist, and poor accountability can ultimately translate into stalled infrastructure projects, financial irregularities and public dissatisfaction.

The lesson for municipalities is therefore clear: **Governance must move beyond compliance on paper towards effective implementation, accountability and measurable results.**

Strengthening Oversight Structures

Dr Mosai's research highlights the importance of strengthening municipal oversight institutions, including audit committees and Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPACs).

These structures must have the authority, independence and institutional support necessary to perform their oversight responsibilities effectively. More importantly, their recommendations should not simply be noted and filed away. They must result in corrective action, with clear responsibilities, timeframes and mechanisms for monitoring implementation.

For municipalities, this means strengthening the relationship between oversight findings and consequence management. Repeated findings should trigger decisive interventions rather than becoming recurring features of



audit reports.

Effective oversight is not about creating additional bureaucracy. It is about ensuring that governance structures should identify weaknesses, demand corrective action and monitor whether improvements are taking place.

Investing in Skills and Institutional Capacity

Another important lesson is the need for sustained investment in municipal human and institutional capacity.

Municipalities require appropriately skilled officials who can manage increasingly complex responsibilities relating to financial management, infrastructure planning, procurement, performance management and service delivery.

Capacity building should therefore not be treated as an occasional training exercise. It must form part of a long term institutional development strategy that identifies skills gaps, develops personnel and ensures that mu-

nicipalities retain critical technical expertise.

Strong institutions are built through capable people, effective systems and consistent leadership.

Clarifying the Role of District and Local Municipalities

The research also points to the need for greater clarity and co-ordination between district and local municipalities.

Where responsibilities overlap or coordination is weak, resources can be duplicated, interventions can become fragmented and communities can struggle to determine which sphere of government is responsible for addressing their needs.

This is particularly relevant to the objectives of the District Development Model (DDM), which seeks to promote integrated planning, coordination and implementation across government.

Municipalities should therefore use the DDM as an opportunity to strengthen cooperation, eliminate duplication and ensure that

planning is centred on the actual needs of communities.

Putting Communities at the Centre

Perhaps one of the most important lessons from the research is the need to deepen citizen participation.

Public participation should not be reduced to compliance with a statutory requirement. Communities must have meaningful opportunities to influence municipal priorities, planning, budgeting and service delivery decisions.

The published research specifically found that superficial community participation can weaken the application of corporate governance principles.

Meaningful participation, by contrast, can strengthen accountability and help municipalities understand the lived realities of the communities they serve.

A municipality that listens to its communities is better positioned to identify problems early, build public trust and ensure that lim-

ited resources are directed towards genuine priorities.

For the ANC, this speaks directly to the principle that government must be people centred, participatory and accountable.

Ethical Leadership Matters

Cde Mosai's research places ethical leadership at the centre of effective corporate governance.

Strong governance cannot be sustained through legislation and policies alone. It requires leaders who understand that public office is a responsibility entrusted to them by the people.

Ethical leadership must therefore be reflected in decision making, financial management, procurement, appointments, performance management and the manner in which public resources are utilised.

The challenge is not simply to prevent wrongdoing, but to build a culture in which integrity, accountability and service to communities become the defining features of municipal leadership.

The Published Research: From the Thesis to the Public Debate

An important contribution arising from Cde Dr Mosai's doctoral work is the publication of the research article: *"The Nexus Between Corporate Governance and Service Delivery in South African Local Municipalities: The Case of Sedibeng District Municipality."*

The article was authored by Dr Andiswa Mosai, Professor Purshottama Sivanarain Reddy and Professor Emmanuel Mutambara and published in the International Journal of Applied Research in Business and Management, Volume 7, Issue 2 (2026). It was published on 01 February 2026 as an Original Research Paper.

The article examines how corporate governance practices influence service delivery outcomes in South African local government, with Sedibeng District Municipality as the case study. It uses a qualitative, interpretivist approach and draws on the lived experiences of municipal officials, supported by documentary analysis.





Its findings reinforce the central message of the doctoral thesis: corporate governance is not merely a compliance exercise; it is a critical determinant of municipal performance and service delivery.

The research identifies political administrative interference, institutional capacity challenges, weakened oversight and superficial community participation as factors that can undermine governance and contribute to stalled projects, financial irregularities and public dissatisfaction.

This makes the article particularly relevant to municipalities seeking to reflect on their own governance arrangements and identify practical areas for improvement.

A Call to Municipalities

The findings of Cde Dr Mosai's Doctoral study and Published Research should be viewed as an opportunity for municipalities to reflect honestly on their own governance systems.

Municipalities can ask themselves:

- Are our governance policies being implemented effectively?
- Are oversight recommenda-

tions resulting in corrective action?

- Do we have the technical and administrative skills required to deliver our mandate?
- Are political and administrative roles clearly separated?
- Are our planning and budgeting processes aligned with community priorities?
- Are performance management systems producing accountability and improved outcomes?
- Are citizens genuinely participating in municipal decision making?
- Are our leaders consistently demonstrating ethical and accountable leadership?

These questions can assist municipalities to move beyond identifying problems towards addressing their root causes.

Knowledge Must Serve the People

Cde Mosai's academic journey demonstrates the value of bringing research, public administration and political oversight into conversation with one another.

Having previously served in local government, including as a proportional representation council-

lor and Speaker of the Sedibeng District Municipality, and having held various governance and public sector responsibilities, her research is informed by both academic inquiry and practical experience.

Reflecting on the value of post-graduate studies, she emphasises that advanced academic work enables public servants and leaders to look beyond immediate operational challenges and interrogate the underlying causes of governance failures, institutional weaknesses and policy implementation gaps.

Her doctoral achievement should therefore not be viewed merely as a personal academic milestone. It represents an opportunity to apply knowledge in the service of better institutions and better communities.

As municipalities across South Africa continue to confront challenges relating to governance, financial sustainability, infrastructure and service delivery, the lessons from this research are particularly timely.

The central message is simple: Strong municipalities require strong governance, ethical leadership, capable institutions, ef-

fective oversight and meaningful community participation.

For the ANC, strengthening local government must remain a critical part of building a capable developmental state. Research such as Cde Mosai's provides evidence that can help municipalities interrogate their weaknesses, strengthen their systems and, ultimately, deliver better services to the people.

Continuing the Journey of Public Leadership

Cde Mosai has also continued to expand her academic grounding in public law. Having completed modules in Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, Multilevel Government and Local Government, she is due to be conferred with a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Law by the University of the Western Cape (UWC) on 09 October 2026.

This continued commitment to

learning reinforces an important principle for public representatives and public servants alike: leadership must be accompanied by continuous learning, reflection and a willingness to improve the institutions entrusted with serving society.

The real measure of Cde Mosai's academic achievement will ultimately be the extent to which this knowledge contributes to stronger governance, more accountable institutions and improved service delivery.

Knowledge must move from the thesis to the institution, from the institution to improved governance, and from improved governance to a better life for communities.

Let us continue building better communities together.

Dr Andiswa Mosai is a Member of the Gauteng PPT, and a member of the Gauteng Provincial

Legislature and subsequently appointed as the Chairperson of the Finance Portfolio Committee. She also serves in the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) and Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA). She was conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy in Management by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Her doctoral thesis, titled "Enhancing Effective Corporate Governance in Local Government: A Case of Sedibeng District, Gauteng Province, South Africa," examined the factors affecting effective corporate governance and service delivery within the local government sphere.

The study, supervised by Public Governance expert Professor Purshottama Reddy and Management specialist Professor Emmanuel Mutambara, provides important insights into why governance frameworks do not always translate into improved municipal performance.



PART 1



Reconfiguration of the Alliance:

Narrow shortsightedness or Long-term Defence of the National Democratic Revolution?

■ By **LESEGO MASISI**

THIS is the first part of a 4-part series of articles that would form a comprehensive discussion document, leading to the 2027 ANC and SACP National Congresses, that is premised on the historical development of the liberation struggle, shortly before the dawn of democracy in 1994, then juxtaposes the conceptualization of the NDR with the progression of ANC rule, up to today. It is with intention that I do not refer to ANC rule, as Alliance rule, due to the persistent relations of power within the Alliance from the end of the 21st century, which evidently have not resulted in the deepening and comprehensive advance-

ment of the NDR, bringing us to this present stage of confusion, impatience, and grave setback to this project of revolution amongst all Alliance partners. The last article will include comprehensive recommendations, coupled with evidence-based forecasted scenarios of political developments, in relation to satisfactorily chartering a path of least counterrevolutionary resistance for advancing and defending the NDR, as close as possible, to the point of finality.

Firstly, I would like to explain in great and simple detail as to where we left off in the ideological development of the revolu-

tionary alliance, as well as the state of the development of new ideas. Currently, as of 2026, South Africa has been existing in a more comprehensive democracy for the past 32 years. In these 32 years, there has been a number of internal victories, as well as a number of strategic failures, that have been both as a result of an overreliance on subjective decision-making, both organisationally across the Alliance structures, namely, the ANC, SACP, COSATU, and SANCO. The basis for this subjective decision-making has to be critiqued, not just criticized. I am going to restrict this basis I'm referring to only for organisational process-

es within the ANC and SACP, in light of recent developments that followed from the SACP's 5th Special National Congress. For the sake of not conflating the ultimate point that this short paper must get through. This series is not meant to be deeply rooted in academic structure and content, but to provide a valid and basis for the recommendation it presents – not just for the audience of members and leaders of these organisations, but for also the genuinely concerned masses of South Africa in the state of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) and the organisations that have been mandated to carry out this task to completion from as early as 1969. Lastly, this series is not going to regurgitate existing ideas and critiques, which will be a futile exercise.

Reverting to the strategic failures I mentioned earlier, these also manifested themselves in the administration of our Government, across all levels and all spheres. The issue is persisting today, without any comprehensive honest admissions by those who actively participated in the breakthrough of 1994 should not have been the endpoint of the liberation struggle, now that the Alliance, represented by the ANC, would've been able to substantively transform society, apart from making basic human rights accessible as much as possible, through all the national government policies that have been adopted and implemented, to date.

This has obviously resulted in the confusions of what and the social relations of power, under a neo-liberal democratic state framework. However, it would've still been possible to conceal these strategic failures to the masses, while simultaneously conducting



damage control to reduce the risks these strategic failures may pose in the foreseeable future. Foreseeability might have been present in the early days of our democracy, however, this has since eroded.

A practical example of how those strategic failures started to become avoidantly clear to our masses, is the reduction of many leaders within the executive branches of government to develop new ideas based on existing ideological foundations. As much as some degree of blame should be placed on them individually, this was a strategic failure by the leaders who were tasked with selecting these comrades from the legislative bodies. In the earlier years of our democracy, many of these affected leaders did not fully reveal how difficult – if not entirely impossible, it is to really read and develop concrete ideas out of some of these ideological texts, while having to critically read documents relating to the assigned executive position, and attend tons of meetings and conferences, on top of persistent decision-making. Maybe it is because many of those earlier leaders were involved in the liberation struggle for decades, that the content of these texts had ba-

sically crystallized in their heads and had become second nature.

For millions of South Africans, as well as many of their leaders who do not have the privilege of having participated or led in the liberation struggle before the current constitutional order, due to having not existed yet, or having been burdened by youthfulness to fully appreciate the complexity of revolution, in totality.

This state of affairs manifested itself through successive National Leadership cycles of both the ANC and SACP, which has resulted in a massive decline of ideological and political clarity, not in relation to where we come from, but in relation to where we are, and where we should be going, and how we should be travelling to that destination. This is now the crux of this series. If you have still been reading along, you should find this part rather refreshing, particularly in relation to this (new) idea of reconfiguration. To make a more grounded explanation, let's borrow some words from Che Guevara:

"When it became clear that a new social class had definitely taken power in Cuba, the great limitations which the exercise of state

Che Guevara



power would encounter because of the existing conditions in the state became evident: the lack of cadres to cope with the enormous tasks which had to be carried out in the state apparatus, in political organisation, and on the entire economic front.

Immediately after the taking of power, administrative assignments were made "by rule of thumb"; there were no major problems – there were none because as yet the old structure had not been shattered. The apparatus functioned in its old, slow, lifeless, broken-down way, but it had an organisation and with it sufficient co-ordination to maintain itself through inertia, disdaining the political changes which came about as a prelude to the change in the economic structure."

Excerpt taken from Che Guevara's *The Cadres: Backbone of the Revolution* speech (1962)

2027 ANC & SACP National Electoral Cycles

The purpose to reconfigure the Alliance should be projected to the masses of the land in such a way so as to accept the incompleteness of the NDR, which has been described as the present stage of liberation struggle, particularly in the context of evaluating the state of resolution of the 4 fundamental contradictions present in South Africa – namely;

class domination, poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

Strategic failures happened when the Alliance, represented by the ANC in government, when the ANC, as an organisation, started to lose electoral support, from as early as 2009, suggesting that it couldn't maintain itself through inertia. Some of the universal metrics used to measure the levels of these contradictions, such as the Gini Coefficient, factually reveal that in December 1993, it sat at 63%, and dropped to its record low of 57.8% in 2000. As of 2026, South Africa's inequality is estimated to be at 63%, exactly matching level of inequality just at the dawn of our democracy. It is already common cause that unemployment is very high, so I'm going to save that statistical analysis. With regards to measuring poverty, current tools were only developed and applied from 2006. Nonetheless, inflation-adjusted averages/midpoints between upper-bound and lower-bound poverty lines have increased from R757.50 to R2130.50, signaling another strategic failure of the Alliance.

Unfortunately, class domination cannot be quantifiably measured directly in isolation, and requires an outright qualitative evaluation of the social relations of power, across various strata of both

the bourgeoisie and the working classes, across all existing sectors in our society. Another more robust evaluation that would serve a great degree of relevance to the discussions and debates concerning reconfiguration is the social relations of power between the ANC and the SACP from pre-1994, to date.

The State of the National Democratic Revolution

The National Democratic objectives of the current stage of struggle do not necessarily have to be confined to national geographic borders, which are, ultimately a stage of development that has taken both shape and form, since the ratification of the treaty of Westphalia in 1648, and its reactionary and colonial entrenchment following the outcomes of the Berlin Conference of 1886.

It is also common cause that the relationship between the ANC and SACP has been strained in recent years, due to the Party's decision to contest local government elections, with a number of personalities who carry a great deal of influence within both organisations pulling the tug on from both ends. I'm not going to dwell on the reasons by these personalities, who have communicated these reasons through their respective organisations, as if it is an equally shared view and a comprehensively collective view by both the memberships and leaderships of these organisations. This is not entirely the case. Both these set of reasons by both organisations are reasonably valid, considering the previous statistical findings above on the progress in addressing and managing the fundamental contradictions within South Africa, with the ultimate objective by

both organisations, being their extensive reduction through the mechanisms of this existing constitutional state framework. The SACP's ultimate and separate objective of achieving a socialist state order cannot be pursued in the foreseeable future if the ANC, with the mass-based character in the Alliance, does not fulfil its core objectives, both organisationally, as well as in government. Unfortunately, this can no longer be achieved by the ANC, under the existing relations of power within the Alliance.

During the pre-1994 liberation struggle, the relations of power between the ANC and SACP were adequately balanced, not in the current tokenist sense of balance, as it is presently manifested in deployments to, and representation in government. This was primarily succeeding a period of collective mass mobilization in the 1940's and 1950's, through campaigns focused on aggressively undermining the prevailing relations of power that were set and sustained through the Apartheid state framework's legislative and policy development, with the ultimate objective of eliminating those relations of power and creating new social relations of power under a new state framework.

The successes of these campaigns crystallized the relationship between the SACP and ANC, even when the SACP was banned a decade before the ANC, with a period of 3 years of complete dissolution between 1950 and 1953. Fast forward to the 1960s and the introduction of armed struggle and comprehensive international solidarity, this relationship between the SACP and ANC never became asymmetric, as both the leaderships of



these organisations understood the differing, yet similar roles they had to play. A crucial aspect of this relationship was kept regulated was how Moses

Kotane, who remains to date as the longest-serving General Secretary of the CPSA/SACP of all time, spanning a period of 39 years, from 1939 to 1978, having concurrently been the Treasurer-General of the ANC, from 1963 to 1969. Secondly, another senior leader of the SACP, John Beaver Marks, while serving as the Chairperson of the SACP, was elected as the Treasurer-General of the ANC in 1969, responsible for organizing financial support for the External Mission of the ANC, while ensuring that the SACP continues to provide support and strategic ideological direction to the ANC, simultaneously advancing the separate ultimate objective of the SACP, in relation to the liberation and socialist struggles.

Revelations of this nature are often treated with disdain by non-communist ANC members, due to the intensity of their truth being polarizing for some of the

quarters in our broad-church movement, especially from the perspectives that support the current modelling of a constitutional supremacist regime. This truth may undermine the some of the transformative efforts that have since taken place under the legislative supervision of the Constitution, especially in reducing the intensity of the fundamental contradictions, as mentioned above. I have to intimate that the purposes of these critiques are not absolutist in approach but do take into honest consideration the persistent class contradictions under a constitutional era that was intended [on paper] to resolve them, which may reveal the hidden structures of power and how they have been giving effect to the systems of power, and possibly making them resilient to overt political and governmental transformation.

Lesego Masisi is a co-founder and a former NEC member of the Anti Apartheid Movement for Palestine (SA Chapter) and ANCYL Greater Tshwane Region Inner City East ZTT member. He writes in his personal capacity.

Love and Revolution: Remembering Geneva Morake

■ By **NOEL SOLANI**

 On Tuesday the 25 August 2026 we were awoken to the news that Comrade “Geneva Ntlangano” Philemon Modisagarekwe Morake ceased to breathe. The memories of liberation and the experiences of his generation died with him. Such memories can never be retrieved again. We only hope that his memory is preserved somewhere within our institutions as we seek to document the history of the liberation struggle, so that it is told from the perspective of those who lived and experienced it; rather than those that seek to criminalise the gains of liberation.

It was Ernesto “Che” Guevara, a central figure in the Cuban Revolution, who reminded us that a *“the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality”*. Geneva loved life, he loved his family, cherished his people, and was prepared to sacrifice life and limb for them, driven by an unwavering devotion to their well-being. It is important to also identify the defining characteristics of a true revolutionary. The title “revolutionary” should not be assigned lightly, for many have claimed it without embodying its true essence.

A revolutionary dedicates life to the cause of improving the human condition by seeking to dismantle all forms of oppression. For their

commitment to these ideals, they are prepared to make the highest human sacrifice, which is life itself. Revolutionaries dedicate their time and energy to understanding ways and means of transforming a society to a state that is equal and peaceful.

Comrade Geneva was a dedicated artist, a painter and playwright who used the arts as a terrain of mobilising the masses against oppression and instil a desire to organise and resist the system of white supremacy. This was to bring about a non-racial, non-sexist democratic society

guided by the Freedom Charter. In its 55th National Conference held at Nasrec, the African National Congress (ANC) re-instituted a Commission on the Arts, Culture and Heritage since the unbanning of the liberation movements. This did not only restore the significance of the arts, culture and heritage in the life of the ordinary masses, it re-recognised that there could be no successful revolution without the arts, since the arts speak to the soul of the nation. This signified to Comrades like Geneva that the movement was now serious about rejuvenation and renewal.



For the arts are integral to any renewal. Hence the Freedom Charter had to declare that the *“doors of learning and Culture Shall Be Opened where the government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life”*. The “Ready to Govern” document envisaged a *“flourishing cultural life that is vital to the well-being of South Africa”*. The movement recognised that, arts, culture and heritage were critical instruments for social cohesion, nation building, patriotism and moral regeneration to flourish. It is the same space that comrades like Geneva excelled in their youth and throughout life.

Born on the 7 November 1955 in Bloemfontein to a family of 6 children with 3 girls and 3 boys (Thabo, Morali, Mongi and Ithukele), Comrade Geneva was the second born within the family. His father Mothusi Johan Morake married a MoSotho woman from Mafeteng in the Kingdom of Lesotho. His mother Mmamotse, a Mofokeng, was dedicated to her family. The birthplace of his mother is important in highlighting our connectedness within the region and continent considering the new reactionary tendencies in our country, of serious attempts to divide us and undermine the project of the African Renaissance and Unity of Our People. His father a Mokubung, was born in the Bantu Location, one of the oldest African Locations in Bloemfontein, the birthplace of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) established in 1912 and later renamed the African National Congress (ANC).

Early in his life, Comrade Geneva demonstrated organising abilities which would be utilised later in life by the ANC. Commenting about

the state of the ANC in his letter to the 44th National Conference, Dr A B Xuma, President-General (1940-1949) crying and calling for unity within the organisation had this to say, *“when I took over leadership of the Congress in 1940, the Transvaal was divided into seven sections, Natal into two and the Cape Province into two and the Orange Free State could only claim Bloemfontein for the Congress”*. This indicates that Geneva and his generation did not only end up within the ranks of the ANC by mistake when they joined the movement in the 1970s after a period of what some social commentators and historians had called a period of lull. The region never stopped to mobilise and organise, and Bloemfontein was the nerve centre of constant mobilisation and struggles in the Free State.

This mobilisation took many forms and was inspired by various methods of struggle. When he was in secondary school, inspired by Gibson Kente’s play, “How Long”, which Comrade Geneva viewed twice, he found the motivation to write and stage his own production. While at Leroko Senior Secondary School, he wrote two plays, the first was “Nkululeko”, which was showed twice on stage in Bloemfontein before the authorities pulled the plug on it. The second was themed ‘Suffering’. This play was never performed on stage. The objective of the play was to demonstrate the suffering experienced by the oppressed groups. Taking into account the repression that took place shortly after the killing of Stephen Bantubonke Biko in 1977, the play could not be staged. These two plays led to his detention as the police got to learn that he was collaborating with one of the progressive

journalists in Bloemfontein, Mr Isaac to mobilise students and the community for resistance. The Special Branch also detained the students because they wanted them to testify against Isaac, but their dedication and commitment to the struggles of the oppressed did not allow them to turn against him though seriously tortured.

It was after this incident in early 1978 that Comrade Geneva together with Comrades Pinki, Biza and the only female among them, Comrade Manana decided to leave the country. When they left, they were helped by comrades in the internal underground machinery of the ANC, and particularly Comrade Caleb Motshabi, who had served 10 years at the infamous prison off the coast of Cape Town, Robben Island Prison having been sentenced in the 1960s.

To talk about Comrade Geneva only as an artist would be missing the point. True art is influenced by the material conditions experienced by the masses. Without these experiences, there is no art to express. For Comrade Geneva, what influenced his artistic expressions, both in theatre and his paintings (an issue we will return to later) was his experiences as a worker. For various reasons, when he could not continue with his schooling, he found work at Pelonomi Hospital as a porter where he experienced the exploitation of the black working class first hand. This happened when he took a break from school in Form 1 at Leroko Secondary School. He was expelled from Pelonomi Hospital for challenging the authorities, so he found work at a newly established Hypermarket in the City. Soon, he was part of a group of 40 who protested low wages and because they were

not unionised, and the labour laws of the apartheid state were anti working-class struggles, they were all fired from their jobs.

These experiences informed his decision to leave the country while he was in Form 4 in 1978 to join the ANC in exile. In 1979 he registered at Kana High School in Teyateyaneng, Berea District, North of Maseru for Form 5. It was in this school where he met a woman, Evelyn who would become his wife before the movement sent him for Military Training in Angola. It is important to note that at this time, living in Lesotho, members of the liberation movement faced abductions and murder by the apartheid state machinery which operated in the frontline states without any regard for sovereignty of these states. P W Botha's total strategy was in full force with many massacres taking place in the frontline states including the mass killing of ANC cadres with some Basotho by the South African Defence Force. The Lesotho massacre of 1982 proved the correctness of the ANC intelligence gathering that the country they called the "Island" was no longer safe for operation. In his address on 5 December 1982, Oliver Tambo illustrating the P W Botha's Total Strategy and killing machines, stated that, *"the problem of revolting people, a people that has decided to overthrow that regime, will not be solved in Maseru. It will be resolved in South Africa. Pretoria murder squads have been deployed far around South Africa, to every conceivable country of laceration. They massacred in Kasinga, they butchered in Chimoio. They destroyed in Matola. They have destroyed within South Africa in Soweto. They are killing every-day: the assassination of men*



and women, their massacres and murders by this regime".

Cadres of the movement were trained to defend the people against this onslaught. When comrades Geneva completed his military training in Angola and was sent to the front and inside the country, he was fully prepared to defend the people. They entered the country via Northern Transvaal in what today is Limpopo. After some period operating inside the country, they were spotted by villagers and reported to the local chief who then called the racist police. Unaware of their exposure, they were caught off guard. Sentenced to long term imprisonment at Robben Island Prison, comrade Geneva sharpened his artistic skills and taught himself painting. The most important thing he did was to find ways of reconnecting with his girlfriend in Lesotho. After many searches, he was able to reconnect with her, she visited him at Robben Island several times as they rekindled their love. Letters and photographs were some of the important artefacts at Robben Island Prison, as they connected the prisoners with the outside world. Evelyn sent Comrade Geneva her photograph. Using that photograph, Comrade Ge-

neva painted her and christened the painting my *"queen from the mountains"*. The theme is taken from the original photograph of his wife, Evelyn and the Lesotho landscape which is mountainous.

Quiet often, revolutionaries are taken as a group of people whose dedication is to the cause of the people at the expense of their families. However, the life of many revolutionaries would indicate that, for any human being to care about the human condition and seek to alter it for the better, they need to love and love deeply. Comrade Geneva loved, loved the arts, culture and heritage, and used them to mobilise our communities and people to free themselves from the yoke of oppression and deprivation. These virtues are more important today as the revolution is being criminalised by reactionary forces that seek to reverse the gains of the revolution.

Comrade Geneva is no more, we will never hear his voice and guidance, but his three daughters will pick up the Spear, continue the struggle for a just and democratic society in whatever sphere of operation they have chosen, for a giant had given birth to them and on this, they cannot fail.

Remembering the Martyrs of Bethal and Eastern Transvaal Who Fought Guns With Bare Hands and Defeated the Evil System of Apartheid

■ By **SELLO SHAI-MORULE**

THE history of Bethal and the greater Eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga Province) is not a footnote in the history of the liberation struggle. It is the history itself. Bethal was known as the capital of farm slavery. It is where the evil of apartheid was at its most brutal, where our people were forced to work on farms from sunrise to sunset with no rights. It is no accident that it was here that resistance was also at its fiercest.

Firstly, if we forget Bethal, we forget why we need land reform, why we need decent work, why we need free education.

Secondly, because the battle is not over. The evil system of apartheid was defeated politically in 1994, but its legacy remains in poverty, unemployment and inequality. The same spirit that allowed Nomoya Masilela to stand unarmed before a gun must allow us today to fight corruption, crime and service delivery failure.

Thirdly, because youth must know. Our children in Kanyamazane, Mmamethlake, Thulamahashe, Embalenhle, Seabuswa, Ethandakukhanya Piet Retief, Mdluzi, Leandra, Mashishing, in Mzinoni must know that freedom was not free. It was paid for by their own brothers and sisters from their own streets. As we host these remembrances and commem-



orations let us not just gather to listen. Let us commit to build the South Africa they died for, a South Africa of jobs, dignity and non-racialism.

We remember today young Nomoya Christina Masilela of eMz-inoni High School. She had no gun, no army. She had only her school uniform, her conscience, and her love for her people. For that, she was shot and killed by the apartheid security forces. Her body may be gone, but her spirit lives in the Nomoya Masilela Museum, the former magistrate's court where our people were once sentenced, now a shrine of our freedom. We remember Gert Sibande, the Lion of the Eastern Transvaal, who organised farm-

workers when organising meant death. He taught us that a worker is not a tool, but a human being.

We remember Nokuthula Simelane, the young MK operative who disappeared, tortured by the enemy because she refused to betray her people. Cde Nokuthula who was kidnapped and tortured to death by the Special Branch in 1983. Her statue stands next to Sibande's. Nokuthula was a young South African activist whose life was cut short by the apartheid regime in 1983. Born in 1959 in Mzinoni Township, Bethal, she was a university student activist who dedicated her life to the fight for the freedom of all oppressed black masses in South Africa. She was only 24 years old

TRIBUTE

when she worked as a courier for uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), operating between South Africa and Swaziland. It is alleged that on 10 September 1983, she was lured to a meeting in Johannesburg by an askari, a former MK member turned collaborator, where she was abducted by members of the Apartheid Security Police.

A horrific ordeal underlined her last days on earth. She was taken to a police office in Norwood and later to a farm in Northam, then Northern Transvaal, where she was subjected to weeks of torture, including severe beatings, electric shocks, and near drownings, to force her to betray her cause. She was last seen alive, badly injured and in handcuffs, being placed into the boot of a car driven by Security Branch officers. To this day, her remains have never been found.

As South Africa continues to honour and recognise these gallant fighters who fought guns with bare hands, the President of the Republic of South Africa and President of the ANC, Cde Cyril Ramaphosa, shall on Friday 03 September 2026, at the University of Mpumalanga Province's Great Hall in Mbombela, present the Nokuthula Simelane Memorial Lecture. The lecture is expected to be attended by people from all spheres of life, Khoisan and Traditional leadership, the business community, the clergy, ANC Activists, politicians, former Mkhonto we Sizwe cadres, comrades of the ANC and all persons of social standing in the community including civil society. The lecture will also mark the official launch of the Nokuthula Simelane Foundation, established to keep her memory alive and to support young women leaders. Lest we forget the daughters of

**Nokuthula
Simelane**



Mzinoni. All of them together with many comrades in Mpumalanga and the entire country, they fought guns with bare hands. They fought armoured casspirs with stones, dustbin lead, petrol bombs and slogans. They fought an evil system that had courts, jails and guns with nothing but courage.

This day we pause to remember the martyrs of Bethal and Eastern Transvaal, who fought guns with bare hands and defeated the evil system of apartheid. The Republic of South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa launched the Milestones of Freedom Campaign on Thursday, 18 June 2026 at the Union Buildings, Tshwane. Under the theme "Honouring the Past. Delivering the Future." The historic campaign was launched to commemorate key milestones in South Africa's democratic journey, which is and not limited to 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution (1996), 50th anniversary of the 1976 Youth Uprisings, 70th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March, the

anti-pass campaign and 60th anniversary of the forced removals from District Six.

This was also to strengthen service delivery, social cohesion and national pride by bringing government services directly to communities like IDs, birth certificates, health outreach, housing, small business support. As well as to run the campaign as a year-long national programme until February 2027, rolled out to all provinces through GCIS. This milestones of freedom campaign above all are to celebrate three decades of the adoption of the new South African Constitution.

As he underlined his address, the President said "As we launch the Milestones of Freedom, let us hold all four of these anniversaries in our hands at once, the women, the children and the dispossessed and the Constitution that turned their dreams into a promise of a better future. We are the inheritors of their courage. We are the keepers of their dream. And we are, every one of



us, the authors of what South Africa will become. Let us, together, build the South Africa of which our forebears dared to dream, united in our diversity, equal in our dignity and free at last”.

It is important to note, that this Constitution did not just come, it was negotiated and written by South Africans. After CODESA negotiations to end apartheid, parties in 1993 agreed on an Interim Constitution which governed the first democratic elections on 27 April 1994. It said Parliament elected in 1994 would also sit as the Constitutional Assembly to write the final Constitution. The public participation process commenced under Chairperson Cde Cyril Ramaphosa, the Assembly called for submissions. We are told over 1.7 million submissions came from ordinary people, churches, unions, traditional leaders. The final text was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996 with more than two-thirds majority. It was sent to the Constitutional Court to certify it complied with 34 Constitutional

Principles.

The Court refused to certify the first draft in September 1996, sent it back for 9 amendments, then certified the second draft. President Nelson Mandela signed it into law on 18 December 1996 in Sharpeville, and it came into effect on 4 February 1997. It replaced Parliamentary sovereignty with constitutional supremacy, created the Bill of Rights, and established Chapter 9 Institutions to protect democracy. The question we ask this day, is why we celebrate it 30 years later in 2026. Is because this year marks 30 years since adoption (1996-2026). Government under the Milestones of Freedom Campaign is using it to honour those who suffered for justice like Gert Sibande, Nokuthula Simela, Nomoya Masilela and many more whose rights were denied. Also to reflect on gains of 32 years of democracy, equality, dignity, freedom, socio-economic rights to housing, health, education. As well as to promote social cohesion and remind citizens

that the Constitution belongs to all who live in South Africa.

The Mpumalanga Provincial chapter of Milestone of freedom campaign was launched on 14 August 2026 in Gert Sibande District, Govan Mbeki Municipality, where Deputy Minister Kenny Morolong of the Presidency, MEC Thulasizwe Thoma of Mpumalanga Provincial Administration's Public Works, Roads and Transport on behalf of Premier Mandla Ndlovu, Executive Mayor of Govan Mbeki Local Municipality Nhlakanipho Zuma, the community of Bethal and families of stalwarts specifically honoured their fallen gallant heroes and heroines in that august and emotional commemoration.

The decision by the Premier of Mpumalanga, Comrade Mandla Ndlovu, to choose Bethal in the Gert Sibande District, Govan Mbeki Municipality, to officially launch the provincial Milestones of Freedom Campaign was not by accident. It was a deliberate political choice. Bethal was chosen because of its deep political significance. The launch was held at the Nomoya Christina Masilela Museum, which hosts the memories of many martyrs of our struggle, among them Gert Sibande and Nokuthula Simelane. The Nomoya Masilela Museum, formerly the Bethal Museum, was built in 1910. It is now declared a National Monument and forms part of Bethal's cultural precinct at 50 Chris Hani Street. Entrance is free, but its value is priceless.

There are many fallen heroes and heroines who are honoured at that Museum. The main stalwarts whose statues and exhibitions are inside the museum are that of Nomoya Christina Masilela, a student from eMzinoni who

was fatally shot by apartheid police during a student protest in the mid-1980s. The museum is named after her. The building itself was the former magistrate's court where our people were tried for pass law offences. Gert Sibande, affectionately known as the Lion of the East, the organiser of farm workers in the Eastern Transvaal. His statue is where the wreath was laid on 14 August 2026 during the Mpumalanga launch the proceedings which was presided over by the Deputy Minister in the Presidency Cde Kenny Morolong, Mpumalanga Provincial Administration, the municipalities, the community and families of the stalwarts.

In that Bethal Nomoya Christina Masilela's Museum, you will also find memorials of Ruth First. Ruth First an anti-apartheid journalist and activist who, together with Father Michael Scott and Gert Sibande, exposed Bethal farm slavery in 1947. Henry Nxumalo "Mr Drum" the investigative journalist whose 1952 Drum Magazine exposé on Bethal prison labour shocked the world and paved the way for the Potato Boycott. There are also many other local farm workers and political prisoners from Bethal, Trichardt and Standerton who were part of the potato boycott era in the same museum. The exhibition in the museum has 24 dedicated sections honouring them.

The event of the Mpumalanga Provincial launch of milestone of freedom campaign was further underlined by a community meeting at the Raymond Thaka Mavuso Hall, the former Mzinoni Hall, where families of stalwarts, community leaders and survivors of the apartheid war were in attendance. Trees were also planted in honour of the trio, Cde Gert

Sibande, Nomoya Christina Masilela and Nokuthula Simelane, as well as Kaizer Mathibela, Victor Khayiyane, Vincent Shabala, Jack Madoda Kubheka, Percy De Kock, Mfrayi Dlodlu, Bafana Shabangu, Mdundu Sibande, Dolmen Dumisa Mango, Bheki Albert Mkhwanazi, Daniel Bhuti Mokoena, Mafrizi Nkosi, Masokana Spencer Simelane, Patrick Tsibitso Sibanyoni, Raymond Thaka Mavuso, Papa Steven Nkabinde and Apostol Sikhosana whose their names are engraved on cenotaph at Raymond Mavuso Hall at Mzinoni township.

The choosing of Bethal was deliberate, and not because Bethal came ahead of the rest, but because it is linked to the name of the district itself, which is named after Gert Sibande, a popular leader of the Potato Boycott. The district is named Gert Sibande District Municipality in honour of Gert Sibande, a farm worker and ANC leader from Ermelo in the Eastern Transvaal. Born in 1901, he died in exile in Swaziland in 1987. He is known as "The Lion of the East". Cde Sibande was linked to the Pota-



to Boycott because he exposed farm slavery in Bethal. From the 1930s he organised farm workers. In 1947 he disguised himself as a farm labourer, investigated conditions, and invited journalist Ruth First and Anglican priest Father Michael Scott to publish the findings. Later Drum Magazine, through Henry Nxumalo, did the same in 1952.

Painfully, the farms were using cheap prison and convict labour, and conditions were described as near slavery. The reports were ignored by the apartheid government. The so-called Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd, dismissed them in Parliament. Because conditions did not improve, 12 years later in June 1959, the ANC, SACTU and the Congress Alliance launched the National Potato Boycott led by Gert Sibande as ANC Chairperson for Bethal and later Transvaal President. Black South Africans were asked to stop buying and handling potatoes from Bethal, Trichardt and Standerton farms to hit the farmers economically and force government to end the farm labour system. The boycott was a success; it drew national and international attention to farm workers. He was banished from Bethal in 1953, charged in the Treason Trial of 1956-61 alongside Mandela, elected Transvaal President of the ANC in 1958, and later helped MK fighters move through Swaziland into South Africa.

The launch of the Milestones of Freedom Campaign required one place for the official launch, but it is well known to all of us that there are still many areas of political significance in the entire province. This campaign will obviously have a footprint in the entire province, just like the ANC

touch in 2012 during the centenary of the Congress movement. We are aware that those places will be visited during Milestone of Freedom Campaign year-long rollout, which forms part of the Mpumalanga Liberation Heritage Routes which includes not limited farm labour and MK corridor, the potato farms slavery sites, Gert Sibande's family house, the MK infiltration route to Swaziland, Barney Molokoane ambush site and Sasol II bombing site. Driefontein where the late Saul Mkhize (1935-1983) was killed resisting forced removals. To Volksrust and Wakkerstroom where Mahatma Gandhi was first arrested in 1906, and to Daggakraal, Pixley ka Seme's model of black farming.

Areas like Piet Retief and Mkhondo, the MK corridor to Mozambique and landmine sites. Trichardt and Kinross for the Kinross Mine Disaster of 1986 where 177 miners died. Mbuzini, where the President of Mozambique Samora Machel was assassinated. The cultural heartland and centre of Bantustan resistance in Nkangala Region, the Solomon Mahlangu capture site in Middelburg, the Delmas Treason Trial of 1985-88 where UDF leaders were tried, the KwaNdebele anti-independence struggle of 1985-86, the Middelburg Security Branch torture house and Witbank Prison.

Lastly the Lowveld Mas-sacres of 1986, the Nel-

spruit Prison and KaNyamazane youth uprising, MK safe houses, Bushbuckridge resistance of 1986-1990, the Acornhoek police station killings, and the ANC safe houses for MK crossing to Mozambique through Barberton, Nkomazi and Matsamo border route.

This day, as we celebrate thirty

years of the nation's birth certificate, our Constitution, we remember and honour the martyrs of Bethal and the Eastern Transvaal who fought guns with bare hands and defeated the evil system of apartheid. On 04 November 2026, let us vote ANC with our feet as we march towards the National Democratic Society they envisaged during their lifetime.

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
HONOURING OUR FOUNDERS.
PRESERVING OUR LEGACY.

SAUL
“MAI MAI”
MSANE

FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
(BLOEMFONTEIN, 1912)

FORMAL RECOGNITION & COMMEMORATION
OF A FOUNDING GENERATION LEADER

“Honouring the legacy of one of the pioneers of the African National Congress, whose contribution to the founding and early development of the movement remains a vital part of South Africa's liberation history.”

PROPOSED COMMEMORATION INITIATIVES

 RECOGNITION OF THE GRAVESITE AS PART OF THE LIBERATION HERITAGE OF THE MOVEMENT.	 WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY LED BY ANC NATIONAL OFFICIALS, VETERANS AND ALLIANCE PARTNERS.	 ERECTION OF A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE OR MONUMENT ACKNOWLEDGING HIS ROLE AS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE ANC.	 COLLABORATION WITH HERITAGE INSTITUTIONS TO ENSURE THE PRESERVATION OF THE SITE.	 INSTITUTIONALISATION OF AN ANNUAL COMMEMORATION AND POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME.
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6 OCTOBER 2026
COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

THALANENI MISSIONARY CEMETERY
NKANDLA, KWAZULU-NATAL

“Mai Mai!” — an expression of urgency, care, and attention.

SAUL MSANE FOUNDATION
PRESERVING HERITAGE • ACTIVATING CULTURE • LAND JUSTICE

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

5–11 September 2026

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

5 September 1890 Composer Benjamin Tyamzashe born



South African composer, choir conductor, organist and teacher, Benjamin Tyamzashe, affectionately known as 'B-ka-T', was born in Kimberley in 1890. His music enjoys a wide popularity within the education sector and is preferred during schools music festivals. He was the only composer and choir conductor of his generation to have his song "Zweliyaduduma" sung to the British Royal family in Umtata, during their visit to SA in 1947, B-ka-T conducted the song to a mass choir of 3000.

5 September 1909 Yusuf Dadoo born

On 5 September 1909, a tireless fighter for national liberation, Dr. Yusuf Mohamed Dadoo was born in Krugersdorp. Dadoo was known by many for always forging closer links between oppressed groups of Indian, African and Coloured people in the struggle for liberation. He left an impressive



political legacy, covering a number of fields spanning the relationship between transnational identity, racial identity, national liberation, socialism, non-racism and internationalism. Dadoo died in exile in London in 1983.

5 September 1939 Astronomer Ian Stewart Glass born

Born in Dublin and migrating to South Africa, Glass pioneered work in infrared astronomy and instrumentation at the South African Astronomical Observatory and authored more than 220 scientific papers.

5 September 1945 Freddie Mercury born in Zanzibar

Freddie Mercury was born Farrokh Bulsara in Zanzibar, Tanzania. His parents were Parsis from Bombay (now Mumbai), India. Mercury was sent to boarding school in India and grew up there. At the age of seventeen he and his family left Zanzibar

and settled in Britain. In 1970, he formed the band Queen with guitarist Brian May and drummer Roger Taylor. Queen was one of the most successful bands of the 1970s and 1980s. Mercury wrote most of the hit songs that the band recorded and a few that he recorded solo.

5 September 1978 Camp David talks

The Egypt-Israel peace conference start at US Presidential retreat, convened by then President Jimmy Carter. The peace accord which results from the talks, eventually earned Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin a joint Nobel Peace Prize.

5 September 2014 WHO on Ebola in West Africa

As the Ebola pandemic spread in parts of West Africa, the World Health Organisation estimated that 2,000 people have died, more than half of the 3,500 people reported infected by the Ebola virus in Guinea, Liberia, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

5 September 2019 Military coup in Guinea

A military coup d'état deposes democratically elected Guinea President Alpha Condé. ECOWAS immediately suspended Guinea's membership, called for the President's unconditional release, and sent envoys to Conakry to attempt a "constitutional"

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resolution to the situation. The African Union also suspended Guinea's membership in response to the coup.

6 September 1910

Artist Gerard Bhengu born



Pioneer South African artist Gerard Bhengu was born at Mission Station at Centecow, Bulwer. Bhengu's remarkable skill attracted wide attention. His paintings were exclusively in watercolour and sepia ink on paper, with his earliest paintings and drawings date from 1926. His art works are seldom inscribed with a date, although they are almost always signed. Bhengu died in 1990 in Umlazi, Durban. His paintings are part of the collections of Museum Africa, the University of Fort Hare and the Albany museum in Graham's Town.

6 September 1939

South Africa joins Second World War

After the invasion of Poland by Germany in September 1939, SA Prime Minister Gen. J.B. Hertzog tried to pass a resolution in parliament, proclaiming South Africa's neutrality during the war. Hertzog's attempt was rejected by 80 votes to 67. After the refusal of Governor-General Sir Patrick Duncan to dissolve the parliament, Hertzog was left with no option but to resign from his

position. The minister of justice, Gen. J.C. Smuts, took over and formed a new cabinet and South Africa joined the war against Germany. This step caused bitter dissent amongst the pro-war and anti-war sections in the white community.

6 September 1945

Artist Bheki Manyoni born

On 6 September 1945, Bhekisani Manyoni was born in Greytown, KZN. He attended the Rorke's Drift Art School and later took classes in fine arts, in particular ceramics and weaving. Here Manyoni also befriended John Muafengejo, who influenced his work. In 1970, Manyoni was appointed as curator of the Pandora Gallery in Mbabane, Swaziland, and in 1979 he began to teach at the Katlehong Art Gallery. Manyoni specialised in ceramic sculpture and lino design, and has exhibited in many countries, including Holland and Germany. Manyoni also creates wood carvings and has received several awards, including the Hans Merensky Trust Award.

6 September 1991

Western Sahara-Morocco ceasefire

A ceasefire is reaching ending the Western Sahara War between Polisario Front and Morocco over the right of self-determination of the Saharawi people. The war started in 1975 and claimed the lives of over 20,000 people.

6 September 2003

Queen Mother Mamohato Seeiso of Lesotho passed on

The Queen Mother Mamohato Bereng Seeiso of Lesotho was born in 1941. She was the youngest child of Chief Lerotholi Mojela. The princess was sent to study at Bath Training College of



Home Economics in the United Kingdom. In 1962, she married King Moshoeshe II and they had three children. As the Queen Mother, she ran several charities and organisations in Lesotho. She was passionate about farming and was involved in poultry, livestock and crop farming and has been highly praised for her work in uplifting the lives of Basotho women. The Queen Mother Mamohato Bereng Seeiso died on 6 September 2003.

6 September 2019

President Robert Gabriel Mugabe passed on

President Mugabe, a liberation icon and Pan Africanist, founder of the Frontline States, was Prime Minister and President of Zimbabwe since independence in 1980 until 1918. He passed away in Singapore where he was undergoing medical treatment.



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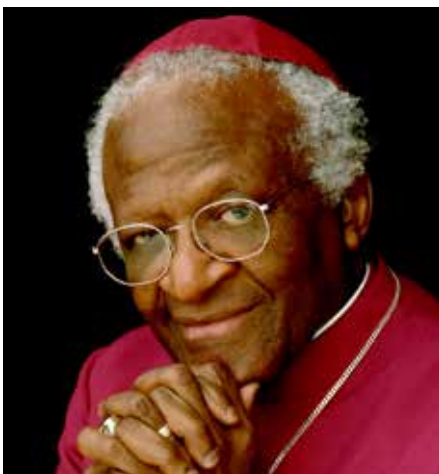
7 September 1971

Artist James Cudjoe born

One of the best-known painters in Ghana, James Cudjoe was born in Tokoradi. His cityscapes of contemporary West African life, especially his series of paintings featuring market women, are legendary.

7 September 1986

Tutu ordained as Archbishop of Cape Town



The Anglican Church ordains the bishop and anti-apartheid icon as first black Archbishop of Cape Town, which makes him the head of the Anglican Church in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and Eswatini.

7 September 1992

Bisho Massacre

80,000 protesters gathered outside Bisho, capital of Ciskei, demanding an end to the military government of Brigadier Joshua Gqozo and the re-absorption of the bantustan into South Africa. The protest was led by several senior African National Congress (ANC) leaders, including South African Communist Party Secretary General Chris Hani, Cyril Ramaphosa, Steve Tshwete and Ronnie Kasrils. Demonstrators tried to cross the Ciskei Defense Force lines and enter into Bisho. Soldiers opened fire and continued firing indiscriminately into the crowd for

7 September 1992 BISHO MASSACRE



about five minutes using machine guns and rifle grenades, killing 28 people and over 200 injured.

7 September 1997

Mobutu Sese Seko dies

Mobutu Sese Seko (66), former president of Zaire (DRC) from 1965 to 1997, died in exile in Rabat, Morocco, three months after the end of his nearly 32-year reign. Sese Seko was exiled after he was ousted from power by Laurent Kabila's rebel movement, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire.

7 September 2004

Beyers Naudé, struggle icon and Afrikaner cleric passes on



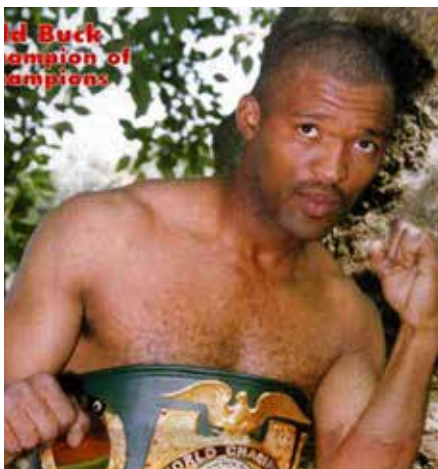
Oom Bey, as he was affectionately known, passed away on 7 September 2004 at a retirement home in Johannesburg, with his wife, Ilse, by his side. Beyers Naudé was born in Roodepoort on 10 May 1915. One of eight children, he was born into a family fully committed to Afrikaner nationalism. His father was a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) and a founding member of the Afrikaner Broederbond. Beyers Naudé joined the Broederbond as one of its youngest member at the age of 25. He however defied his upbringing, aligning himself with the struggle of the oppressed after the Sharpeville Massacre, and in 1963 resigned from the Broederbond, after 22 years of membership. He condemned apartheid from the pulpit and was called a traitor by his community, harassed and eventually banned by the security forces and the apartheid government. Forced to resign as a dominee, he continued his ministry and the struggle through the Christian Institute, which was banned in 1977. In 1985 he succeeded Archbishop Desmond Tutu as Secretary

General of the South African Council of Churches, and was a leading figure in the Dakar meeting between Afrikaner leaders and the ANC in 1987. He opened the inauguration of President Thabo Mbeki in 1999; in 2001 he was given the freedom of the City of Johannesburg and one of the major roads named after him.

7 September 2015 **Ibukun Awosika breaks finance glass ceiling**

Nigerian financier Awosika is the first woman to be appointed chairperson of the First Bank of Nigeria, the first to hold a top job in the country's male dominated finance sector.

8 September 1998 **Mpush Makambi wins World Boxing Title**



Former APLA member and South African Middleweight Boxing Champion, Mpush Makambi defeated Adrian Dodson of Britain to take the Middleweight Title Fight. He was later voted Boxer of the Year because of his exploits in that title match.

8 September 2017 **Large scale culling of chickens**

The agricultural department of South Africa orders the culling of poultry following an outbreak of avian flu in the industry.

8 September 2023 **Morocco earthquake**

The 6.8-magnitude earthquake, the most deadly in 120 years shook Morocco's High Atlas mountain range shortly after 11 p.m. local time at the relatively shallow depth of 18.5 kilometers. The epicenter was 72 kilometers from popular city of Marrakech, affected. Death toll from the quake numbered in the thousands.

8-9 September 2023 **African Union becomes member of G20**

At the 18th Summit hosted by Prime Minister Modi of India, the G20 officially admitted the African Union as a full member, bringing the number to 21 members, and the AU the second regional organisation member after the European Union. The G20 was formed in 1999 in response to the then Asian financial crisis, initially by the Finance Ministers and Central bankers, and later at leadership level, primarily focusing on economic and financial cooperation.

9 September 1913 **Artist Gerald Sekoto born**



Jan Gerard Sekoto was born on 9 September 1913 in Botsha-

belo, in the Middelburg district. Sekoto became one of South Africa's most renowned and celebrated artists, especially known for his evocative paintings. On 13 December 1989 he received an honorary doctorate from the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). In 2004 Sophiatown unveiled the Sekoto mural that depicts Archbishop Trevor Huddleston walking the dusty streets of Sophiatown. Sekoto passed away on 20 March 1993 at the age of 79, six months before his 80th birthday.

9 September 1919 **Artist Tahia Halim born**



Egyptian Painter Tahia Mohamed Halim (1919-2003) is born in Sudan. A pioneer of the Modern Expressive Movement in Egyptian Art in the 1960s, her art features Nubian culture, the Nile and boats.

9 September 1973 **Regent Maqomo dies on Robben Island**

Xhosa war hero, Maqomo and regent of the AmaNgqika Xhosa clan died on Robben Island. He was captured in 1858 after the Cattle Killings of 1856-57, incited by Nongqawuse's vision on the banks of the Gxarha River. Maqoma was captured during the ensuing famine and convicted of having been a party to the murder of a chief who had refused to

destroy his cattle. Maqoma and his wife Katyi were banished to Robben Island for twenty-one years. In 1869 they were released but he was sent back to Robben Island in 1871 after being found guilty of incitement, this time without his wife. According to historical sources, he was a brave warrior and *"a formidable tactician, a masterly politician and a brilliant orator."*

9 September 2006

Hilda Bernstein passes on



Veteran political activist, artist and writer Hilda Bernstein passed away on 9 September 2006 in Cape Town, at 91. In 1932 Bernstein and her mother immigrated to South Africa from England. She worked in the advertising and later publishing and journalism sectors. Bernstein got involved in politics when she joined the South African Labour Party League of Youth, a member until 1940, when she left to join the Communist Party of South Africa. She made a historic entry into the Johannesburg City Council when she became the first communist to be elected as councilor to public office in South Africa on a "Whites only" vote. Bernstein participated actively in the major struggle campaigns such as the 1946 African Mine Workers' Strike, the 1952 Defiance Campaign, the

1954 FEDSAW launch, the 1955 Freedom Charter Campaign, the 1956 Women's March and 1960 Sharpeville Campaign. Bernstein was arrested and banned on several occasions. After the 1964 Rivonia Trial, Bernstein and her husband fled the country on foot to Botswana and exile. Her contribution to the liberation struggle was acknowledged and with the National Order of Luthuli.

10 September 1921

Editor JT Jabavu passes on

John Tengo Jabavu, the founder of the first Black-language newspaper, *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Native/Bantu Opinion) and political leader dies in Cape Town. He was the father to Davidson Don Jabavu, the first Black professor at the University of Fort Hare.

10 September 1944

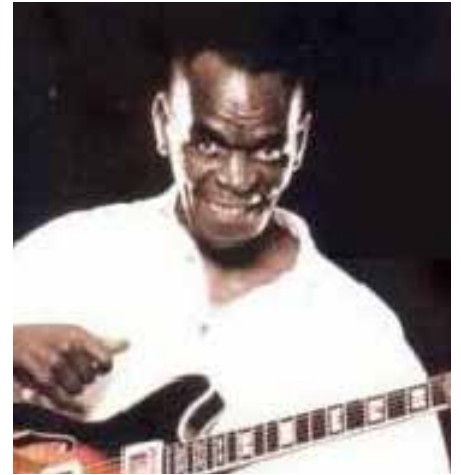
Treaty of Tangier

In August 1844 French forces under General Thomas Bugeaud defeated the Moroccan army in the battle of Isly. The battle was a result of the French government's pursuit of Algerian resistance leader, Abd al-Qadir who had taken refuge in the country. Following the defeat Sultan Abd ar-Rahman of Morocco was forced to accept French presence in Morocco. He also had to agree to remain neutral and not assist any enemy of France in any way. A peace treaty was signed in Tangier on 10 September 1844 and came to be known as the Treaty of Tangier.

10 September 1936

Musician Allen Kwela born

Allen Kwela was born in Kwazulu Natal, having been exposed to music, both African and Western from an early age. After moving to Johannesburg during the 1950's, he met musician Spokes



Mashiyane. They collaborated musically and Allen composed most of the kwela music, while Mashiyane performed. However, he remained in the shadow of his collaborator, who was later credited with the breakthrough of kwela during the 1950's. After his partnership with Mashiyane ended, he became interested in jazz, playing with well-known South African jazz artists such as Kippie Moeketsi and Barney Rachabane. He subsequently became one of South Africa's legendary jazz guitarists. His only album, *Broken Strings*, was released in 1998. Kwela passed on in 2003.

10 September 1960

Abebe Bikila wins Olympic Gold Medal

Ethiopian Abebe Bikila, running barefoot, became the first Black African to win gold in the history



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of the Olympic Games, setting a new world record at 2:16:2. Explaining later why he ran barefoot, Bikila said, *"I wanted the world to know that my country, Ethiopia, has always won with determination and heroism."* Four years later during the Tokyo Olympics, Abebe's fame has already reached all corners of the globe. Six weeks before the big race that awaited him, Abebe was taken ill with appendicitis. He underwent surgery amid a public outcry for proper medical counsel to decide on the procedure. The day he arrived in Tokyo, Abebe hadn't fully recovered from the surgery and limped his way down the stairs. However, the reception Abebe received from the Japanese people helped him to become the first athlete ever to win two Olympic marathons. Bikila died in October 1973.

10 September 1990 **Côte d'Ivoire Our Lady of Peace Basilica consecrated**

The world's largest basilica build by 1200 workers in Ivorian administrative capital of Yamoussoukro, working day and night, is consecrated by Pope John Paul II, who also gives blessing to the adjacent hospital.



10 September 2009 **4 de Abril Bridge inaugurated**

The bridge which connects the Angolan cities of Benguela and Lobita, is opened by former President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos and named for the date of the 2002 peace agreement that ended the civil war in Angola. It is a 483m suspension bridge, construction started in 2007. The bridge provides for connection between the provinces of north, central and south of the country.

11 September 1896 **Johannesburg name explained**

In reaction to an inquiry, officials in Pretoria replied that Johannesburg was named after Johann Friedrich Bernhard Rissik and Christiaan Johannes Joubert. Some controversy exists concerning the origin of the name Johannesburg, as several men bearing the name Johann(es) occupied positions of authority in the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR or Transvaal Republic) or were involved in events leading to the founding of the town. Rissik was a principal clerk attached to the office of the surveyor-general of the ZAR, while Joubert was a member of the Volksraad and head of the government's office of mines. It was on

the recommendation of these two men that the land involved was declared a public goldfield, while they also suggested the town to be laid out either on the farm Randjeslaagte (Randjieslaagte) or a section of the farm Doornfontein. Government authorities decided on the former place. Other evidence, notably a letter from the deputy secretary of foreign affairs to the Swiss consul, dated 18 February 1896, substantiates the claim that the town was named after these two men.

11 September 1980 **Court commutes James Mange's sentence**

Following an international campaign led by international bodies such as the United Nations, Organisation of African Unity (now AU), Non-Aligned Movement, and non-governmental organisations in South Africa, the Bloemfontein Appeal Court commuted James Mange's death sentence on a charge of high treason to 20 years' imprisonment. The African National Congress (ANC) applauded the achievements of this international campaign. In a statement issued by its Secretary General, Alfred Nzo, the ANC called for the same solidarity to demand the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners.



James Mange

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

5–11 September 2026

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



1–7 September National Book Week

South Africa commemorates National Book Week every first week of September. It is an initiative of the South African Book Development Council and the Department of Arts and Culture. Reading statistics report that only 14% of the South African population are active book readers, and a mere 5% of parents read to their children. National Book Week is an important initiative in encouraging the nation to value reading as a fun and pleasurable activity and to showcase how reading can easily be incorporated into one's daily lifestyle. The theme for 2026 is *"The Books of Our Lives"*. Led by the South African Government via the South African Book Development Council (SABDC) and the Department of Arts and Culture, this year's activities in-

clude reading in indigenous languages, storytelling, poetry sessions, word-a-thons, and book debates across all provinces.



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5 September

International Day of Charity



Charity, like volunteerism and philanthropy, provides real social bonding and contributes to the creation of inclusive and more resilient societies. Charity can alleviate the worst effects of humanitarian crises, supplement public services in health care, education, housing and child protection. It assists the advancement of culture, science, sports, and the protection of cultural and natural heritage. It also promotes the rights of the marginalized and underprivileged and spreads the message of humanity in conflict situations.

6 September

World Read a Book Day

The day is celebrated to encourage reading and the joys of books. On this day, we are all encouraged to share a quote from a book, talk about your favourite book or author, to give, read, donate, collect and share books, and to popularise your libraries and bookshops.

7 September

International Day of Police Cooperation

The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Policing highlights the importance of police integrity, accountability, and oversight in strengthening the rule of law, ensuring human rights-based and effective policing, and enhancing public trust towards law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement institutions are entrusted with a diverse set of tasks requiring a high degree of integrity within police agencies, supported by effective oversight mechanisms, while maintaining high standards of conduct and ensuring that they serve the communities in an effective and transparent way. The theme of the 2026 International Day of Police Cooperation, ***“Protecting against Vulnerability – Building Trust and Legitimacy in Policing,”*** highlights the need to protect those most vulnerable to crime while strengthening the trust and legitimacy that



underpin effective policing. The theme is especially relevant amid rising conflict, displacement and other global challenges that heighten vulnerability and fuel transnational crime. Those most at risk are often disproportionately affected by cross-border threats, reinforcing the need for stronger international police cooperation to protect victims and combat criminal networks. Effective policing depends not only on operational capacity, but also on public trust. In a rapidly evolving security environment, sustaining legitimacy and trust is essential. Building and maintaining trust with vulnerable groups is therefore not only a normative imperative, but also a practical necessity for effective policing.

7 September

International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies

Air pollution is the biggest environmental health risk of our time. It also exacerbates climate change, causes economic losses, and reduces agricultural productivity. It knows no borders. The day recognizes the need to substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination by 2030, paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.

8 September

International Literacy Day

Since 1967, International Literacy Day (ILD) celebrations have taken place annually around the world to remind the public of the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights, and to advance the literacy agenda towards a more literate and sustainable society. Despite progress made, literacy challenges persist with at least 773 million adults worldwide lacking basic literacy skills today.



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

9 September African Union Day



The day commemorates the decision by African Heads of State and Government, to transition from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union, as issued in the Sirte Declaration on 9 September 1999, which called for the establishment of an African Union, with the aim of accelerating the process of continental integration to enable Africa to play its rightful role in the global economy while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political problems compounded as they were by certain negative aspects of globalisation. AU Day also reflects on the Union's transformation and achievements in the African continent.

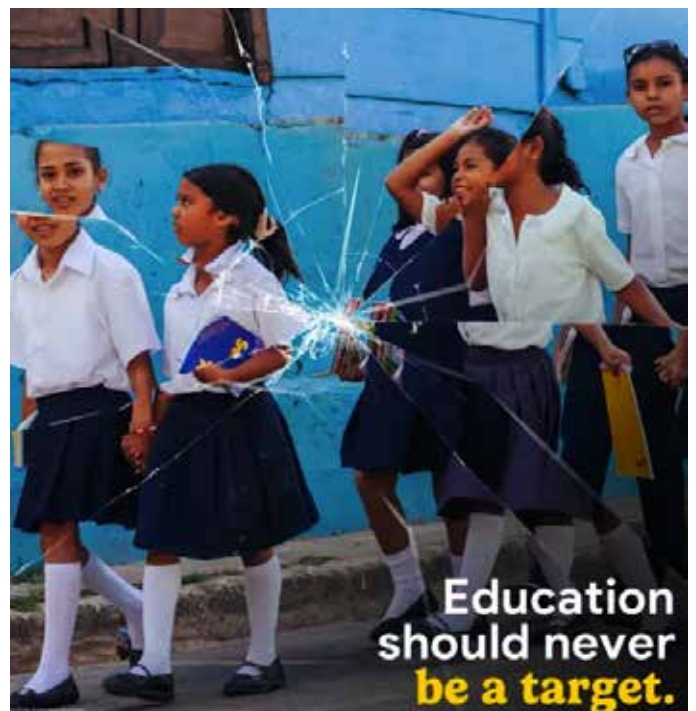
9 September International Fetal Alcohol Syndrome day

Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) is a condition that develops in a fetus (developing baby) when a pregnant person drinks alcohol during pregnancy. FAS rates from studies conducted in SA are among the highest worldwide, it affects all communities and is therefore a major public health concern. Multidisciplinary and intersectoral interventions are urgently required to raise awareness about the dangers of prenatal alcohol exposure and the devastating effect of FAS on the lives of children, families and communities.



9 September International Day to Protect Education from Attack

Schools should be places of safety for children and teachers, but often they are targets of attacks during war and conflict. For example, according to UNICEF, up to July 6, 564 schools in the Gaza Strip have been directly hit or damaged by Israeli attacks. One year after the start of the civil war in the Sudan, over 10,400 schools are closed, affecting more than 19 million children (UNESCO). Attacks on education deprive students of their fundamental right to quality education and impede teachers' ability to carry out their work. Yet, attacks on educational institutions, students, and teachers are occurring at an alarming rate globally, particularly in contexts of armed conflict, depriving them of a crucial lifeline, lifesaving knowledge and skills and hope for the future. Armed conflicts have devastating impacts on education, often turning schools, universities and other educational institutions into targets and battlegrounds. Educational institutions should always be safe havens, sources of knowledge, and pathways to foster peace and development. In 2026, seven years after the first commemoration of International Day to Protect Education from Attack, armed conflict continues to escalate globally, while attacks on education are increasing at an alarming rate. In 2024 and 2025, 8,566 attacks on educational institutions were reported, compared to 6,000 in 2022 and 2023. This year's global observance will take place under the theme ***"Can education survive attack? The resilience of human communities."***



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